



Rural Stirling
Housing Association

ANNUAL REPORT

2022/2023

Annual
Performance
Report

Chairpersons Report 2022/2023

Welcome to the Annual Report on the Association's activities and finances for the Year Ended 31 March 2023.

The Board are responsible for setting the strategic direction of the organisation, agreeing targets and monitoring performance. The day to day running of the Association is delegated to our staff team led by our Chief Executive Officer. Our Annual Report is an important document and explains what we have achieved together over the last year.

“ This is my fourth report as your Chairperson, and I still find it both a privilege and a big responsibility to lead this great organisation, particularly in such unusual times! I am proud that we remain ambitious and plan to continue to be so. Serving our communities is at the heart of all we do and I, your Board and our staff are passionate about this. ”

For the past couple of years, I have commented that each year seems to bring new challenges, and that is certainly the case again this year. The continuing fallout from the war in Ukraine together with the post-Covid supply chain issues have driven inflation to levels not seen for many years and that, together with the increases in interest rates, has resulted in a Cost-of-Living crisis which has had a severe financial impact on each of us and also on the Association. Managing our way through this has and still is taking a huge amount of hard work from our staff, and I must once again thank them for all their efforts associated with keeping our services operating for our customers.

As a result of the high levels of inflation and rising interest rates, the rent review undertaken at the turn of this year was very difficult as we found that the Association was facing cost pressures which couldn't be absorbed by efficiency savings and, reluctantly, to ensure the future viability of the organisation, the Board agreed a 5.6% rent increase for 2023/24. Although this is a high figure, it is worth pointing out that it was roughly half the inflation rate at the time it was set, and still lower than the current rate. Since that decision was made, we have seen the cost pressures I mentioned earlier continue, which vindicates the stance taken. Whilst the summary of our financial position included in this report shows a healthy position, your Board are well aware of the ongoing need to closely monitor the forward projections in the light of these extraordinary pressures.

I noted earlier that we remain ambitious, and this is exemplified by our development programme. The 9 new homes at Burngreen, Kippen, developed in conjunction with Dawn Homes, were completed in the autumn 2022 and we received the go ahead for 4 homes in Strathblane. The development in Strathblane is named Graham Lambie Brae in memory of the late Councillor Graham Lambie and the development is a fine tribute to Graham, who worked tirelessly for our communities and was also a former Board member.

We are still working with contractors to finalise arrangements for developments in Killearn (11 homes) Croftamie (14 homes) and Balmaha (22 homes) and, in conjunction with developer



Springfield (Mactaggart and Mickel), on 30 homes at Gartness Road, Drymen. Unfortunately, progress on these projects has been slower than we would have liked due to the cost pressures we and our contractors are under. Updates on these and other schemes in the pipeline will be covered in Rural Matters.

Our Board of Management is a fantastic team of volunteers with a mix of professional expertise and tenants, and I thank all of them for their dedication and hard work. We welcomed Graeme Darling to the Board during 2022/23 but unfortunately Martin Earl, Scott Fitzpatrick and Mike Morrice stepped down during the year. Theresa Elliott, who has been on the Board since 2013 and has served as Joint Vice Chair for the last two years has informed the Association that she will also be standing down at the AGM; all have stepped down for personal reasons. I would like to thank Martin, Scott, Mike and Theresa for their very valuable service to the Association.

All Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) must produce Annual Assurance Statements and our last one was published in late 2022. In March, the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) confirmed our regulatory status as Compliant.

We are required to carry out this formal self-assessment against the Scottish Housing Regulator's 7 Regulatory Standards every year and the Board and the Senior Team are working hard to ensure our Annual Assurance Statement is submitted by the end of October. We will publish the Assurance Statement in the winter edition of Rural Matters to let you know how we are performing against the standards and how we intend to continue to strengthen and improve governance.

