

REPORT TO: Policy and Performance Review Committee

MEETING DATE: 26 January 2016

BY: Depute Chief Executive (Partnerships and Community Services)

SUBJECT: Landlord Performance Report 2014/15

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the Council's progress in meeting the Social Housing Charter outcomes.
- 1.2 To update the Committee in regard to performance on key measures as per the 2014/15 Landlord Performance Report

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That PPRC note the contents of this report and the actions being taken to address where performance needs to be improved.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Scottish Social Housing Charter was introduced in 2012 as part of the Housing (Scotland) 2010 Act. The Charter sets out a number of outcomes that all social landlords (local authorities and housing associations) must work towards achieving.
- 3.2 Social landlords are required to submit an Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) by 31st May each year to the Scottish Housing Regulator. This return captures a range of performance and contextual information across 69 indicators.
- 3.3 There are additional requirements placed on each social landlord, each of whom must:
 - Carry out a comprehensive tenant customer satisfaction survey at least once every three years

- Provide a landlord performance report to tenants each year by the 31st October. In producing this landlord report, there is a requirement that tenants will be involved in its development.
 - Give tenants meaningful opportunities to scrutinise and assess a landlord's performance
- 3.4 East Lothian Council has a strong tradition of tenant participation and is seen as an exemplar of good practice. The Charter created a requirement for all social landlords to deepen tenant participation by involving tenants and other service users through scrutinising and assessing a landlord's performance.
- 3.5 The Council has worked in partnership with East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel to create a scrutiny framework through a project group involving tenants and staff. As well as building on and improving existing scrutiny and participation structures, tenants have been involved in a mystery shopping exercise focused on communication (outcome 2 of the Charter) and a desk top audit of allocations information (outcome 10 of the Charter).
- 3.6 Further development work in this area continues and has extended to the co-production of the Landlord Performance Report 2014/15 (and last year's) with tenants involved in all aspects of what information was to be incorporated, its layout and presentation and consultation with other tenants.

Performance commentary on key measures

- 3.7 Tenant satisfaction across six of eight measures compares very favourably across the Council's peer group and nationally (overall satisfaction, keeping tenants informed, participation, quality of home, neighbourhood management and value for money).
- 3.8 Two satisfaction measures are lower than the peer and national group average (satisfaction with home when moving in and repairs). Both of these areas are the subject of ongoing improvement work (PPRC report dated 29 September 2015 details the repairs improvement work).
- 3.9 81.6% of East Lothian Council's stock met the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 31st March 2015, with 7.4% failing. Exemptions account for 6.1% and abeyances 4.9%. Exemptions generally occur where the work cannot be done for technical, disproportionate cost or legal reasons. Abeyances generally occur for social reasons i.e. where owners refuse to pay their share. The Council is on track to have no fails by the end of 2015/16 and is re-visiting all exemptions and abeyances.
- 3.10 The Council is also working hard to meet the new Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) by 2020, which aims to improve the energy efficiency of all social housing in Scotland through a range of measures including boiler replacements, insulation, new technology etc. It will help to reduce energy consumption, fuel poverty and emission of

greenhouse gases. The Council will be undertaking further survey work to meet this target.

- 3.11 The Council's new build activity has resulted in 6% of the overall stock being designated as new build as against the national average of 2% for local authorities. The new build programme continues with another 132 new council houses to be delivered over 2015/16 and 2016/17.
- 3.12 Day to day repairs performance, although at the lower end of the peer group and nationally, continues to improve. Committee has had a separate update on repairs performance (PPRC report dated 29 September 2015).
- 3.13 Given that East Lothian remains a severely pressured housing area with high demand, together with high tenancy sustainment levels (ELC is a high performer in its peer group and nationally), turnover of Council stock is below the peer group and national average.
- 3.14 Council housing offer refusal rates have moved from around the national average of 45% to 30%, principally as a result of recent changes in the allocations policy (which placed restrictions on the number of offers, which can be refused to help get people re-housed more quickly).
- 3.15 Lets to homeless applicants are lower than the national and peer group averages but again the Council has taken action to address this (Allocations Target Cabinet Report dated 20 October 2015).
- 3.16 East Lothian Council's rents continue to be the second lowest in the country amongst local authorities although the Council's recent percentage rent increases have been higher than its peers and nationally.
- 3.17 Rent collection performance has improved by 1.3% and is now sitting above the national average. Current rent arrears have also reduced and continue to do so as the Council undertakes improvement work in this area (see PPRC report dated 25 November 2014).
- 3.18 Although re-let times have increased by four days (from 16 to 20), the Council continues to be one of the best performers in the country with current year performance operating at similar levels. Work is ongoing to improve the condition of properties when new tenants move in e.g. more decoration.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The delivery of the report meets the Council's regulatory requirements. Performance as stated in the report is generally good and supports the Council's strategic objectives as outlined in the Council Plan and Single Outcome Agreement. Improvement work is underway to tackle areas where performance needs to be better.

5 COMBINED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 A Combined Impact Assessment is not applicable for this report.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial – None.

6.2 Personnel – None.

6.3 Other – None.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Appendix 1 – 2014/15 ELC Landlord’s Performance Report to Tenants

7.2 Appendix 2 – Powerpoint presentation to PPRC January 2016

7.3 PPRC Report – Council Housing Repairs Update – September 2015

7.4 Cabinet Report – Council House Allocations Targets for 2015/16 – October 2015

AUTHOR’S NAME	Tom Shearer
DESIGNATION	Head of Communities and Partnerships
CONTACT INFO	James Coutts x7483
DATE	January 2016

2014/15

LANDLORD PERFORMANCE REPORT TO TENANTS



FOREWORD

Welcome to East Lothian Council's 2015 Landlord Report which lets you know how we are performing. I would like to thank all of those involved in producing this report which is the result of a huge amount of hard work by council staff who strive to deliver the best possible landlord service to you, our tenants. I'd also like to acknowledge the important contribution your tenant representatives from East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel (ELTRP) have made in helping shape the content and design of the report. We received great feedback on last year's Landlord Report, our first, and we've taken on board comments received to improve the appearance of this year's report. We hope you like it and would again welcome any comments you have – please use the feedback slip enclosed or the number provided on the back page.

I hope you can see from this year's Landlord Report that East Lothian Council take your views seriously as we strive to provide you with an excellent service. I would urge you to keep completing the satisfaction and feedback forms - we do read these and it's good to know when we get things right and also learn when things don't go to plan, to ensure our landlord service is the best it can be.



Monica Patterson
Depute Chief Executive
Partnerships & Community Services



Councillor Norman Hampshire
Spokesperson for
Housing & Environment

WELCOME & CONTENTS

Hello and welcome to the second Landlord's Report to Tenants. The excellent partnership that East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel (ELTRP) have with East Lothian Council continues to go from strength to strength. Over the past year tenants have been involved in a whole variety of activities, meetings and events to ensure that tenants' voices are at the forefront of decision making. It has been a busy year for tenants in helping to develop and shape tenant scrutiny. Overall three scrutiny activities have taken place including a mystery shopping pilot project, a desk top audit of allocations and improvements to the estate inspection process.



It is important that tenants have the opportunity to hold their landlord to account and be involved in assessing their performance. This report gives you the information on how well East Lothian Council is performing and tenants should take this opportunity to read the report and provide feedback on what they thought of it and, indeed, what they would like to see in future reports.

I would like to thank all the tenants and residents in East Lothian for their valuable contribution to tenant participation and their involvement in all our events and activities.

Mark Ormiston
Chairperson
East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel

	Page
Contextual information, the report and results	4-5
Access to housing and support	6
Value for money, rent and service charges	7-11
Repairs, maintenance and housing quality	12-14
Tenant satisfaction	15-16
Estate management and antisocial behaviour	17-18
Sheltered housing	19
Gypsy travellers	20
Communication and participation	21-22
Contact information	24

CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

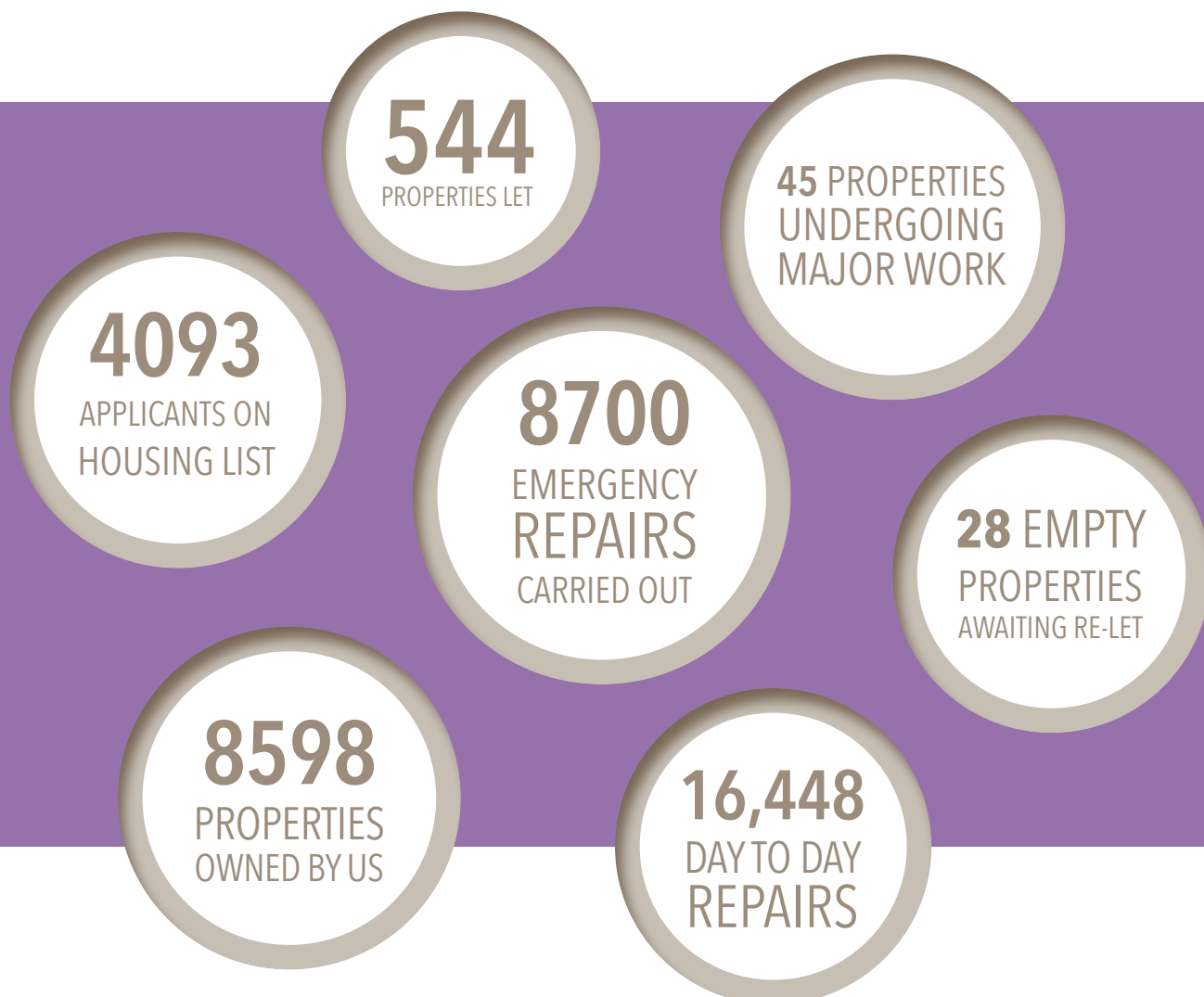
KEY FACTS

This report shows that East Lothian Council continues to deliver a good landlord service to its tenants. There is however, still room for improvement and this report, combined with feedback from tenants during the year helps us prioritise our improvement work.

There are various challenges for the council as a landlord, including an increasing and ageing population, homelessness, growing demand for affordable housing, welfare reform and social deprivation. These factors all continue to place heavy demands on the housing service.

As your landlord we are well placed to respond to these challenges, but we can only do this with your help. It is essential that we maximise rental income to pay for day-to-day services and considerable effort has been made to improve rent income collection. We encourage our tenants to get involved in shaping the services we deliver for example, by reading this report, filling in a survey form or getting involved with your local tenants and residents group.

SOME FACTS ABOUT OUR HOUSING SERVICE AS 31ST MARCH 2015...



THE REPORT AND RESULTS...



Landlord Report Working Group

The Social Housing Charter was introduced in 2013 and sets out clear indicators for the level of service tenants can expect from their landlord in return for the rent paid, under the terms of the tenancy agreement. The new Charter has certainly focussed everyone's minds on ensuring every effort is made to continually improve our service standards. In our first Landlord Report, published last autumn, we identified rent arrears and repairs as key areas for improvement and over the past year there has been a huge amount of effort put into improving these areas; as you will see from this year's report this effort is beginning to show rewards as improvements in both have been reported. We can report a reduction in rent arrears, at a time when most social landlords are reporting an increase. The Council's 'Pay to Stay' campaign has been promoted widely to encourage tenants to seek assistance and avoid falling into rent arrears and potentially losing their tenancy.

A Repairs Improvement Group has been reviewing our processes and introduced a number of changes which have contributed to improved services, including increasing the number of inspection appointments available which has helped get repairs completed sooner.

Looking ahead, another area we need to focus on improving is the condition of our properties at the start of a new tenancy. We are very proud of our performance on turning much needed houses around quickly, indeed East Lothian Council is one of the top performers in Scotland. However we recognise that some more work is required to review our 'void standard' and improve new tenants' satisfaction. We understand that a new tenancy is important to both the tenant and landlord and we want to get this off to a good start.

2014/15 KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- DELIVERED 61 NEW BUILD PROPERTIES
- IMPROVED RENT ARREARS PERFORMANCE
- IMPROVED REPAIRS PERFORMANCE
- INCREASE IN PROPERTIES MEETING SCOTTISH HOUSING QUALITY STANDARD
- IMPLEMENTED ESTATE INSPECTION REVIEW
- 20 PROPERTIES ACQUIRED THROUGH OPEN MARKET ACQUISITION
- CARRIED OUT 60 MAJOR ADAPTATIONS TO HELP THOSE WITH MOBILITY ISSUES
- TENANCY SUPPORT SERVICE IMPROVED TENANCY SUSTAINMENT
- INCREASED TENANT SCRUTINY ACTIVITY TO HELP IMPROVE SERVICES
- SHELTERED HOUSING SERVICE ACHIEVED HIGH SATISFACTION LEVELS
- HIGH PERFORMANCE IN VOID TURNAROUND TIMES

ACCESS TO HOUSING AND SUPPORT

Demand for social rented property in East Lothian is extremely high. There were over 4093 applicants on our housing list as at 31st March 2015. During last year, 544 properties were re-let. This low turnover (6%) means we cannot meet all demand for council housing. We continue to invest in building new homes as well as providing housing options advice to customers to try to help them secure a home, either with the council or another provider.

