

WILLIAMSBURGH HOUSING ASSOCIATION ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT TO THE SCOTTISH HOUSING REGULATOR 2023

The Management Committee of Williamsburgh Housing Association has now completed the annual assessment of compliance with the Regulatory Framework and the Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management.

In carrying out our assessment, we are satisfied that we have seen and considered sufficient appropriate and reliable evidence to confirm our level of assurance that, to the best of our knowledge and understanding, Williamsburgh Housing Association complies with the following:

- the regulatory requirements set out in Chapter 3 of the Regulatory Framework;
- the standards and outcomes in the Scottish Social Housing Charter
- relevant legislative duties;
- the standards of governance and financial management for RSLs; and
- duties in relation to tenant and resident safety.

The assurance process that has evolved and been adopted at Williamsburgh Housing Association is based on the good practice advice that is provided in the Scottish Federation of Housing Association's tool kit, along with our own internal reporting considerations.

The Management Committee receives regular "Annual Assurance Statement" reports, and reviews the outcome of the annual self-assessment review prior to submission. These processes identify compliance evidence throughout the year. The process also identifies any potential areas of non-compliance and areas for improvement, which are taken forward as new business objectives. This informs whether (or not) any notification of change to our compliance status should be made to the Scottish Housing Regulator during the year.

Our 2023 assessment is based on a combination of Committee reports, internal audit reports, risk assessments, operational information that is held within our systems and records to support the reports and is readily available to the Management Committee collectively, individually and/or by our auditors as requested. This is supported by training for Management Committee to enable informed scrutiny in key compliance areas. This combined approach, of evidence and informed scrutiny, contributes to our assurance on compliance and contributes to the overall control and governance of our Association.

Service Performance

We continue to perform above the Scottish sector average in our key Social Housing Charter performance measures.

Value for Money and Rent Affordability

We have worked hard to manage costs in the severely challenging context of high inflation and the environment of a cost-of-living crisis. We recognise that a balance needs to be found to support new housing supply and vital investment in services, whilst keeping rents affordable. We developed a new value for money strategy, designed to deliver more efficient services. We adopted a new approach to rent consultation and received our highest ever response rate from tenants. Our rent charges continue to remain lower than the social housing sector averages.

Tenant Safety

Ensuring the continued safety of our customers remains our top priority. We completed our programmes of electrical installation condition reports (EICRs) and the installation of interlinked smoke detectors. Performance in gas safety remains at 100% compliance. We reviewed our approach to dampness/mould and acted quickly to help the very small number of tenants who reported experiencing excessive condensation in their home.

Asset Management

We completed a new Asset Management Strategy, informed by a new stock condition survey, and revised our capital financial plan. Our investment in homes through planned and cyclical work returned to pre-pandemic levels. Our compliance with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) increased to 98% in August 2023. We are planning for the expected requirements of Net Zero standards, with investment in a “fabric first” approach, included starting a new triple-glazed windows programme and have further insulation work scheduled.

Customer Engagement & Tenant Satisfaction

We are delivering our new customer engagement strategy and are enhancing our opportunities for tenants to participate and provide feedback. We will increase our resources in this area in 2023/24.

Equalities and Human Rights

Our data gathering exercise supports our compliance with information collection obligations. Our analysis of the data supports our continuing development of an equalities and human rights approach.

New Homes

Our development programme continued to deliver much needed new homes in 2023. The challenging context of inflationary cost increases has meant we are keeping our plans for new homes under continuous review.

Approval

The Management Committee of Williamsburgh Housing Association approved this Annual Assurance Statement at their meeting held on 18 October 2023 and authorised that it be signed on their behalf, by the Chairperson, John Scott, and subsequently submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

This statement will be made available to our tenants and other stakeholders by publishing it on our website.

We will notify the SHR of any changes in our compliance during the year ahead and confirm that we have effective arrangements in place to enable us to do so.

John Scott

**Chairperson
Williamsburgh Housing Association
18 October 2023**