In previous years I have expressed my many thanks to everyone who has supported and advised me in my role as Chair of RSHA over the previous year; this is particularly warranted this year as I was taken ill in early February and had to take a Leave of Absence. During the period of my absence, Fiona Boath, one of our two Vice Chairs took over the Chair and did a fantastic job, ably supported by Donna Birrell, our CEO, and Theresa Elliot, our other joint Vice Chair. Thank you all very much for your support, it really is appreciated.

Mark Griffiths
Chair

Board Members at the 31st March 2023



Mark Griffiths
Chair



Theresa Elliot
Vice Chair



Fiona Boath
Vice Chair



Linda Anderson



Ken Butler



Andrew Faulk



Lorna Cameron



Susan Macmillan



Howard Dales



Margaret Vass



Graeme Darling

Summary of Annual Accounts 2022/2023

The following information is contained in the Audited Accounts, which are being presented to the AGM. The Accounts have been audited by Alexander Sloan, Chartered Accountants, who have confirmed in the Audit Summary Report that they are satisfied as to the adequacy of the internal financial control procedures operated by the Association. The Auditor's report is unqualified and the Auditor has confirmed that the Accounts - give a true and fair view of the state of the Association's affairs for the year ended 31 March 2023, and have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Determination of Accounting Requirements 2019.

Summary of the Annual Accounts

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE (YEAR ENDED)	31/03/2023 £000's	31/03/2022 £000's	Change (%)
Turnover (Rents, Service Charges & Grants)	4,240	3,975	7%
Less: Operating Costs (excludes loan charges)	(3,562)	(3,517)	1%
Turnover less Operating Costs	678	458	48%
Gain/(Loss) on sale of properties	15	0	0%
Interest Received	11	0	0%
Loan Interest Paid	(557)	(326)	71%
Movement in Fair Value of Financial Instruments	50	107	-53%
Other Finance Charges	0	0	0%
Surplus for Year	197	239	-18%
BALANCE SHEET (As at)	31/03/2023 £000's	31/03/2022 £000's	Change (%)
Housing Properties (Depreciated Cost)	50,117	49,133	2%
Other Fixed Assets (Offices equipment etc)	877	910	-4%
	50,994	50,043	2%
Current Assets			
Debtors	368	334	10%
Cash at Bank and in Hand	3,460	4,397	-21%
	3,828	4,731	-19%
Creditors Due less than 1 year	(1,871)	(1,767)	6%
Net Current Assets	1,957	2,964	-34%
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities	52,951	53,007	0%
Creditor due after 1 year			
Loans	(14,403)	(14,839)	-3%
Deferred Grant Income	(31,969)	(31,786)	1%
	(46,372)	(46,625)	-1%
Net Assets	6,579	6,382	3%
Equity			
Share Capital	-	-	-
Reserves	6,579	6,382	3%
Total Capital and Reserves	6,579	6,382	3%

Reserves

The Association's capital and reserves increased in 2022/23 by £197,350. Total capital and reserves at 31/03/23 now stand at £6,579,323.

HOW RENTAL INCOME HAS BEEN SPENT

HOUSING MANAGEMENT COSTS

Costs of running the Association, including staff costs, costs of the office and tenant communication.

REPAIRS

The annual costs of repairs to the properties including emergency repairs, boiler servicing, external painting etc.