WHO WE RE-LET PROPERTIES TO:	EXISTING TENANTS (TRANSFERS)	182
	HOUSING LIST APPLICANTS	161
	HOMELESS APPLICANTS	201
	TOTAL	544



East Lothian Council Tenant

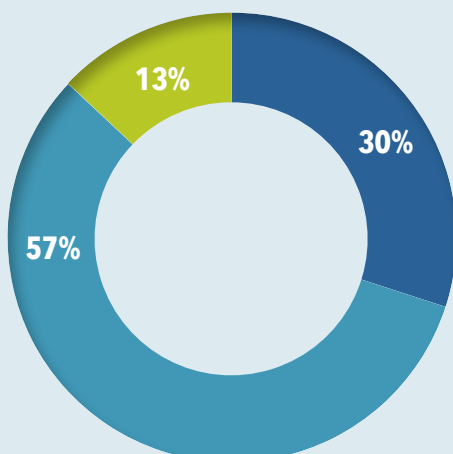
Homelessness in East Lothian

Under the homelessness legislation local authorities have a statutory requirement to provide temporary accommodation to homeless applicants during the homelessness assessment process. During 2014/15 774 applicants were assessed under the homeless legislation. The council accommodated 297 applicants and families in temporary accommodation and 339 as emergencies into bed and breakfast accommodation. The service also dealt with around 800 housing options and advice enquiries.

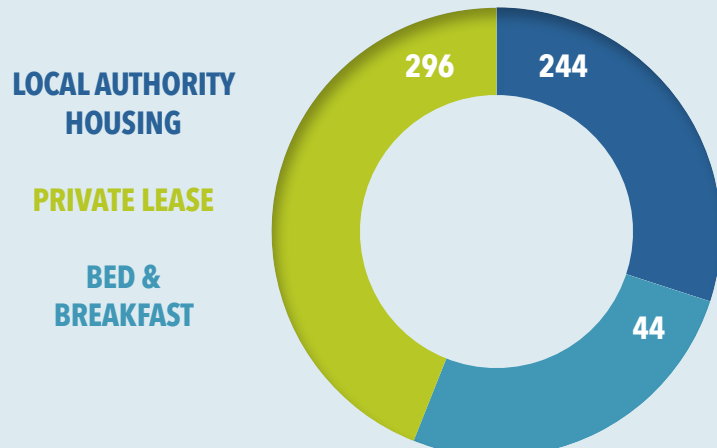
If an applicant is assessed as being unintentionally homeless we have a duty to secure settled accommodation, for example, with the local authority or housing association. **536 applicants were assessed as re-housing priorities in 2014/15.**

On average it can take nine months per applicant to secure settled accommodation because of the shortage of housing. Single applicants may have to wait considerably longer as there is a shortage of one bedroom properties.

TYPES OF TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION PROVIDED



AVERAGE DAYS SPENT IN TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION



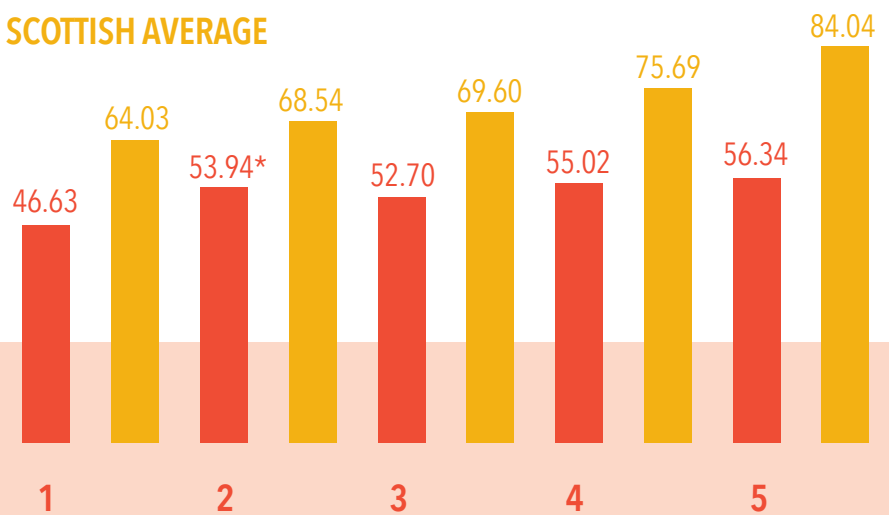
VALUE FOR MONEY, RENTS AND SERVICE CHARGES

Each year, we consult with our tenants on the proposal to increase rents and this is generally considered to provide good value for money. Last year we gave tenants a number of options for a rent increase that would allow more investment in the capital programme. The most popular choice for 2015/16 was an increase of 5%.

AVERAGE WEEKLY RENT (£s)

EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL

SCOTTISH AVERAGE



HOUSE SIZE (APARTMENT)

**The average rent for 2 apartments is higher due to the number of sheltered housing properties in this category which have an additional service charge.*



Rotary Court, Dunbar



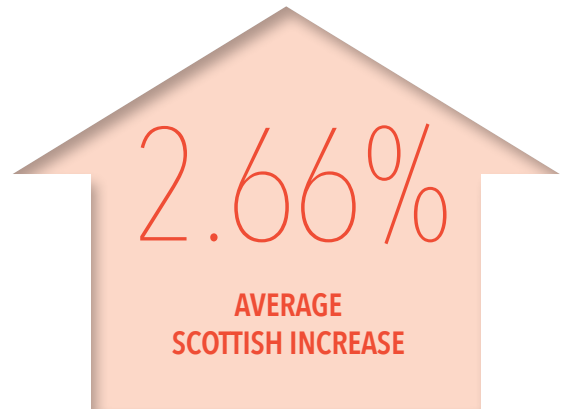
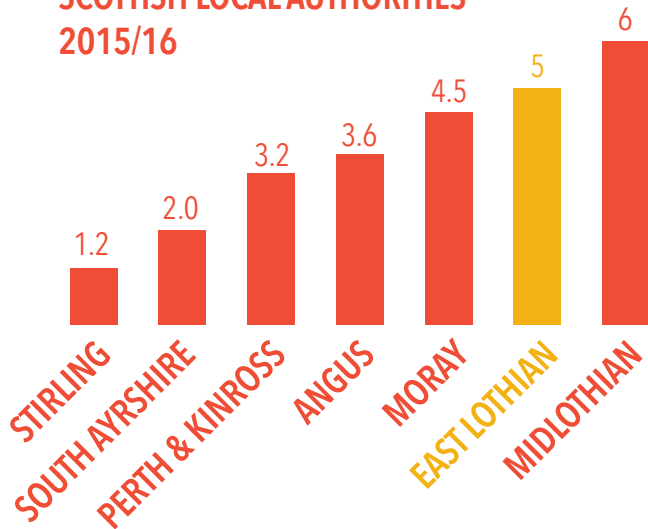
Local Initiative Playpark



**OF TENANTS FEEL THE RENT FOR
THEIR PROPERTY REPRESENTS
GOOD VALUE FOR MONEY**

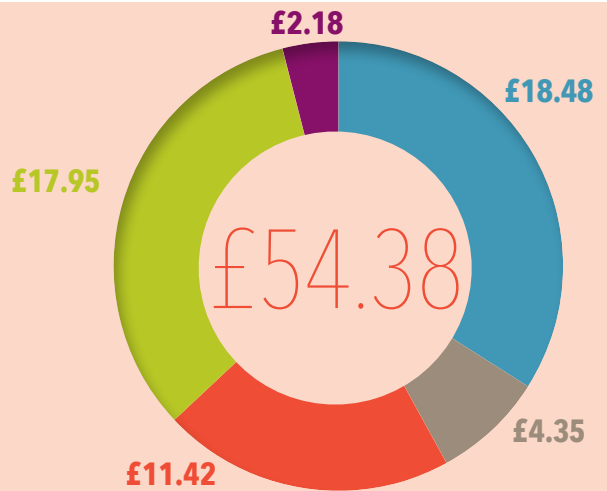
In 2014, we consulted tenants about the rent increase for 2015/16. For the first time we offered a range of percentage increases to tenants ranging from 4.3% up to 6%. The majority of tenants selected the option of a 5% increase and identified their top spending priorities as providing more council homes; increasing bathroom upgrades and improving the repairs service.

**% RENT INCREASE
SCOTTISH LOCAL AUTHORITIES
2015/16**



HOW RENT IS SPENT

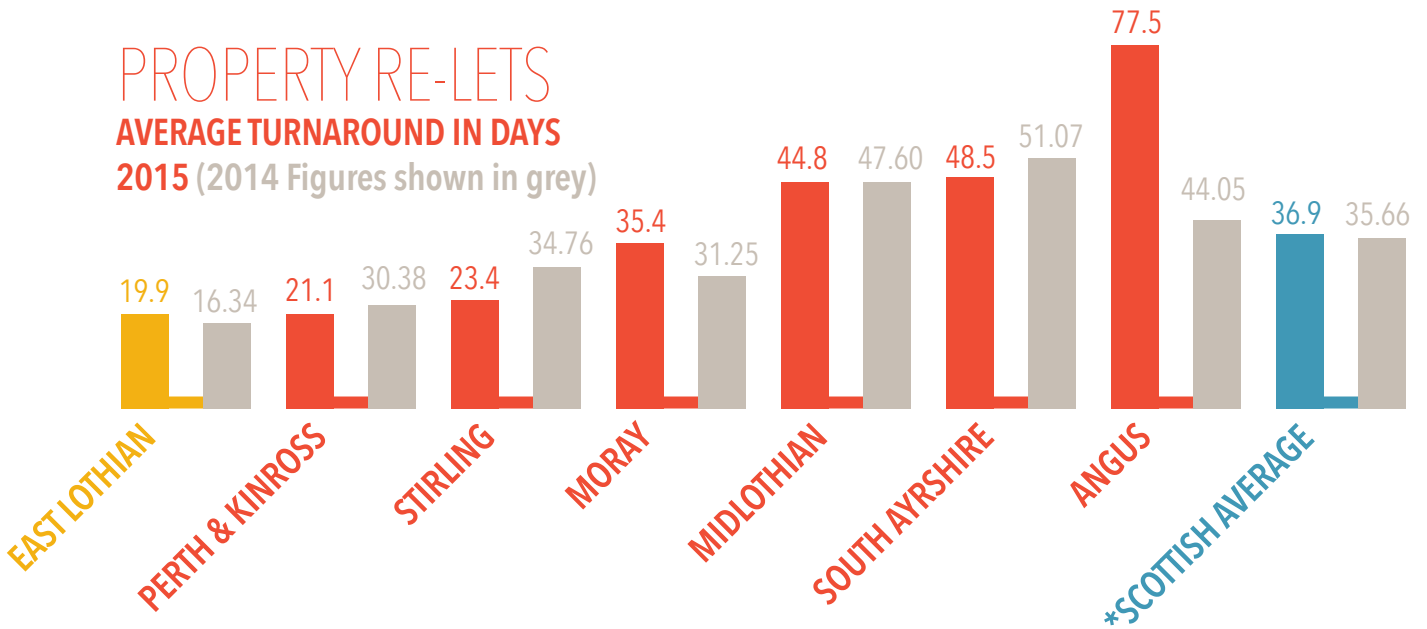
BASED ON 2015/16 AVERAGE WEEKLY RENT



- EMPLOYEE COSTS** Salaries and associated costs of those delivering landlord services to tenants.
- OPERATING COSTS** Information Technology systems and equipment, accommodation costs and service running cost.
- REPAIR & MAINTENANCE** All costs associated with maintaining and improving our properties.
- VOIDS & BAD DEBTS** Money that can't be recovered such as rent loss due to houses being vacant or chasing debt that is uneconomical to recover.
- LOAN CHARGES** These are the payments the council makes to the Public Works Loan Board for the finance it has borrowed to deliver its capital investment plans, principally for the modernisation of existing stock and the delivery of new council houses.

MINIMISING RENT LOST DUE TO PROPERTIES BEING EMPTY

We need to turnaround properties quickly so that we can meet housing demand and minimise rent lost due to properties being empty.



SCOTTISH AVERAGE is based on returns for all Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords in Scotland.

We are one of the highest performing local authorities in this area. A number of factors have increased our re-let times over the past year, including an increase in properties being handed back in poor condition and requiring more repairs.

Whilst our voids turnaround time continues to be low, we realise that the new tenant satisfaction rates need to improve. As such we are dedicating a resource to liaise with new customers to ensure that post-occupancy repairs are carried out as soon as possible after moving in. We are also dedicating a resource to oversee **major work voids** to ensure better coordination between various trades and contractors.



The amount of void rent loss depends on the number of properties becoming empty. The slight increase in the number of days to re-let properties this year will also have had an impact on the void rent loss figure.

ABOUT RENT COLLECTION

The Rent Income Team aims to maximise rental income and manage rent arrears to ensure we have the finances available to continue to deliver quality housing services to tenants.

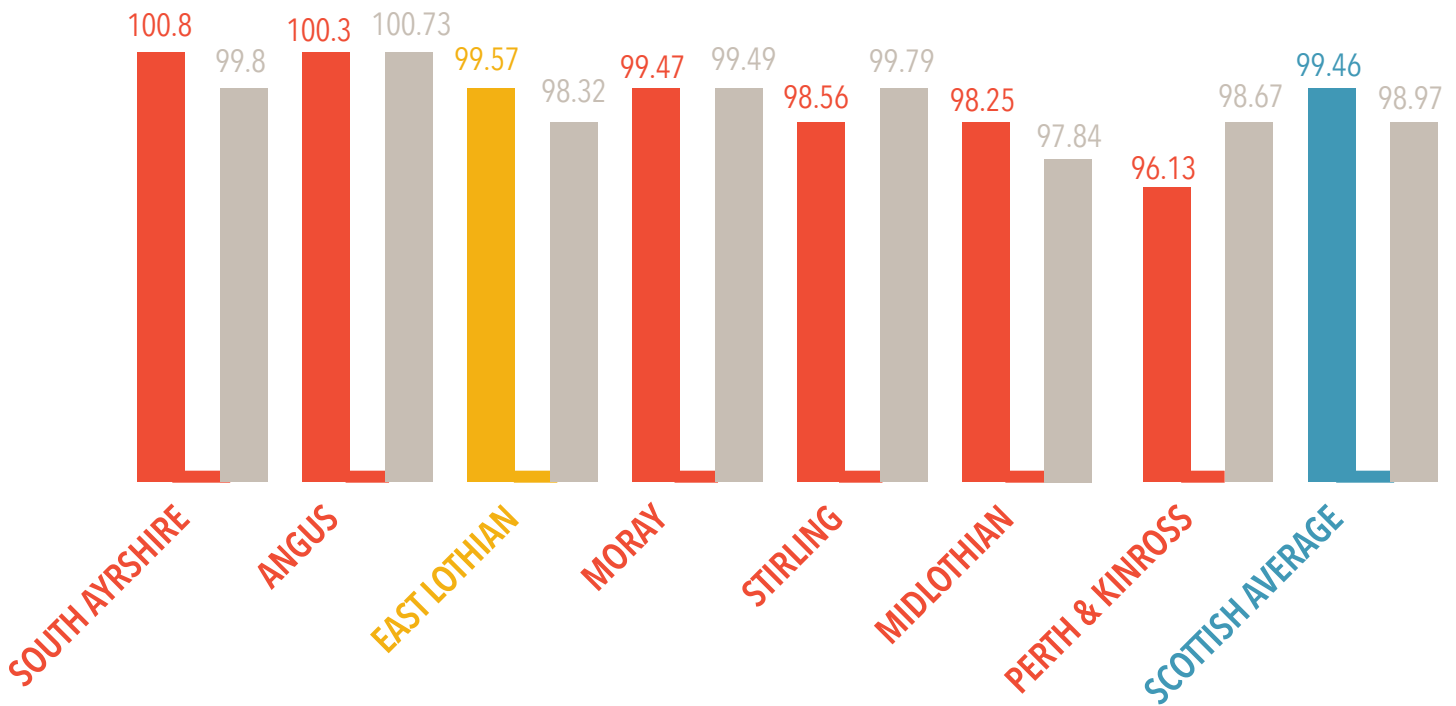
2014/15 RENT DUE: £23,183,952 RENT COLLECTED: £23,083,156

East Lothian Council was the 9th top collecting Scottish Local Authority out of 25 in 2014/15 - up from the 18th spot in the previous period.