DEPRECIATION

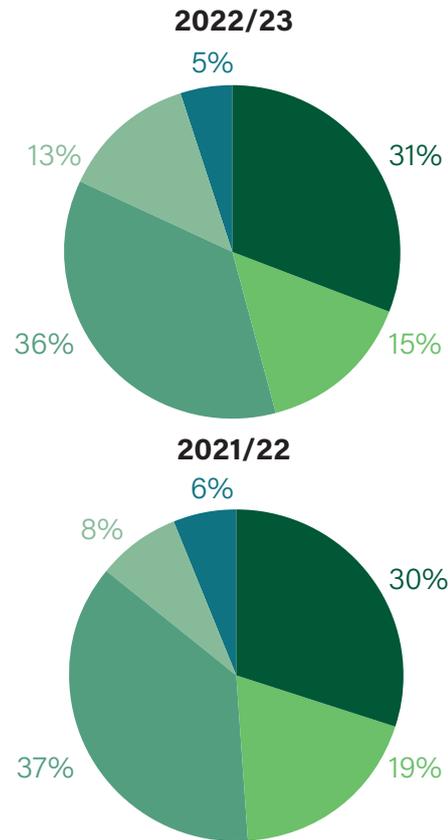
The annual cost for the provision of structure of the properties and the replacement of major components e.g. heating, kitchens & bathrooms.

LOAN INTEREST CHARGES

The cost of the loans required to pay for the costs of building the properties.

TRANSFER TO RESERVES

Surpluses transferred to reserves for future investment in homes.



New Build Developments

We have had another active year progressing new build projects to deliver much needed homes in our rural communities.

KIPPEN

In December we completed **9 homes** delivered with our partner Dawn Homes as part of a wider private housing development.

STRATHBLANE

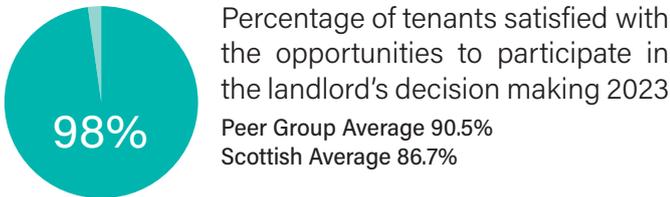
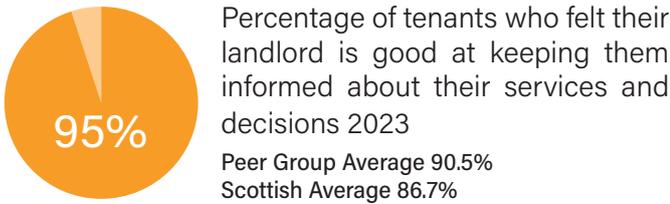
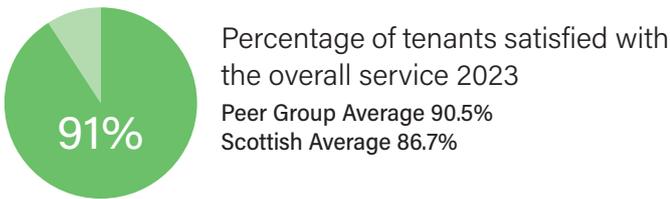
Work commenced on **4 cottage flats** at Strathblane during the year which were handed over early in the 2023/24 year.

OTHER SITES

It has been a very challenging cost environment in the construction sector, however we have continued to progress a number of sites and we are working with the Scottish Government and Stirling Council to make projects financially viable. We received funding approval at Lampson Road, Killearn which will provide 11 new homes and will be onsite in late 2023. We also received funding approval for Croftamie where we expect to build 14 new homes in late 2023/early 2024. Our partner developer has also received planning consent for development at Gartness Road, Drymen, providing 30 new homes. We are continuing to explore ways to progress the Balmaha development with our partners at the Scottish Government, Stirling Council and the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park. This development will provide 22 homes, including a mix of social housing, shared equity homes for sale, key worker accommodation (in partnership with East Loch Lomond Community Trust) and serviced plots for self-build.

Housing & Property Services 2022/2023

“ Tenant satisfaction surveys are carried out every 3 years. Our last tenant satisfaction survey took place in February 2023. The headline results of our latest survey are included below ”

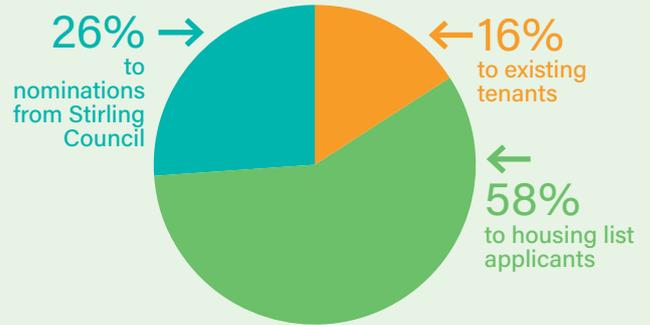


Average rents at 31/3/2022

 1 bedroom £79.77 Peer Group Average £83.66 Scottish Average £83.46	 2 bedroom £89.65 Peer Group Average £92.43 Scottish Average £86.28
 3 bedroom £97.64 Peer Group Average £100.76 Scottish Average £93.96	 4 bedroom £101.74 Peer Group Average £113.75 Scottish Average £103.72

We received **293** new applications in the reporting year.

We let **50** properties in total (excluding mutual exchanges):



It took on average **5** days to process housing applications.

Average Rent Arrears
5.1%
 Peer Group Average 2.6%
 Scottish Average 6.86%

Average Time to re-let properties
22 days
 Peer Group Average 8 days
 Scottish Average 55.6 days

% Tenancy Offers Refused
27.4%
 Peer Group Average 18%
 Scottish Average 30.9%

% Tenancies Sustained
97.5%
 Peer Group Average 95.4%
 Scottish Average 91.2%

Rent increase for 2023/24
5.6%
 Peer Group Average 5.6%
 Scottish Average 5.14%

% tenants who feel rent is value for money
91%
 Peer Group Average 84.6%
 Scottish Average 81.8%

0.4% % rent due, not collected through homes being empty in the last year, compared to 0.38% in 2021/22

73 Number of ASB or Neighbour Nuisance cases reported

95% ASB cases resolved in 2022/23

**Average time to complete emergency repairs
(293 repairs)****2.96hrs**Peer Group Average 3.37hrs
Scottish Average 4.17hrs
3hrs 2021/22**Average time to complete non-emergency repairs
(1457 repairs)****7.54 days**Peer Group Average 6.38 days
Scottish Average 8.68 days
7.8 days 2021/22**Repairs completed right first time****86.69%**Peer Group Average 87.95%
Scottish Average 92.19%**Tenant satisfaction with repairs****70.21%**Peer Group Average 88.25%
Scottish Average 88.02%**Annual gas safety check carried out within target****99.7%****Average time to complete medical adaptations
(30 adaptations to 24 homes)****57 days**Peer Group Average 48 days
Scottish Average 47.83 days

We carry out adaptations to ensure tenants can remain in their own homes with improved accessibility and facilities. These works ranged from grab rails to wet bathrooms and were funded by grant funding from the Scottish Government.

We measure the time taken to complete adaptations from receipt of a request. The time taken to complete adaptations in 2022/23 is high. This was due to a number of very complex adaptations and to seeking additional funding towards the end of the year to meet demand. We will be working hard to improve our performance in this area.

**Planned Maintenance**

The challenging economic and supply conditions in the construction industry had an impact on the delivery schedule of our planned maintenance programme. This led to the delayed start to a number of component replacements to the end of the year and into 2023/24.

We replaced electric storage heating at 41 homes with renewable systems, including air source heat pumps, solar panels and battery storage as part of the Scottish Government's Net Zero Heat Fund scheme. A further 44 electric storage heating replacements with better performing high heat retention storage heaters (Quantums) commenced late in 2022/23 with works due for completion in the summer of 2023.

We also commenced work on 27 kitchen replacements and 43 bathroom replacements that will also be completed in the summer of 2023.

A range of essential cyclical maintenance servicing and smaller major repair works were also completed amounting to total planned maintenance expenditure of £1.4m.

How did we perform?**89%**

of the planned maintenance budget was expended.

99.7%

of annual gas safety inspections were carried out within target.