% RENT COLLECTED OF RENT DUE

2015 (2014 Figures shown in grey)



You will see from the graph above that some Local Authorities collected more than 100% in 2014/15. This is possible if they collected a higher portion of their outstanding arrears in the current year.

RENT ARREARS TRENDS

Rent arrears increased in 17 Scottish Local Authorities in 2014/15.

East Lothian Council reduced rent arrears along with 7 other Scottish Local Authorities.

HOW TO PREVENT RENT ARREARS AND GET THE HELP YOU NEED

If you are having problems paying your rent or want to speak to someone about rent arrears, the Rent Income Team at East Lothian Council can help you.

Don't be afraid to ask for help and don't delay. Friendly and experienced Rent Income Officers are available to deal with your concerns confidentially and sensitively and will make sure you get the help you need.

A RENT INCOME OFFICER WILL

- MAKE SURE YOU ARE RECEIVING ALL BENEFITS YOU MAY BE ENTITLED TO
- HELP YOU TO COMPLETE APPLICATION FORMS
- REFER YOU TO OTHER AGENCIES FOR A FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT IF YOU HAVE MULTIPLE DEBTS
- IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO PAY YOUR RENT ARREARS IN FULL, A RENT INCOME OFFICER MAY DISCUSS AN AFFORDABLE REPAYMENT ARRANGEMENT WITH YOU

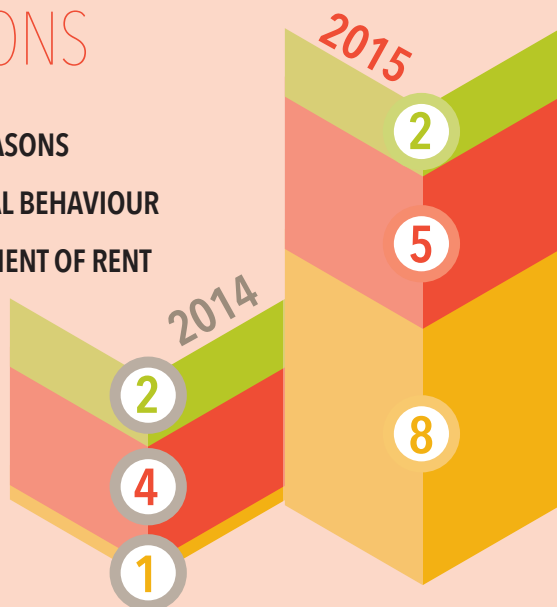


WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU DON'T PAY YOUR RENT



EVICCTIONS

- OTHER REASONS
- ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR
- NON-PAYMENT OF RENT



If you have rent arrears or are concerned about paying your rent, don't delay. Contact the Rent Income Team now on **01620 827528** or email rentincome@eastlothian.gov.uk

You don't have to deal with this alone.

REPAIRS, MAINTENANCE AND HOUSING QUALITY



As part of our rent consultation last year, we asked tenants whether we should increase rents by more than 4.3%. Of those responding, 65% of tenants said that we should and the favoured option was to increase rents by 5%.

YOU TOLD US YOUR TOP THREE SPENDING PRIORITIES WERE:

- PROVISION OF MORE COUNCIL HOUSES
- BATHROOM UPGRADES
- IMPROVED REPAIRS SERVICE



MODERNISATION PROGRAMME

81.6% of our properties currently meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS*) and we will be investing £10,150,000 in modernisation work in 15/16. A further 10.9% of properties have either an exemption or an abeyance. This might be because we are unable to carry out required work as it is not financially viable to do so or in some cases tenants refuse upgrade work for personal reasons. Over the last year we have delivered the following improvements:

454 Kitchen replacements 262 Bathroom replacements 262 Rewires 106 Full external house paints

* SHQS is a set of five broad housing criteria which must be met in order for the property to pass.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY



We have invested in improving central heating systems and insulation to help make our properties cheaper to heat. **96.9% of properties were found to be at or above the National Home Energy Rating (NHER)** compared to 94.6% last year.

NEW BUILD & INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

We continue to invest in new homes, delivering 61 in 2014/15 with a further 72 planned over the next 12-18 months:



ADAPTATIONS

Over the last year we invested £386,164 to deliver **60 major adaptations** and **679 minor adaptations*** to meet the needs of our tenants with mobility issues. The major adaptations that we deliver can make a huge difference to **improving the quality of life and enhancing safe, independent, living** for the tenants involved.

On average we take **19.4 days to complete** an adaptation, however, major adaptations can take a much longer time to complete depending on the requirements.

The responses to our Satisfaction Survey confirm an overall **satisfaction rate of 94%**.

** Typical example of a minor adaptation is a grab rail.*

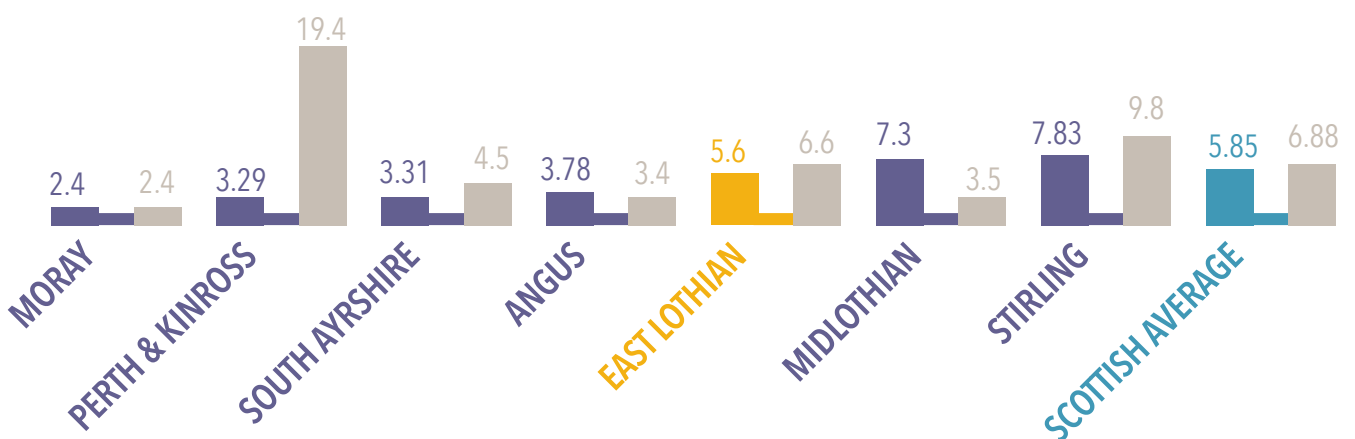
REPAIR & MAINTENANCE HEADLINES

- 5.6 HOURS WAS THE AVERAGE TIME THAT WE TOOK TO COMPLETE AN EMERGENCY REPAIR
- 14.81 DAYS WAS THE AVERAGE TIME THAT WE TOOK TO COMPLETE NON-EMERGENCY REPAIRS
- 100% OF GAS SAFETY INSPECTIONS THAT WERE CARRIED OUT WERE COMPLETED WITHIN 12 MONTHS OF THE PREVIOUS INSPECTION
- 96.4 % OF REPAIRS APPOINTMENTS WERE KEPT
- 82% OF DAY TO DAY REPAIRS WERE COMPLETED RIGHT FIRST TIME

8700
EMERGENCY
REPAIRS
CARRIED OUT

EMERGENCY REPAIR TIMES

AVERAGE TURNAROUND IN HOURS
2015 (2014 Figures shown in grey)

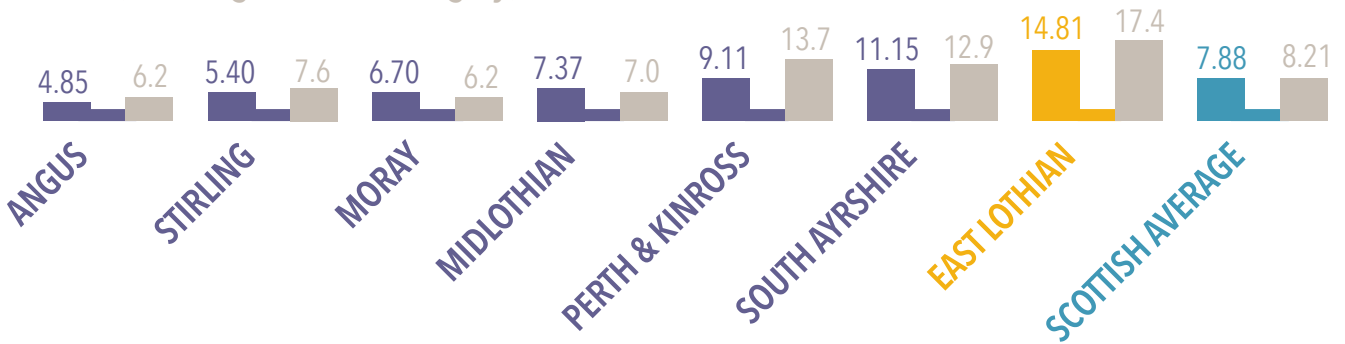


We are pleased to report an improvement in this area with emergency repairs being completed, on average, **1 hour quicker** than they were in the last financial year.

DAY TO DAY REPAIRS

AVERAGE TURNAROUND IN DAYS

2015 (2014 Figures shown in grey)



16,448
DAY TO DAY REPAIRS

We are pleased to report an improvement in this area with day to day repairs being completed, on average, 2.5 days quicker than last year.

85%

OF TENANTS SAID THEY WERE SATISFIED WITH THE REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE SERVICE

WHAT WE ARE DOING NOW

We have recently re-structured our Property Maintenance Service, with the Social Housing Charter very much at the heart of the new arrangements.

While we have made an improvement on the time taken to turn around non-emergency repairs, we realise that this is an important measure for our tenants. Therefore, we are continuing to focus on this measure by recruiting dedicated trade-based supervisors and investing in new technology to ensure we are continually improving the efficiency of this area.

Our level of customer satisfaction is high, but we need to make sure that all customer feedback is considered and we learn from those cases where things do not go to plan. Therefore, we will regularly analyse feedback to consider how to improve service delivery.



New tenants, Victoria Park Haddington



Wet floor shower adaptation

TENANT SATISFACTION

In November 2013, we conducted our first comprehensive satisfaction survey to meet the requirements of the Scottish Social Housing Charter. Over 1,700 tenants took part in the survey and the results were published in March 2014. This included questions about more than just the eight indicators which we must report on for the Charter. As a requirement of the Charter we must renew this survey every three years. We carried out surveys with our sheltered housing tenants and gypsy travellers early in 2015, we are currently analysing the results to identify and prioritise improvement activity. The results from these surveys are detailed below:

I AM SATISFIED WITH	2013 ALL TENANTS	2015 SHELTERED HOUSING TENANTS	2015 GYPSY TRAVELLERS
OVERALL SERVICES PROVIDED	84%	89%	86%
KEEPING TENANTS INFORMED	89%	87%	100%
OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE	77%	78%	100%
STANDARD OF HOME ON MOVING IN (WITHIN LAST YEAR)	68%	71%	86% (PITCH)
HOUSING QUALITY	86%	93%	71% (PITCH)
REPAIRS SERVICE (WITHIN LAST YEAR)	85%	83%	75%
NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT	89%	85%	71%
RENT VALUE FOR MONEY	89%	83%	71%

YOU SAID

WE DID/ARE DOING

WE TAKE TOO LONG TO CARRY OUT DAY-TO-DAY REPAIRS

We have reduced the average number of days it takes us to complete a repair in the last year. However, we consider this a priority and are in the process of changing the way we work to help reduce this time further.

32% OF TENANTS ARE UNHAPPY WITH STANDARD OF HOME ON MOVING IN

We ran a focus group to try to identify in more detail the reasons for dissatisfaction. We would now like to carry out a full review of our voids process during 2015.

SOME ASPECTS OF ESTATE INSPECTION WEREN'T WORKING

A new process has been developed and recently implemented through joint working between staff and tenant representatives. We are monitoring this closely and will report back later in the year on how successful it has been.

YOU HAD DIFFICULTIES WITH THE COUNCIL'S TELEPHONE SYSTEM

Recommendations have been made, some of which have already been implemented to improve this.

INCONSISTENCIES FOUND BETWEEN ONLINE AND PRINTED INFORMATION

A full review of the website is being planned. In the meantime, we have reviewed some of our allocations literature to address these inconsistencies.

COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

East Lothian Council welcomes comments, complaints and compliments about its services. Our complaints procedure aims to **get it right first time**, to be simple to follow and easily understood. It complies with the Model Local Authority Complaints Handling Procedure developed by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) and local government complaints handling experts. It has two stages:

STAGE 1 – FRONTLINE RESOLUTION

The aim is to resolve complaints quickly and as close to the point of service as possible.

This could be an on-the-spot apology, an explanation if something has clearly gone wrong and/or immediate action to resolve a problem if we are able to.

Target – within 5 working days

STAGE 2 - INVESTIGATION

This stage deals with complaints that are complex and require investigation, as well as issues that we have been unable to successfully resolve at Stage 1.

Target – acknowledged within 3 working days and responded to within 20 working days

If someone remains unhappy after they have completed our complaints procedure, they have a legal right to be able to refer their complaint to the SPSO, which is the final stage for complaints about most organisations providing public services in Scotland.

East Lothian Council receives around 950 complaints each year across all its services. Landlord Services complaints ranged from how we allocate properties to how housing repairs had been dealt with. We also receive positive feedback from tenants and for the year 2014/15 we received 54 compliments about our housing services.

HOUSING COMPLAINTS

AND THEIR OUTCOMES

2015

COMPLAINTS	STAGE 1	STAGE 2
Total Number received	181	119
Number carried forward from previous year	2	3
Responded to in full	183 (100%)	119 (98%)
OUTCOMES	STAGE 1	STAGE 2
Complaint upheld	71 (38.8%)	28 (23.5%)
Complaint partially upheld	52 (28.4%)	28 (23.5%)
Complaint not upheld	60 (32.8%)	63 (53%)

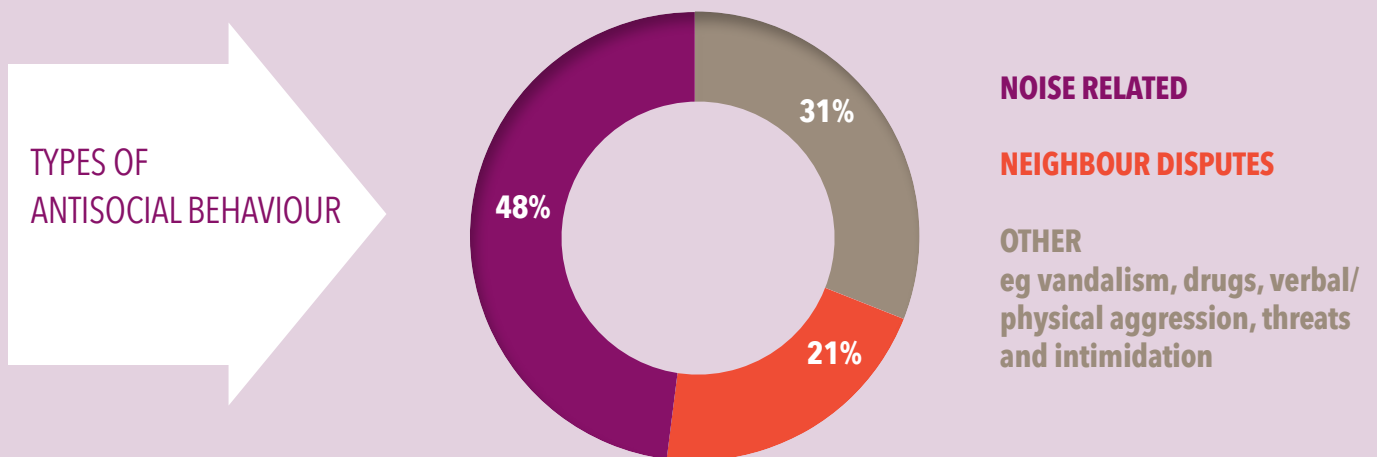
ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND TENANCY SUSTAINMENT

ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR



This encompasses a whole range of behaviour from neighbour disputes over noise or parking to physical violence and drug dealing. The council has developed a very robust Antisocial Behaviour Policy with its partners that applies to all residents of East Lothian. It is good to note that the number of reported incidents of antisocial behaviour is declining in East Lothian. The council has developed a preventative approach to dealing with antisocial behaviour and uses a range of interventions to deal with those who perpetrate such behaviour. Representatives from East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel are involved in the formulation of policy and strategy in this area.

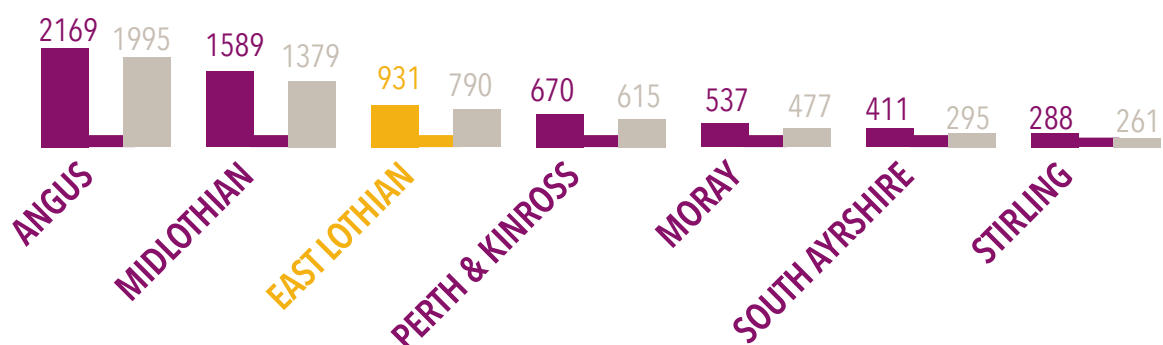
We are currently implementing a new I.T. system which will allow us to report in more detail in the future on the types of anti-social behaviour. The chart provides a breakdown of the most common types during 2014/15.



ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

NUMBER OF CASES

2015 (2014 Figures shown in grey)



84.8% of cases reported within East Lothian were resolved within the locally agreed target times.

TENANCY SUSTAINMENT

Tenancy sustainment is historically very high in East Lothian, in part due to the high demand for affordable housing. The graph below splits sustainment by the source of let, for example, existing tenants who have transferred, homeless clients and housing list applicants.

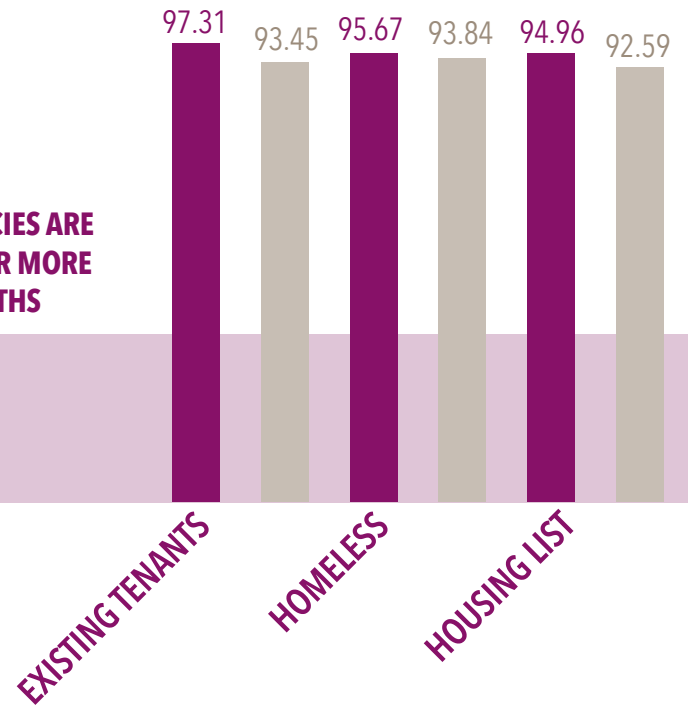
% TENANCIES SUSTAINED

FOR 12 MONTHS OR MORE

2015 (2014 Figures shown in grey)



OF ALL TENANCIES ARE SUSTAINED FOR MORE THAN 12 MONTHS



Rotary Court, Dunbar



New Housing Development, Musselburgh

SHELTERED HOUSING



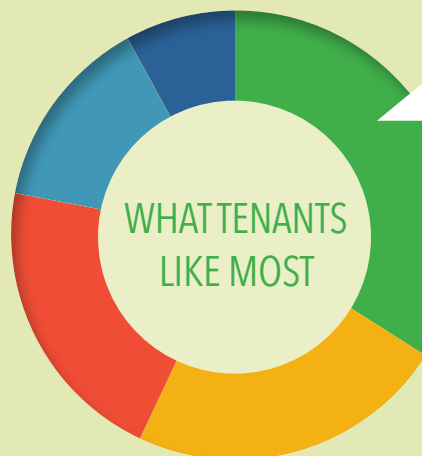
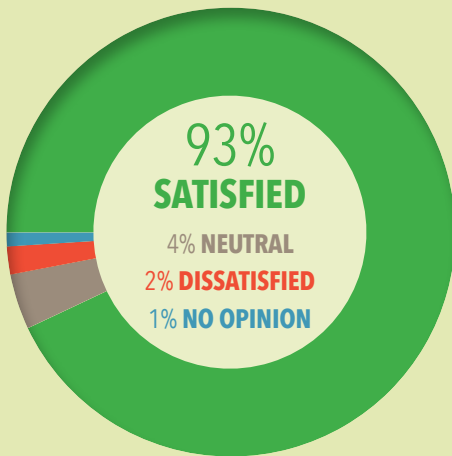
The Council manages four sheltered housing complexes in East Lothian:

- Brunton Court, Musselburgh
- Osborne/Winton Court, Cockenzie
- Mansfield Court, Musselburgh
- Well Wynd, Tranent

Facilities vary between locations but we aim to make sure that all of our sheltered housing complexes offer the same basic services, for example, communal lounge, laundry facilities.

Earlier this year we completed face to face surveys with **74% of our sheltered housing tenants**. The survey included the standard charter indicators as well as specific questions for sheltered housing tenants. The results were very favourable with an **overall satisfaction level of 89%**. We have since visited each complex to feedback to tenants and ask them for ideas on how we can further improve the service. This information will now be fed back to managers to consider how we take these suggestions forward.

SATISFACTION WITH HOUSING SUPPORT STAFF PERFORMANCE



HELP & SUPPORT ON HAND 34%

COMPANY OF STAFF & RESIDENTS 23%

SECURITY 21%

ACCESSIBLE LIVING 14%

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES 8%



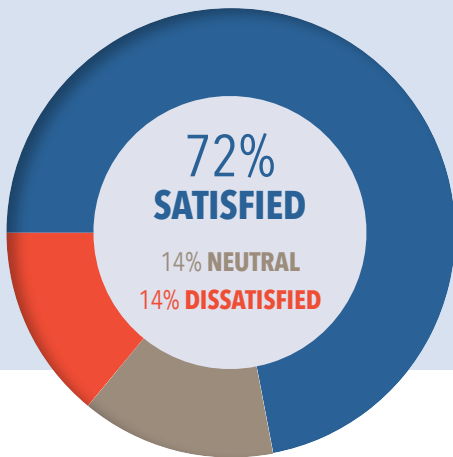
Local Area Initiative, Brunton Court, Musselburgh

GYPSY TRAVELLERS

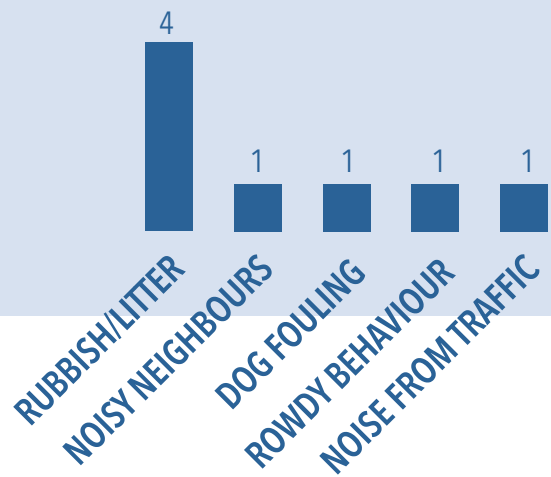
East Lothian Council and Midlothian Council, operate a site for Gypsy Travellers at Whitecraig (between Musselburgh and Dalkeith). East Lothian Council manages the site on behalf of both authorities.

Last year we did not complete indicators for the Charter as the travellers were off site whilst improvement works were carried out. After the work was completed, we conducted a satisfaction survey with tenants on site to allow us to report satisfaction levels in line with the Charter requirements . The following chart shows that 72% of tenants on site were satisfied with the management of the site, this equates to 5 tenants with 1 person neither satisfied or dissatisfied, and 1 person being fairly dissatisfied. We will now be looking at all the information collected in the survey to try to identify any areas for improvement.

SATISFACTION WITH LANDLORDS MANAGEMENT OF SITE



ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY TENANTS ON SITE 2015/16



Travelling persons site near Whitecraig



Travelling Persons Site Manager

COMMUNICATION & PARTICIPATION

COMMUNICATION

Our tenants have told us how important they value communication and through our tenant satisfaction survey 89% of tenants thought the council were very good or fairly good at keeping them informed. One of the ways we communicate with our tenants is through the **Homefront** magazine. The council works in partnership with **East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel** to produce this on a quarterly basis.

PARTICIPATION

Effective participation leads to better and more responsive management and this helps to inform decisions about improving service delivery and providing value for money. The aim of tenant participation is to improve housing conditions and housing services. There are a number of ways tenants can participate in East Lothian ranging from joining a local tenants and residents group, taking part in a consultation event or completing a questionnaire.



Over the last year, the council has been working in partnership with East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel to develop more ways for people to become involved, including developing **tenant scrutiny**.

Scrutiny is 'Landlord self-assessment and customer involvement in the assessment and review of housing services'.

Tenant scrutiny gives tenants:

- greater influence and ability to hold their landlord to account
- opportunity to exercise power over business decisions, governance and performance



Estate inspection



Tenant scrutiny training

Three specific scrutiny activities have been developed and implemented over the last year. These included:

DESKTOP AUDIT

This was an audit of all the public information that the council publishes on its Allocations Policy and also the information on the council website. The purpose of an audit is to look at all the relevant documents, such as the Allocations Policy, housing application form and information leaflets in relation to the policy.

*Easy to work around – time passed really quickly.
Desktop auditor*

The report was very positively received by senior managers and all of the recommendations apart from one were taken on board.

REVIEW OF THE ESTATE INSPECTIONS PROCESS

A group was set up consisting of ELTRP members along with housing officers from East Lothian Council to review the estate inspection process. After months of detailed work, the group went on to make a number of recommendations.

An action plan has now been formulated to take forward each of the recommendations

*I really enjoyed being part of the group and look forward to working in partnership with ELC and celebrating the success of the new estate inspection process.
Estate Inspection Group member*

A MYSTERY SHOPPING PILOT

Some tenants reported they were having problems with the council's automated telephone system, the project focussed on communication and involved a number of telephone calls and visits to council offices.

All the shoppers reported a really positive experience.

*I found the whole project very interesting and enjoyed being involved in it.
Mystery Shopper*

If you would like to get involved in any way, call 01620 827827 and ask for Deborah Piner or East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel on 0131 665 9304.



GET IN TOUCH...

CALL US

East Lothian Council	01620 827827
Feedback on the Landlord Report	01620 827747 (or complete the enclosed survey)
Report a repair (council tenants)	01875 824311 (out of hours 01875 612818)
East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel	0131 665 9304
Antisocial Behaviour Helpline	0845 601 8518
Advice on homelessness	01620 827536 (duty officer) or Emergencies 0800 169 1611
Problems paying your rent?	01620 827528 or visit us online
House Contents Insurance	01620 827255 or visit us online
Community Housing Offices	01620 827827

OR VISIT

www.eastlothian.gov.uk

www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk

www.eltrp.co.uk



Versions of this leaflet can be supplied in Braille, large print, audiotape or in your own language. Please phone Customer Services if you require assistance on 01620 827199



Scottish Social Housing Charter Landlord Report to Tenants 2015

Background



- Scottish Social Housing Charter
 - Introduced in 2012
 - Sets out outcomes that all social landlords must work toward achieving
 - One of the requirements of the Charter is to report performance to tenants every year

Key Requirements:

- Complete Annual Return of the Charter each year by the end of May
- Carry out a comprehensive tenant satisfaction survey every three years
- Provide a performance report to tenants each year by the end of October
- Meaningfully involve tenants

Tenant Involvement



“Landlords are required to report their performance in achieving or progressing towards the Charter outcomes and standards to their tenants, and others, by the end of October each year. It is for landlords and their tenants to decide what form this performance reporting should take”.