90.3%

of our homes meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)

Peer Group Average 90.83%
Scottish Average 79.02%**98.6%**

of our homes met the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH)

Some planned maintenance projects were not progressed sufficiently to incur expenditure during the 2022/23 financial year but were completed early in 2023/24.



Reactive Maintenance

We carried out 1,745 day to day repairs in 2022/23 – 2.6 per property, which was an increase of 6% to the previous year.

The average cost per property was 6% up on the previous year.

All Reactive Costs including Voids

£402,000
2022/2023

£375,000 in 2021/2022
£296,492 in 2020/2021

Cost per Unit

£609.09
2022/2023

£574.27 in 2021/2022
£472.12 in 2020/2021

No of Units

660
2022/2023

653 in 2021/2022
628 in 2020/2021

% decrease / increase on previous year

+6%
2022/2023

+21% in 2021/2022
-1% in 2020/2021



Income Maximisation Officer Kevin McGhee

In 2022/23 Kevin McGhee, our Income Maximisation Officer (IMO), assisted over 125 tenants and raised £409,628.75 in financial gains.

This year we were awarded £53,000 funding from the Scottish Government to assist tenants with fuel poverty by obtaining heated throws for pensioner households. Funding of £46,000 was also secured to assist with fuel debt and some funds are still available.

We continue to work closely with Start Up Stirling who offer a mobile foodbank and support services. We also work with Action in Mind who run a mental health service within the Stirling area. Tenants can be referred to Citizens Advice for energy advice and fuel debt. Referrals can also be made to Stirling Council Money Advice Service.

Case study

Mr X had been on Disability Living Allowance since childhood with an award of middle rate care. He was then asked to claim Personal Independence Payment (PIP) where he was found to have no points which resulted in a loss of £68.00 a week. Kevin assisted with completing a mandatory reconsideration which was sent to the DWP. The decision remained the same and Mr X was taken to a tribunal for an oral hearing. Kevin represented Mr X at the hearing and Mr X was awarded standard rate daily living and standard rate mobility. Mr X was also awarded the severe disability premium. Without assistance he would have lost £171.40 per week (£742.73 per month).

Digital Inclusion

Digital technology is now an essential part of day-to-day life, and we are committed to supporting tenants. We can offer signposting to Stirling Council's Digital Inclusion team to assist tenants with getting online. We also promote use of Near Me technology which provides a platform for confidential online meetings. Near Me can be accessed via our website or via a link provided by staff.

Complaints & Compliments



Rural Stirling Housing Association values all complaints and feedback that we receive as this helps us work towards improving our services to all our customers.

On a quarterly basis the Board of Management receive reports on complaints received throughout the year including our performance on handling complaints and lessons learned.

From April 2022 to March 2023, the Association received 60 Stage 1 complaints and 32 Stage 2 complaints. Of the 92 complaints received, 2 complaints were carried forward to 2023/24 with all other complaints fully responded to within the reporting year. There was one complaint brought forward from 2021/22 which was resolved in 2022/23.

The average response times for Stage 1 complaints was 4.10 days (SPSO target is 5 working days) and Stage 2 complaints average response time was 20.38 days (SPSO target is 20 working days).

The majority of complaints received during 2022/23 were in connection with our reactive repairs service. More information on the type of complaints received is detailed below.

Of the complaints resolved during the reporting year 52.94% of Stage 1 complaints were upheld and 50% of Stage 2 complaints were upheld.

More information on the complaints we receive and how our performance compares to previous years will be included in our Annual Complaints Report which will be available on our website by the end of October. Further information about the way we handle complaints is available on our website at www.rsha.org.uk/your-views/



Compliments

During the year we have received a number of compliments regarding services provided by our staff team and contractors.

Some of the compliments received;

"Thank you to Kevin and the team for the blanket. Keeping me nice and warm."