Scottish Housing Regulator

Tenant Involvement

- Existing TP structures remain strong
 - Strategic level
 - Grass-roots level
- Charter has brought about
 - Scrutiny activity
 - Involvement in production of Landlord Report
 - Involvement in the comprehensive survey
 - Involvement in the review of all point of service surveys

Tenant Scrutiny

- The scrutiny group have developed and carried out two scrutiny activities to date
 - A Mystery Shop which focussed on

Outcome 2: Communication

- Social landlords manage their businesses so that:
 - *tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides*

– A Desk Top Audit

Outcome 10: Access to Social Housing

Social landlords ensure that:

- *people looking for housing find it easy to apply for the widest choice of social housing available and get the information they need on how the landlord allocates homes and their prospects of being housed.*

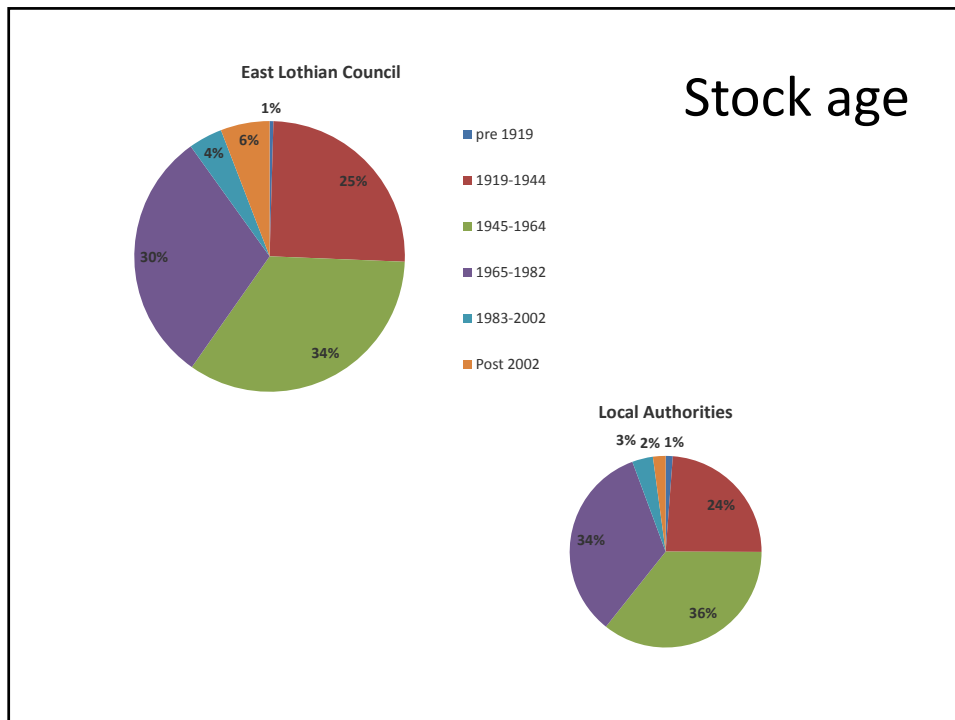
Tenant Scrutiny

- East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel continue to be involved in other scrutiny type activities such as:
 - Anti-Social Behaviour Surveys
 - Reviewing Estate Inspection Process
 - Local Group Surveys
 - Joint Business Plan Group (ELC & ELTRP)
 - Reviewing Tenant Participation Strategy
 - Various joint working groups

Peer Group

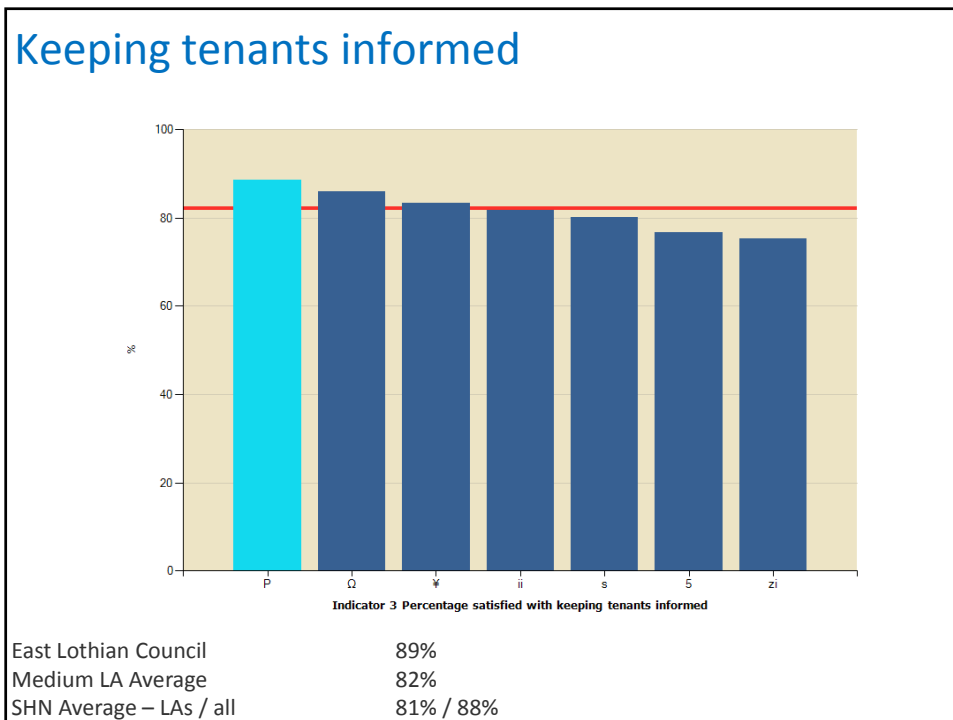
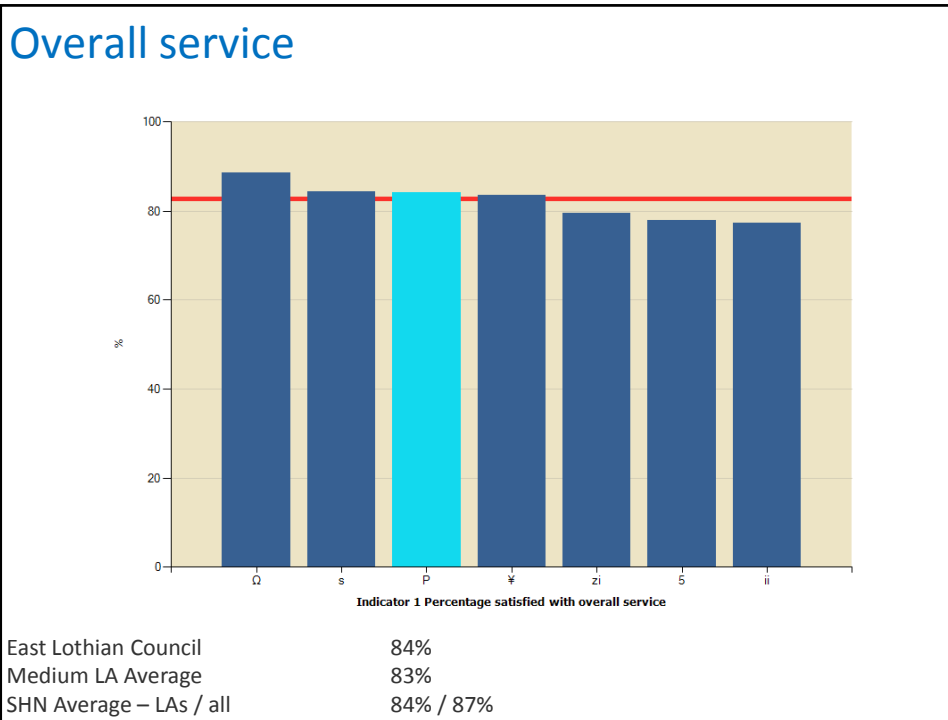
LA's 5 – 10,000 stock

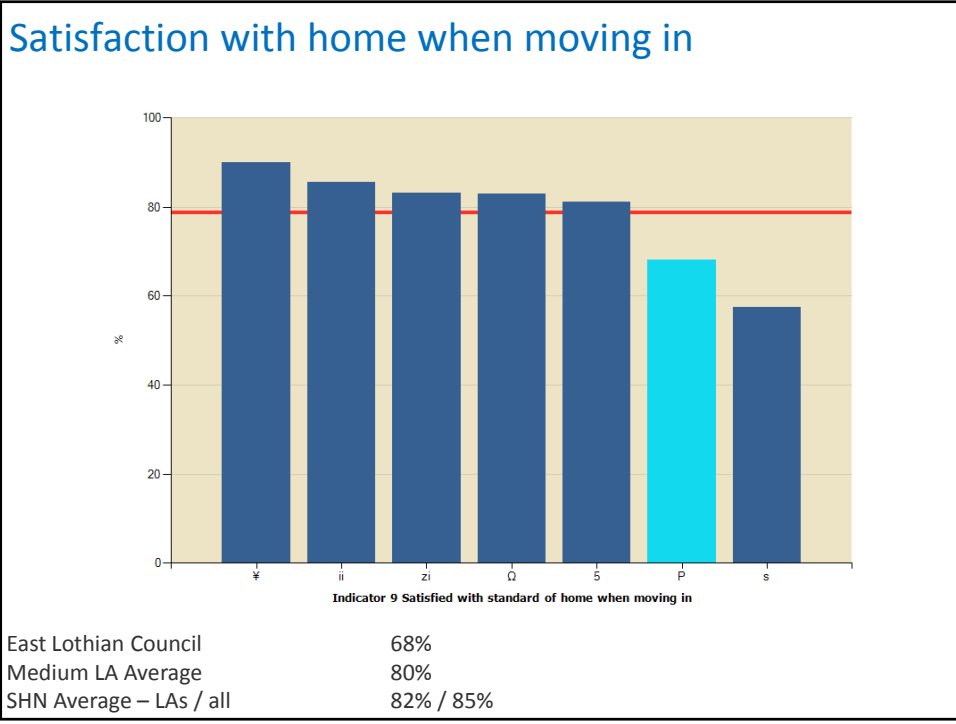
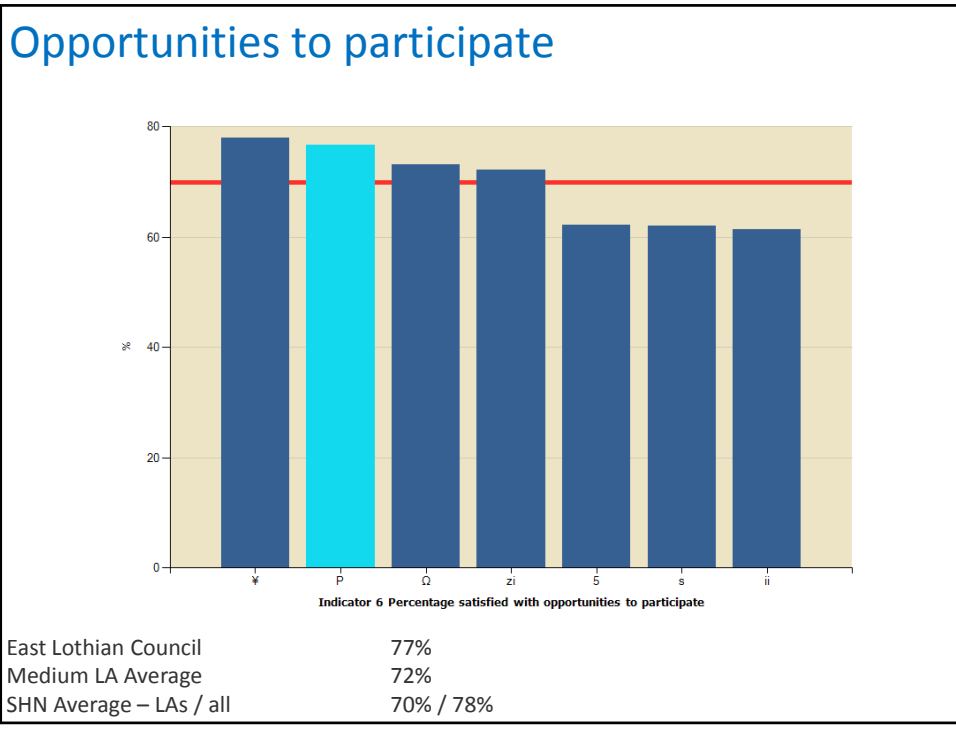
- 5 - Angus Council
- P - **East Lothian Council**
- ii - Midlothian Council
- O - Moray Council
- s - Perth & Kinross Council
- zi - South Ayrshire Council
- ¥ - Stirling Council

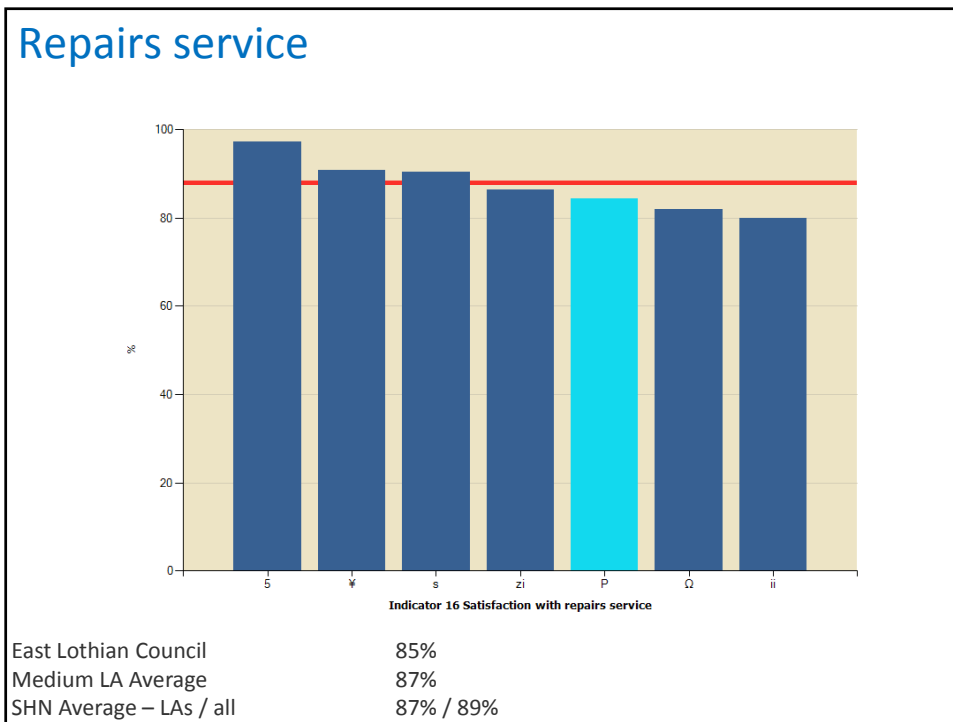
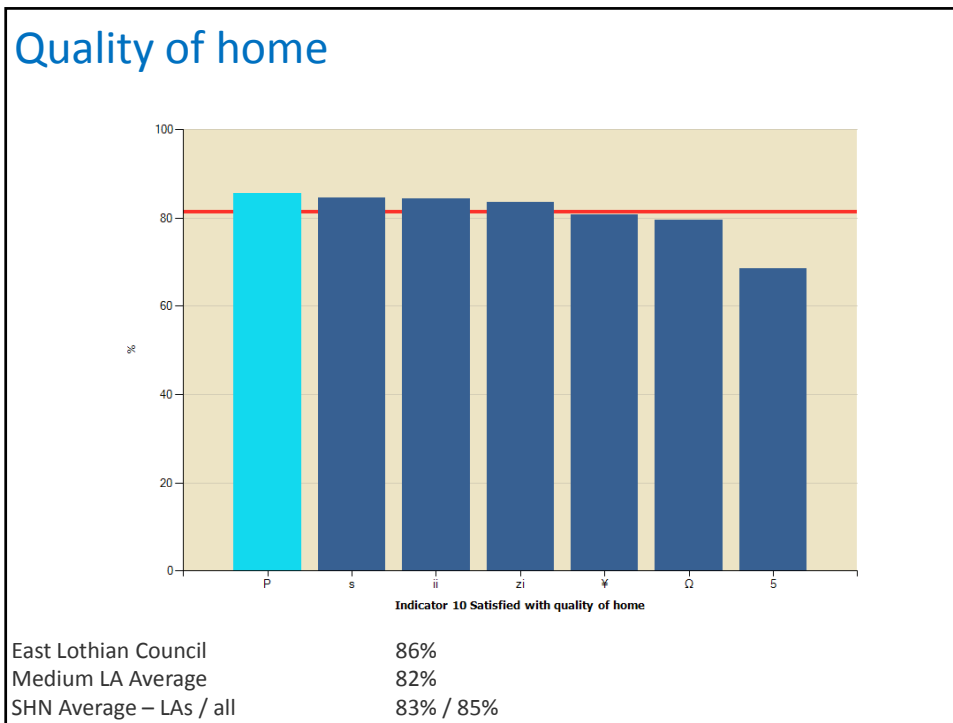


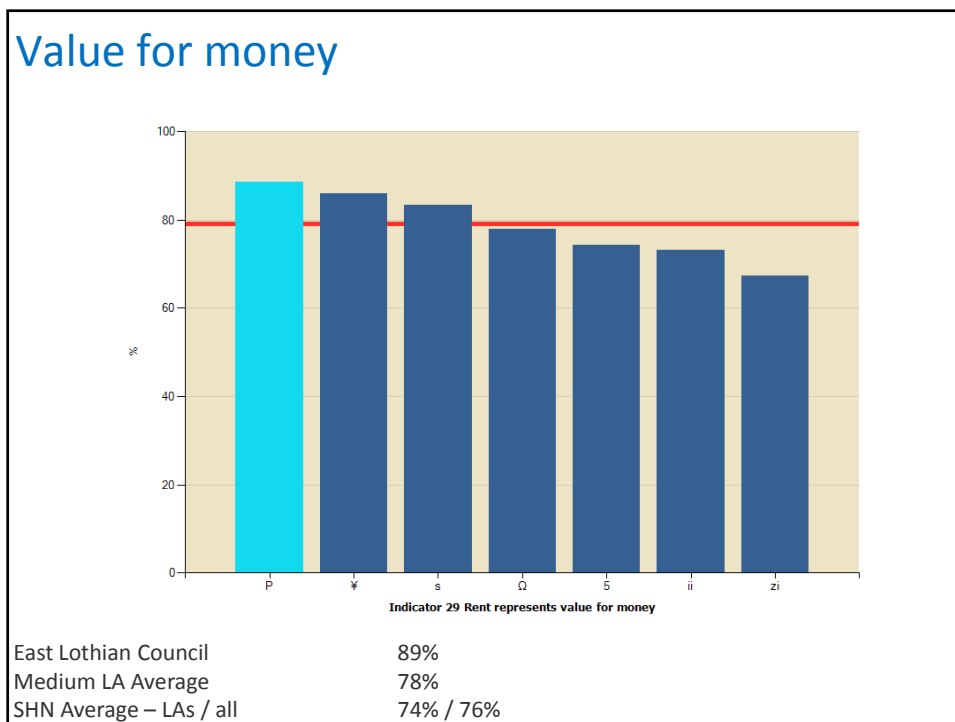
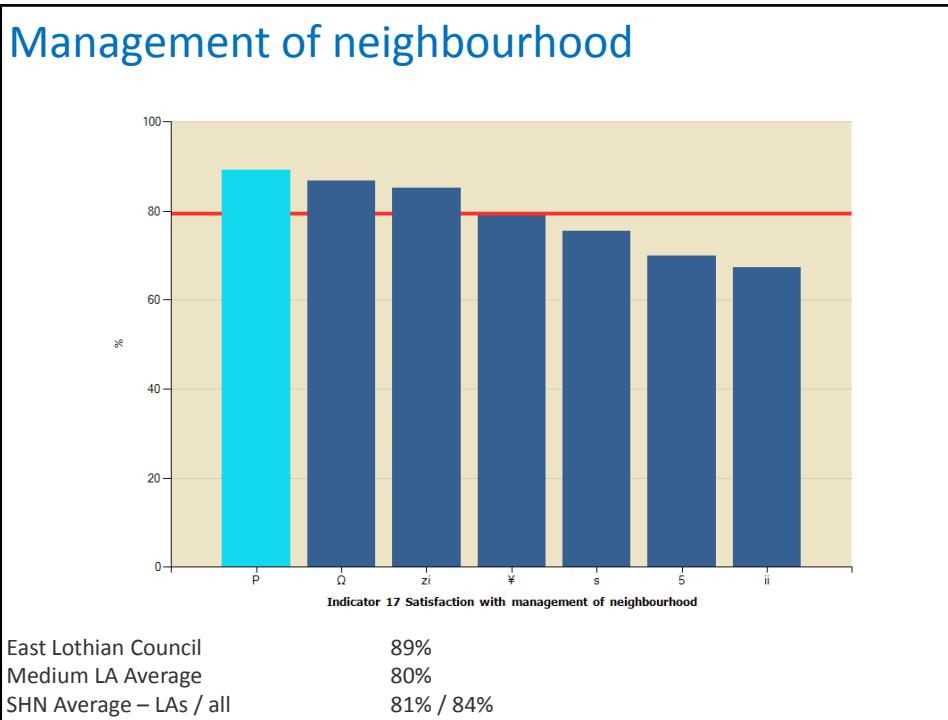
Satisfaction surveys

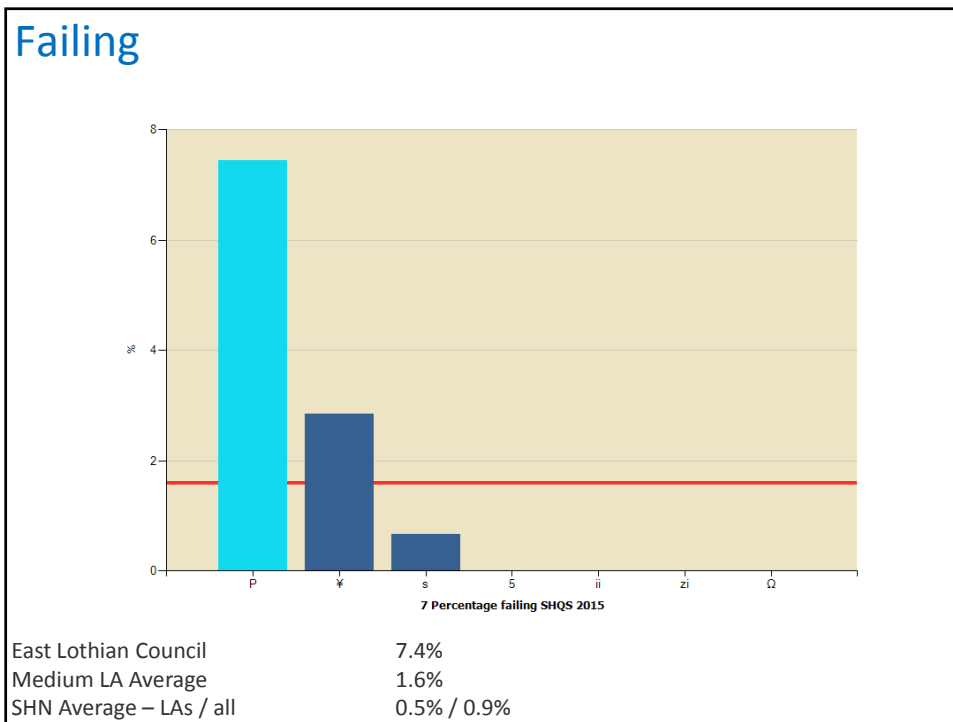
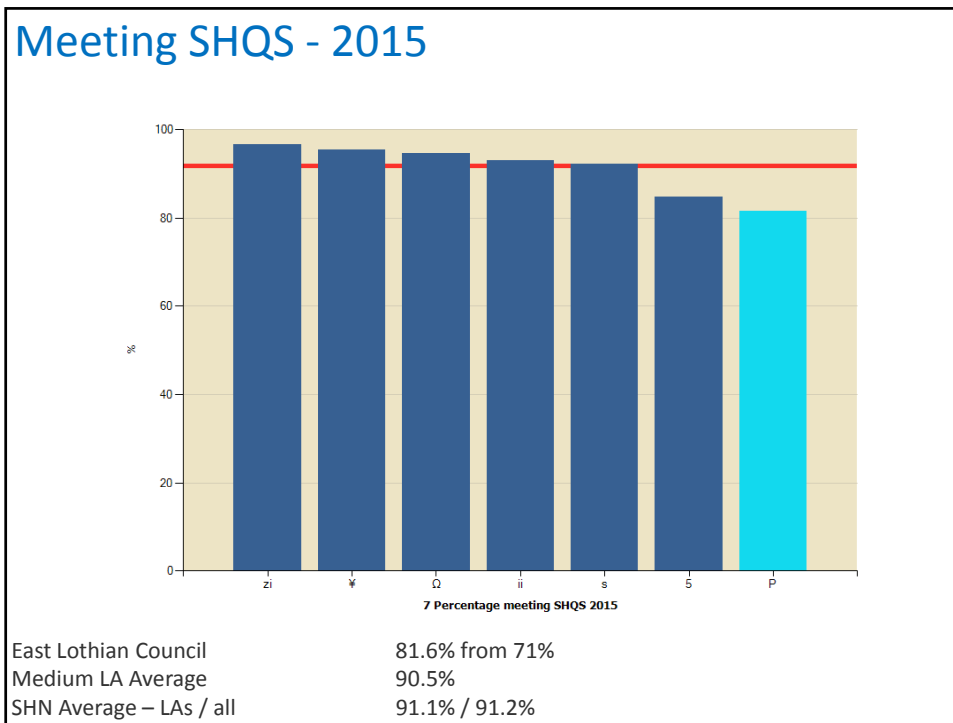
- 1742 tenants interviewed, 20%
- Method: face-to-face
- November 2013

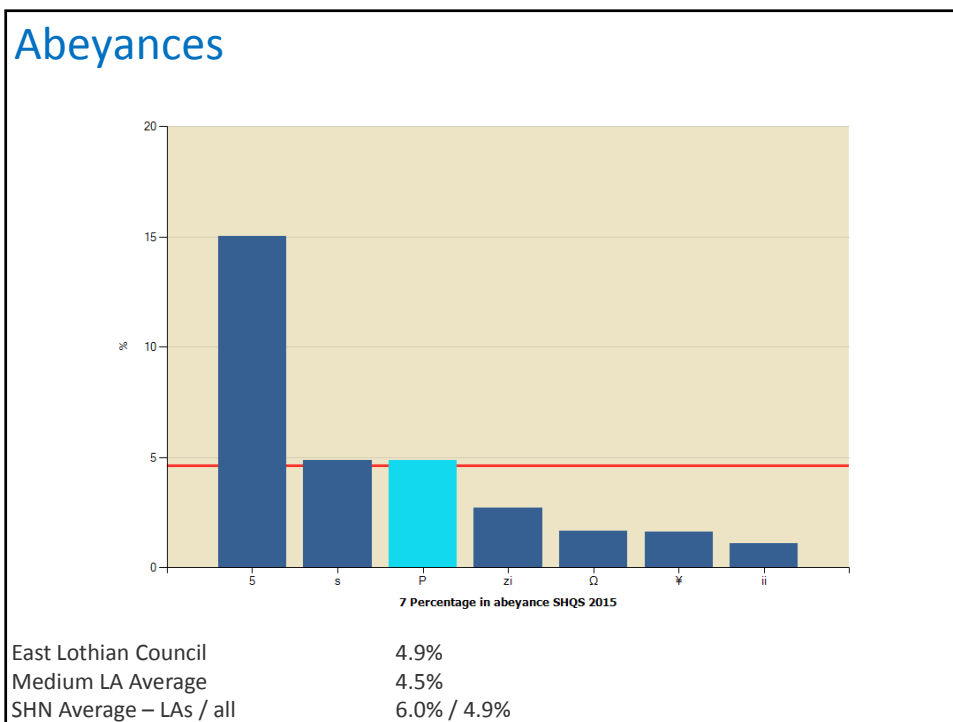
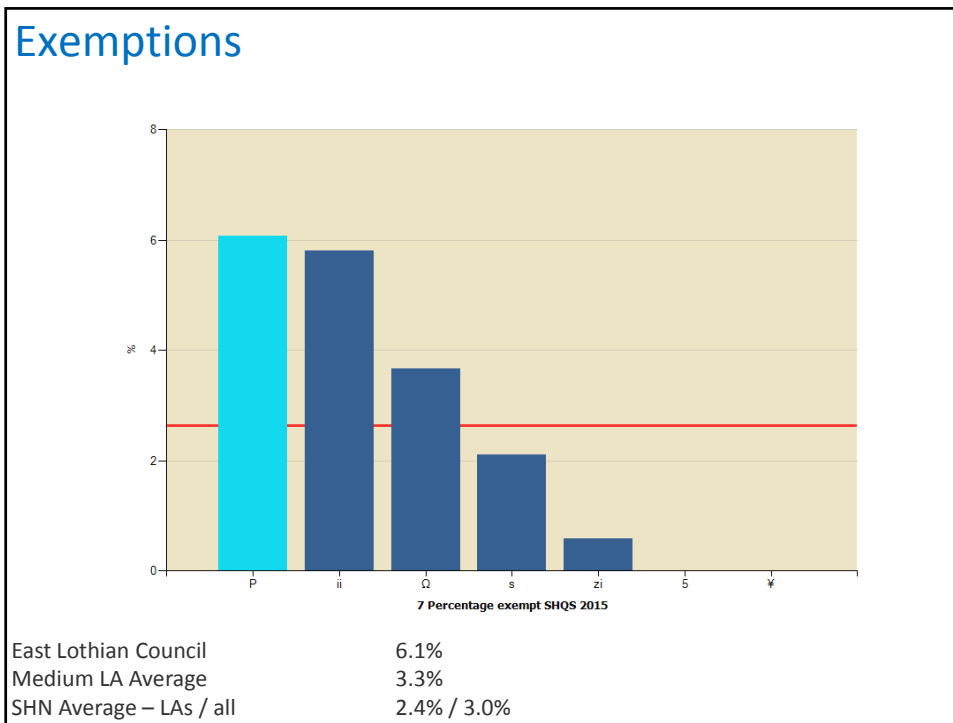