"Thank you for doing what you all do. Everyday we are grateful to RSHA for giving us a such a beautiful home."

"Thank you for the lovely blanket that you gave us before Christmas. It was very much appreciated."

31 	13 	23 
Reactive Repairs	Planned Works	Arrears/void/tenancy management or allocations
7 	3 	6 
Staff	Landscaping	Developer
3 	5 	1 
Recharges	Defect Repairs	Poor Workmanship

A message from our Chief Executive

I hope you have enjoyed our Annual Report this year. We have used feedback from our Tenant Satisfaction Survey carried out in February 2023, to compile the performance information and this lets you see what we are doing well, where we need to do better and how we compare with our peer group. Thanks to everyone who took the time to share their views and took part in the Tenant Satisfaction Survey.

The Scottish Housing Regulator has published Rural Stirling Housing Association's Landlord Report. This lets our tenants and other service users see how we are performing. Our Landlord Report can be found on the SHR website <https://www.housingregulator.gov.scot/landlord-performance/landlords/rural-stirling-housing-association-ltd>

“ Our Annual Report is really important to us. We value the views and opinions of our tenants, and this includes how you want us to report on our performance and the content of this report. There is always room for improvement, and I would really love to hear from you with any suggestions for how we can make this better for you. ”

The last year has been another incredibly difficult and challenging year for us all – our tenants, our team of staff and our business. The Cost-of-Living crisis and huge inflationary increases have dominated the news and created enormous pressures on us all. This made our rent review this year particularly difficult. Our aim is to keep rents as low as possible, to perform well and demonstrate value for money. It is very encouraging that our tenants believe we are performing well in relation to our rents representing value for money. Our focus in the coming year will be on continuous improvement, moving more services online and making efficiencies.

Despite the challenges we have achieved a lot over the last year, and it is important that we celebrate and share these successes with you in this Annual Report.

We have built more new homes and have increased our pipeline. Continuing to deliver new homes in a challenging economic climate underlines our commitment to growing our rural communities and helping them to thrive. We also continue to invest in our existing homes and do all that we can to help and support our tenants.

I would like to say thank you to our partner organisations Stirling Council, Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park, the Scottish Government and our Private lenders for their continued support. I would also like to express my gratitude and say a huge thank you to the great team of people that I work with and without whom our success would not be possible. Thanks also to our volunteer Board of Management who have worked tirelessly throughout the year and particular thanks to our Chair, Mark Griffiths and Joint Vice Chairs Fiona Boath and Theresa Elliot.