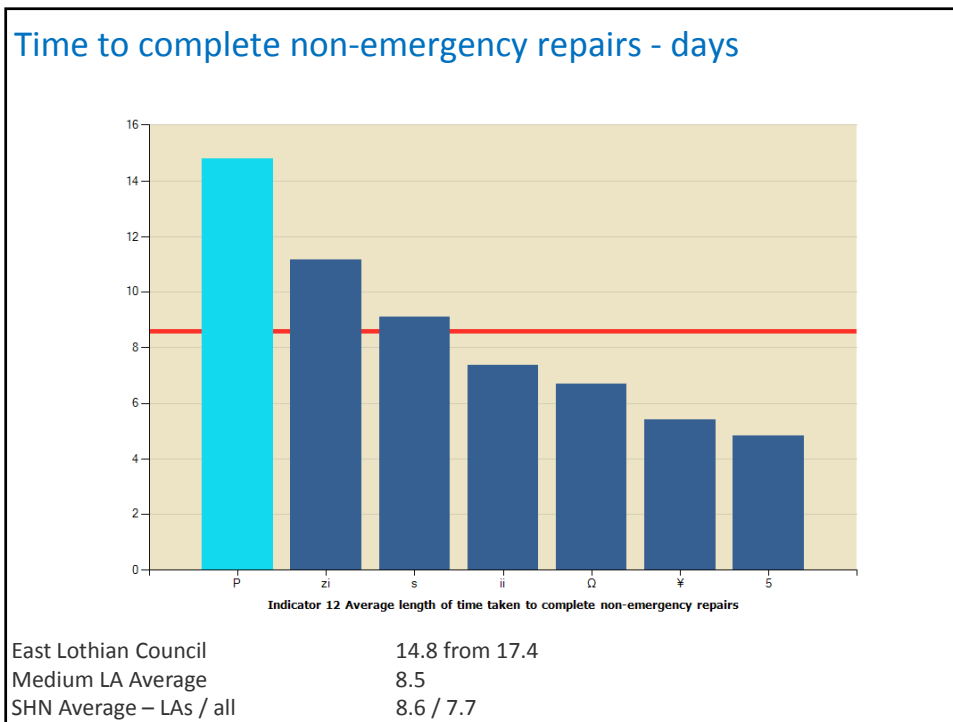
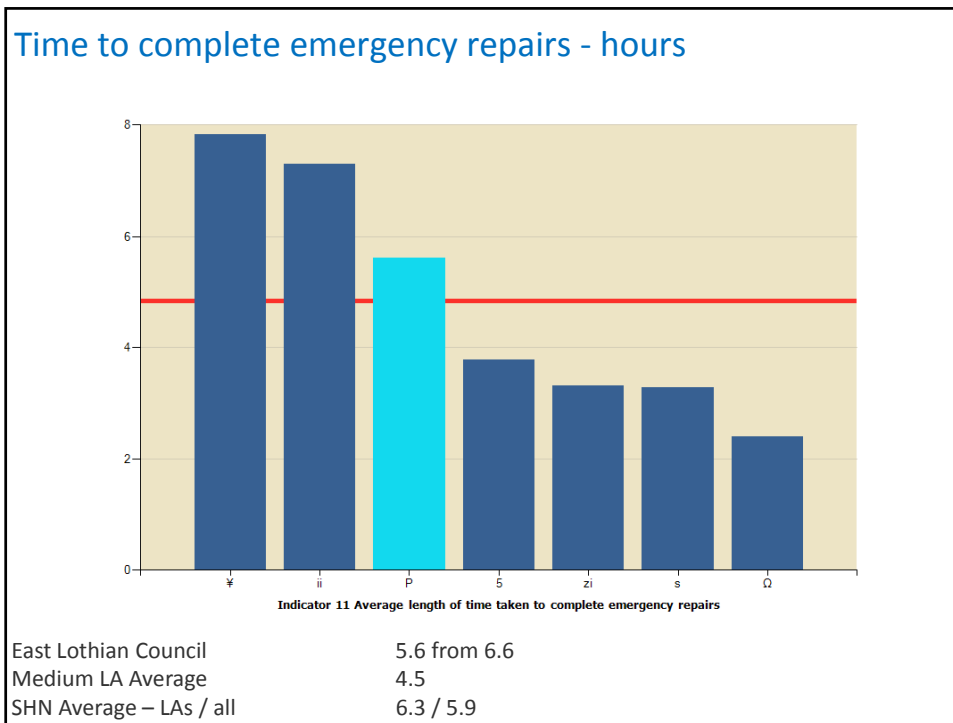




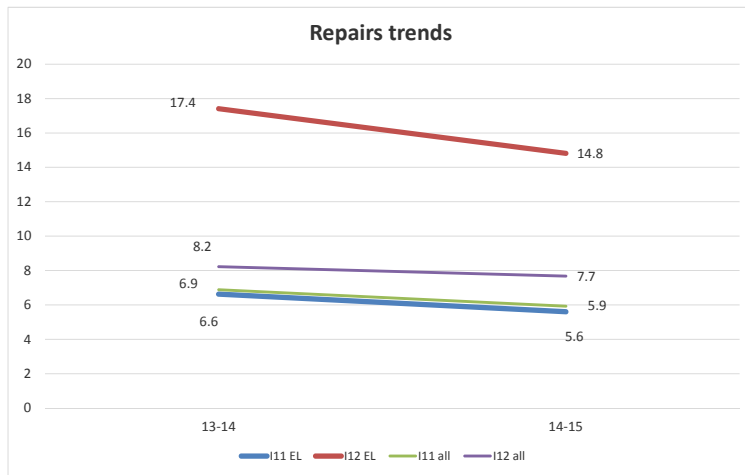




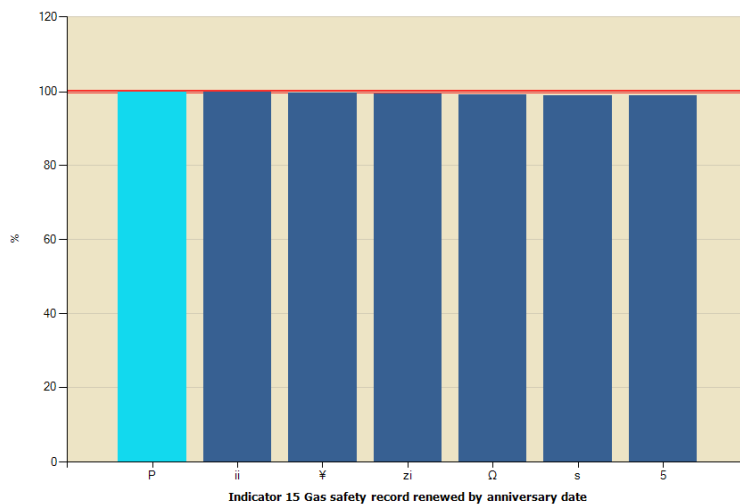




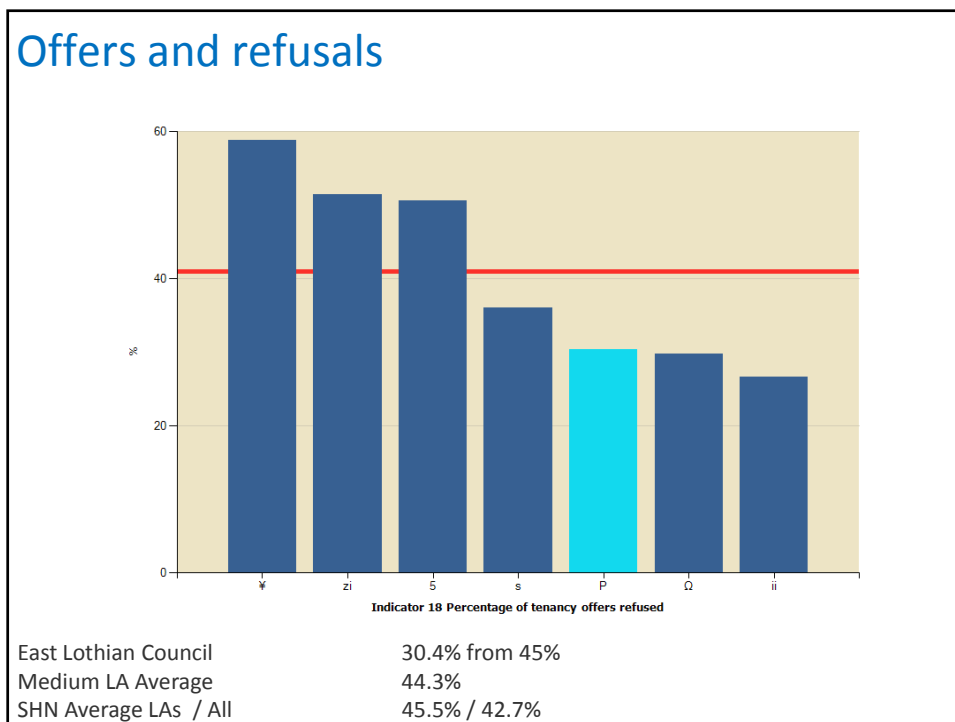
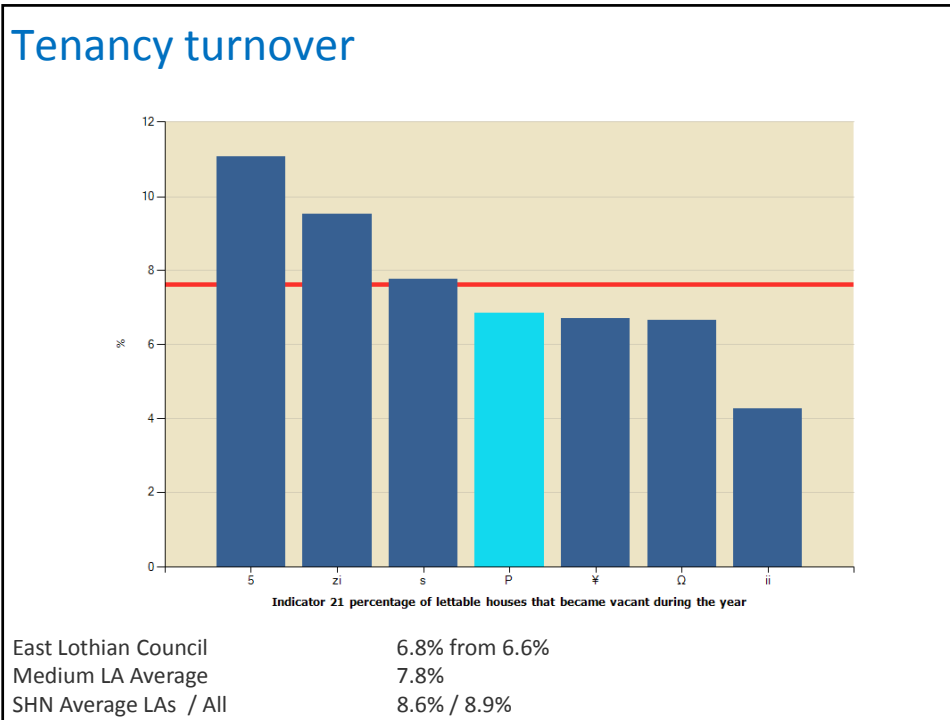
Repairs timescale – trends

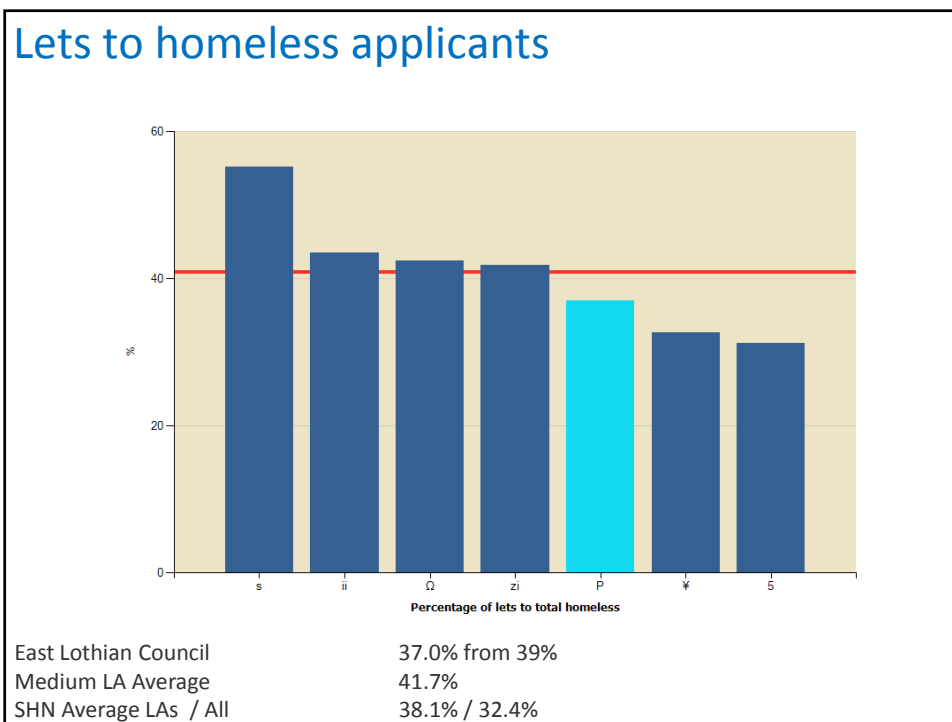
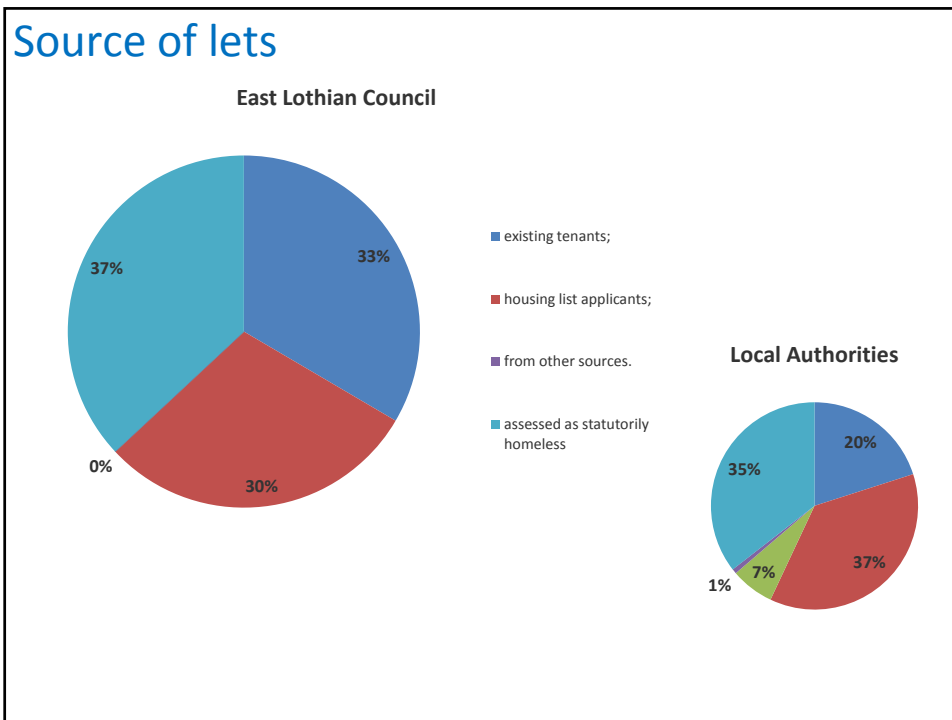


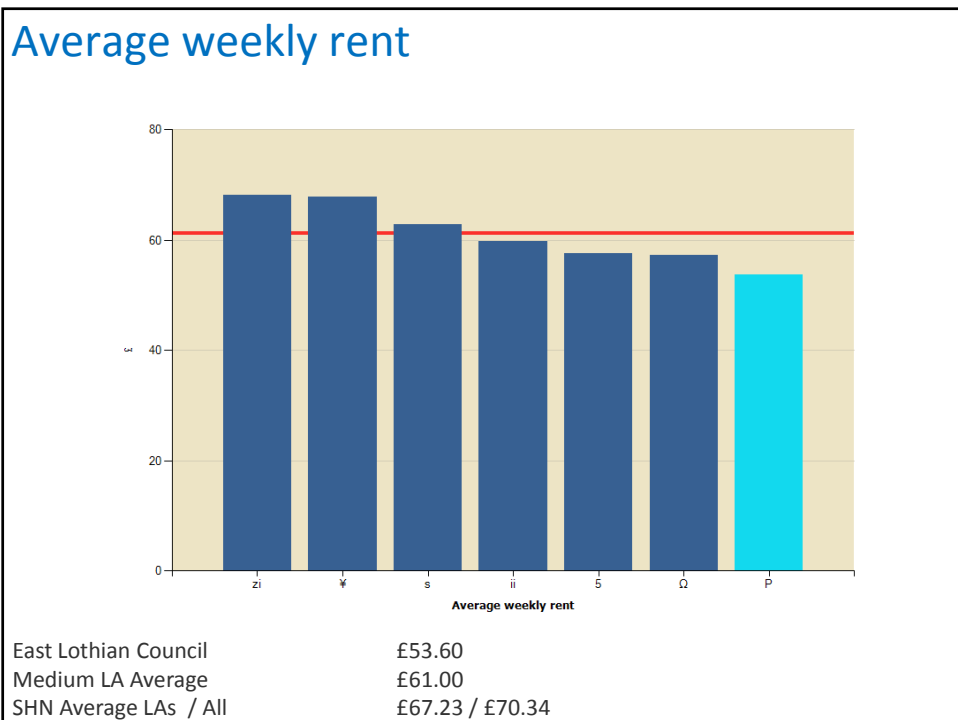
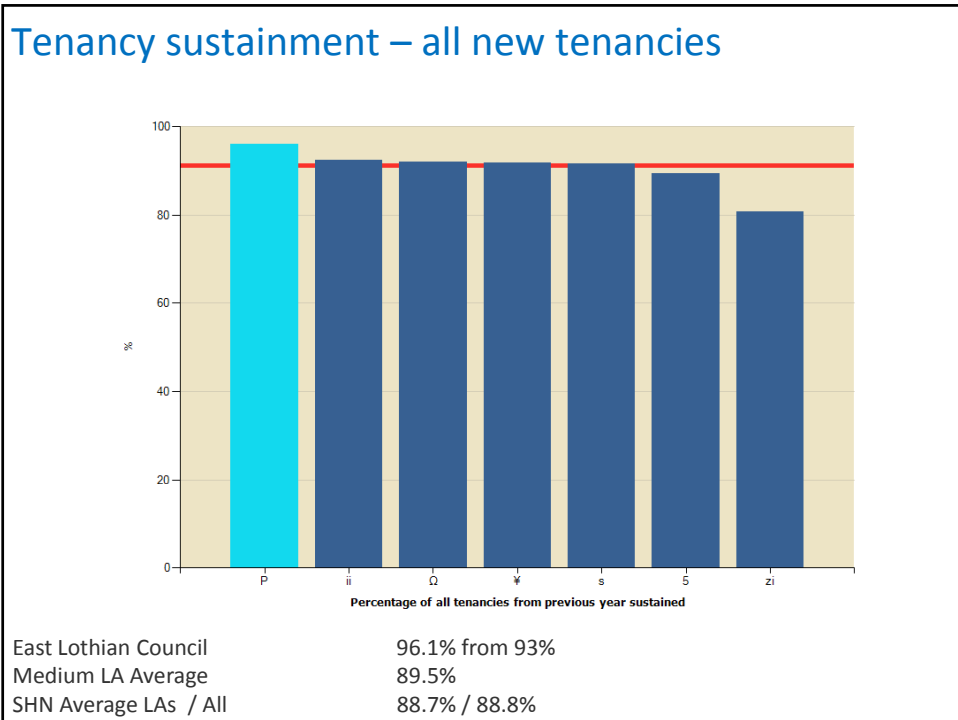
Gas safety

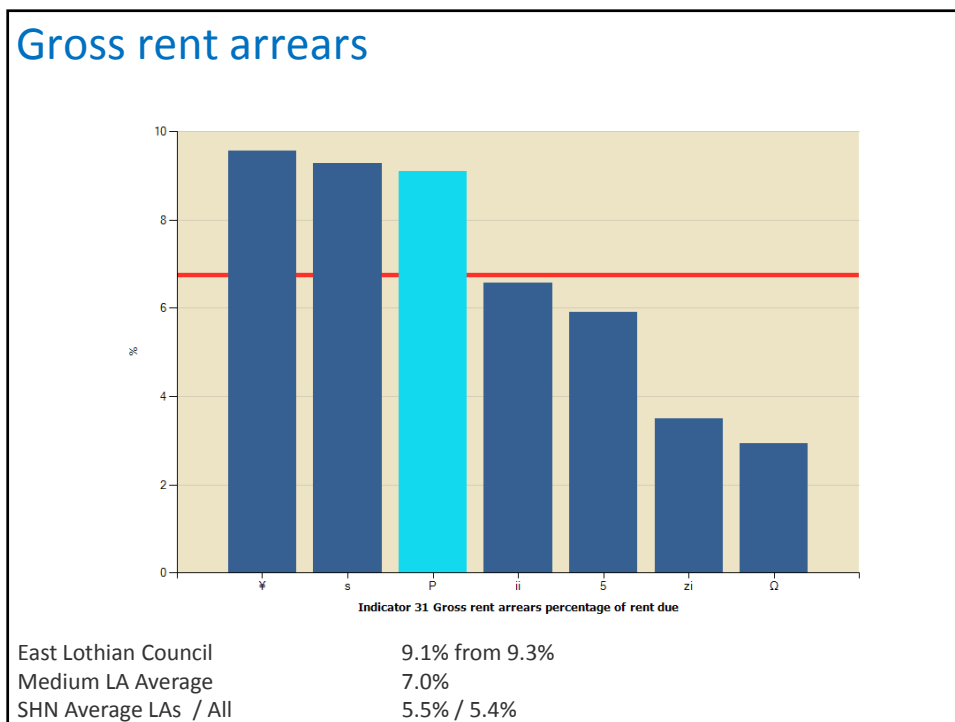
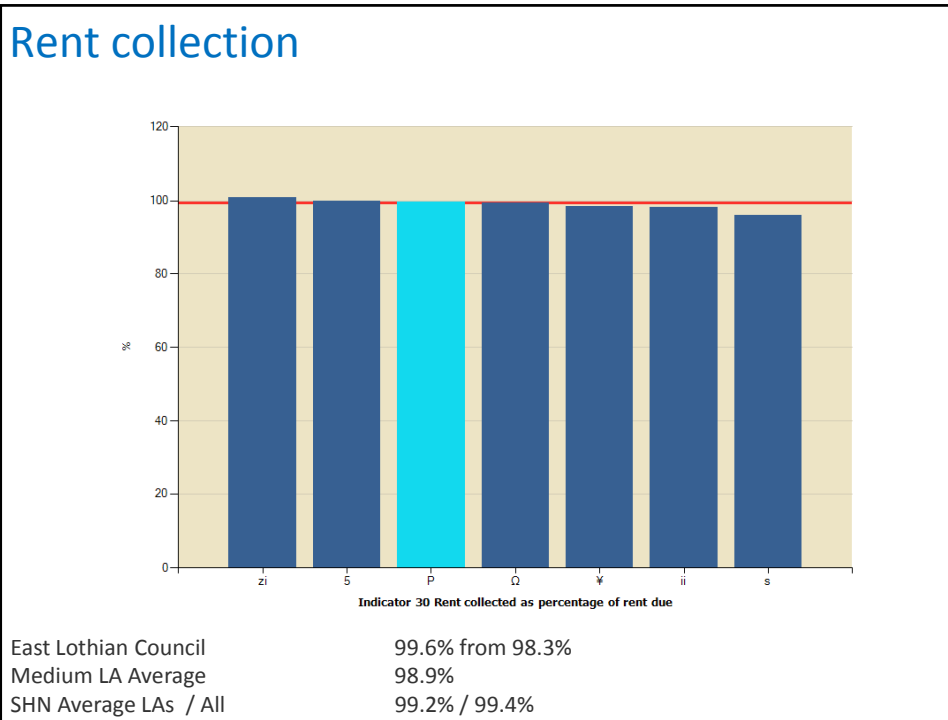


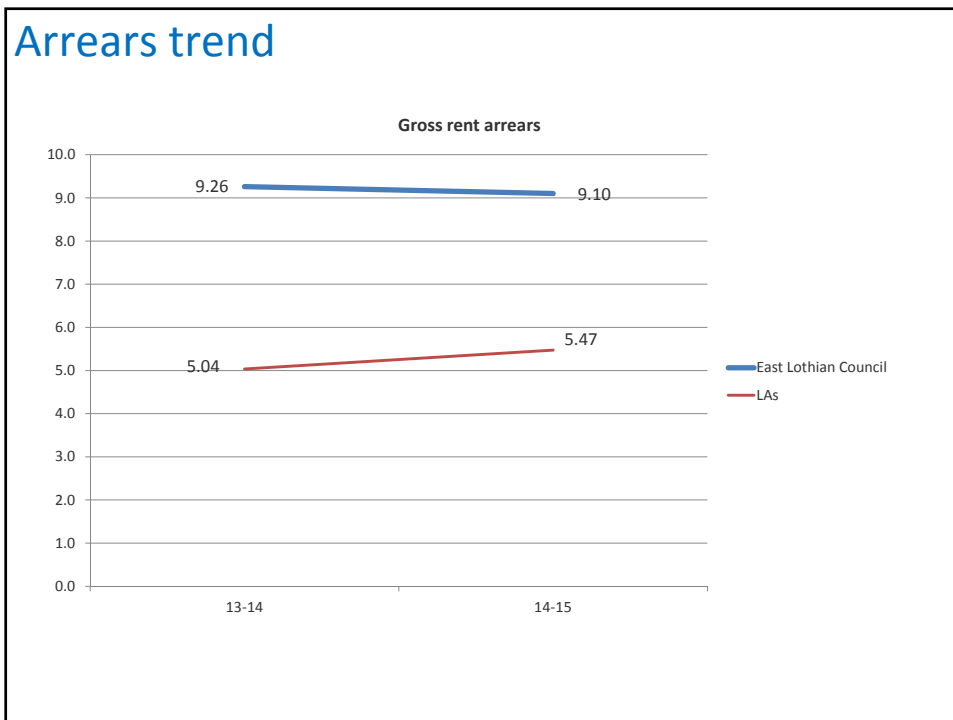
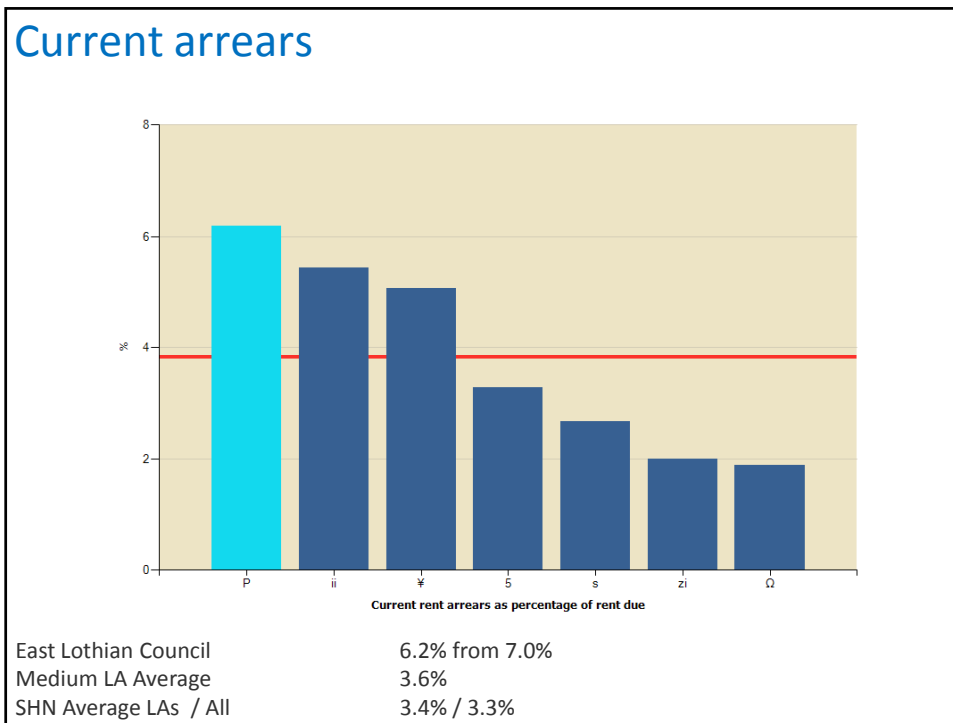
East Lothian Council	100.0% no change
Medium LA Average	99.5%
SHN Average LAs / All	99.5% / 99.5%

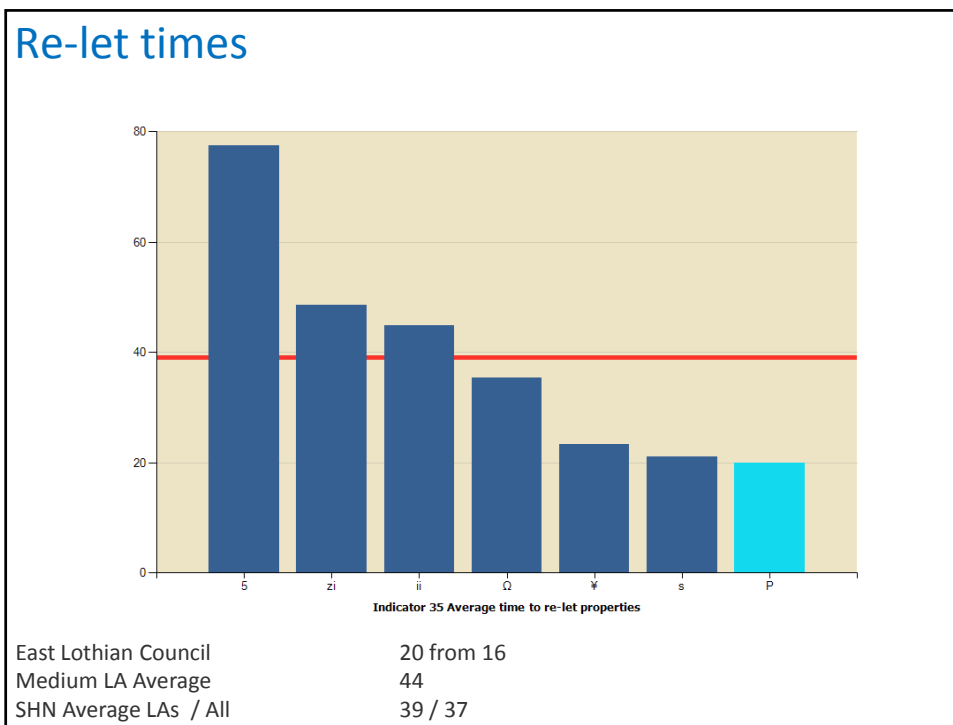












Any questions?