Donna Birrell
CEO



Staff Team 2022/2023

as at 31st March 2023

Chief Executive Officer
Donna Birrell

Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Gerry Casey

Director of Housing and Property Services
Craig Wood

Housing Services Manager
Jackie Leeds

Corporate Services Officer (p/t)
Susan Mackay

Finance Officer (p/t)
Deborah Martel

Governance and Compliance Officer
Sandra McPhee

Corporate Services Adviser
Josh Graham

Property Services Officer
Robert McGregor

Property Services Coordinator
Michelle Johnson

Property Services Assistant
Nicole Wiseman

Housing Services Officer
Lesley McGregor

Housing Services Officer
Dana McNulty

Housing Services Officer (p/t)
Rebekah Hawkins

Income Maximisation Officer (p/t)
Kevin McGhee

Housing Services Adviser
Joe Salcedas

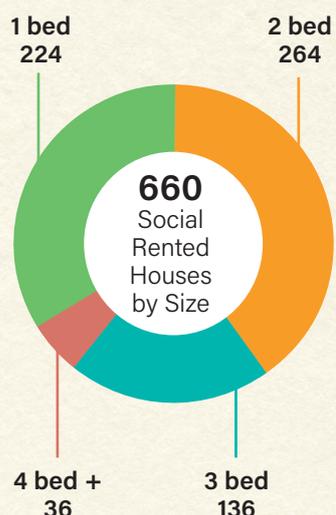
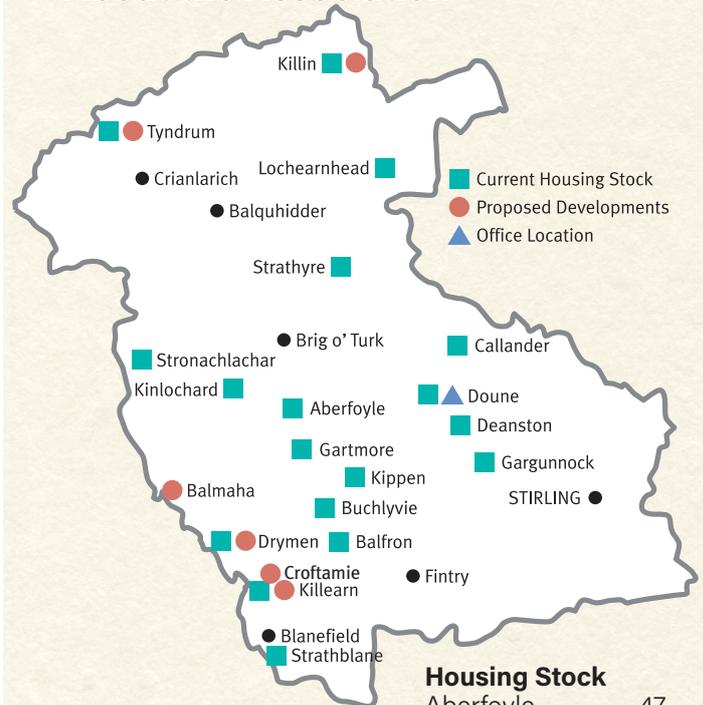
Assistant Housing Services Officer (Temp)
Morag Holehouse

STAFF LEAVERS 2022/23

Kirsty Brown, John Cannell, Gillian Lynas, John Mallon, Ashley Nelson, Pamela Tait (Temp), Hilary Tennant

During the year we bought in Development Services from Macdonald & Cameron Ltd and Data Protection Officer Services from Information Solutions and FMD Financial Services Ltd.

About the Association



Housing Stock

Aberfoyle	47
Balfron	50
Buchlyvie	43
Callander	204
Deanston	24
Drymen	16
Doune	56
Gargunnock	13
Gartmore	8
Killearn	12
Killin	48
Kinlochard	4
Kippen	68
Lochearnhead	22
Strathblane	14
Strathyre	18
Stornachlachar	2
Tyndrum	37
Total Stock	686

The housing stock at 31st March 2023 included: 660 social rented properties; 11 shared ownership properties, 6 mid-market properties leased to Venachar Ltd and a further 9 properties leased to other organisations including Police Scotland and Stirling Council. During 2022/23 Venachar also provided a letting agent service for one privately owned property. We also provide a factoring service to 38 owner occupiers.



Quality property management services

Our non-charitable subsidiary continued to play a small role in meeting local housing and community needs.

We currently let a small number of properties on a Mid-Market Rent basis through Venachar, and can provide property management services for owners.

Both RSHA and Venachar are registered Letting Agents and included in the Scottish Letting Agent Register in accordance with the requirements of the Lettings Agent Code of Practice.



Rural Stirling
Housing Association



Rural Stirling Housing Association Ltd

Stirling Road, Doune FK16 6AA

Tel: 01786 841101 • Email: enquiries@rsha.org.uk • Web: www.rsha.org.uk

Registered as a Scottish Charity No. SC037849 • Registered Society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, No. 2376(s) • Registered with the Scottish Housing Regulator HAL 232 Property Factor No. PF000330 • Letting Agent Registration Nos. LARN 1907004 & LARN 1904083

We can provide this document in another format. If you would like a copy in another language, in large print, on audio tape, on video, in British Sign Language (BSL), on CD or in Braille, please ask us.

