

NEWS

20th Anniversary edition - Summer 2023



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إذا كنت تريد نسخة من هذه الوثيقة بخط طباعة أكبر، أو كنت ترغب في تلقي نص الوثيقة بلغة مختلفة، فنرجو الاتصال بالرقم
01750 724444

Welcome!

Welcome to this 20th anniversary edition of your Tenant Newsletter.

This year marks 20 years since the creation of SBHA, and the long-standing commitment to ensure that Tenants remain at the heart of SBHA, participating and influencing decisions, to make sure Tenants' needs are the priority.

At SBTO we value the partnership between SBHA and SBTO. Since SBTO's creation in 2003, we have represented Tenants' views and helped shape the services SBHA provides. We will continue to do so for the benefit of all Tenants.

Building on this, we have been out and about engaging with communities over the Summer, listening to your views and consulting on a range of themes important to you. We also undertook our 8th Tenant Scrutiny activity - many thanks to all Tenants for your valuable contribution in this, particularly to the Tenants involved in the Customer Audit Team who steered this with support from our Summer Intern, Izzy Folan. This year's project focussed on the standard of customer contact. See more on Page 6.

Good luck to all those who have entered SBTO's annual Gardening Competition. The extremely difficult task of judging has now taken place - watch out for the Winner announcements in the coming weeks.

Have a great Summer, from all of us at SBTO.



Gordon Saunders, SBTO Chair, on behalf of the Editorial Panel

Our Chair reflects on 20 years



Robin Hill, Chair of SBHA's Board of Management

"I'd like to start by saying how immensely proud I am to lead an organisation with such an accomplished history. SBHA has come a long way since 2003 when over 6000 Tenants said "yes" to the transfer of homes from Scottish Borders Council to SBHA.

The steadfast leadership of the late Oliver Angus as SBHA's inaugural Chair set the precedent for driving forward year on year success, delivering on our promises.

Picking up the baton in 2010 as Chair, Ray Licence led the organisation through an extensive programme of modernisation, bringing long-term empty homes back into use to create much needed new homes; achieving quality standards; and modernising how we deliver services.

2015-2020 saw Simon Mountford take SBHA to new ventures and services, beyond "bricks and mortar", strengthening the social value that SBHA offers to Tenants and local communities.

I was appointed as Chair in 2020 and I obviously have big boots to fill! I am determined to ensure that SBHA continues to grow and develop. Over the last 3 years, we have evolved as a community anchor organisation during the challenging times of Covid and the Cost of Living crisis.

SBHA was 'Created for Tenants by Tenants' and this remains our mission today. I am determined to ensure that we continue to work to maximise our social and economic impact, bringing greater benefits to Tenants and the communities we serve."



Oliver Angus



Ray Licence



Simon Mountford

Save the date - SBHA's AGM

SBHA's Annual General Meeting will be held on the 14th September 2023 at our Head Office in Selkirk.

You need to be a shareholder to attend, so if you haven't done so please return your form to us at South Bridge House, Whinfield Road, Selkirk, TD7 5DT



Our events in your area

A great opportunity for face-to-face feedback!

To help mark SBHA's 20th Anniversary, we've been holding a series of early evening events across the Borders, inviting you to come and see us, to find out more about the work we've been doing in your area and how we can support you in your home.

Meanwhile, Gala Park Neighbourhood Team Fiona Mallin and Greig Murray held an all-day drop-in recently, making good use of an empty flat! It was a busy day, with Tenants dropping in to talk to their local team, as well as the specialist advisers who were available on the day.

Thank you to everyone who has come along to these events - we really enjoyed meeting you, and we hope that you found the events helpful.

Would you like to see us do more of this kind of thing in the future? Or maybe we should try something a bit different? Let us know!



Remembering George



We were saddened to learn of the recent death of George Parker, a former SBHA Board and SBTO member.

A dedicated and committed member, George was nominated to the North Area Board in 2008, and later

served on SBHA's Board of Management, as well as the Technical Services Sub-Committee.

Always kind and generous, George is fondly remembered by all who knew him here at SBHA. Our thoughts are with his family at this time.

In your community

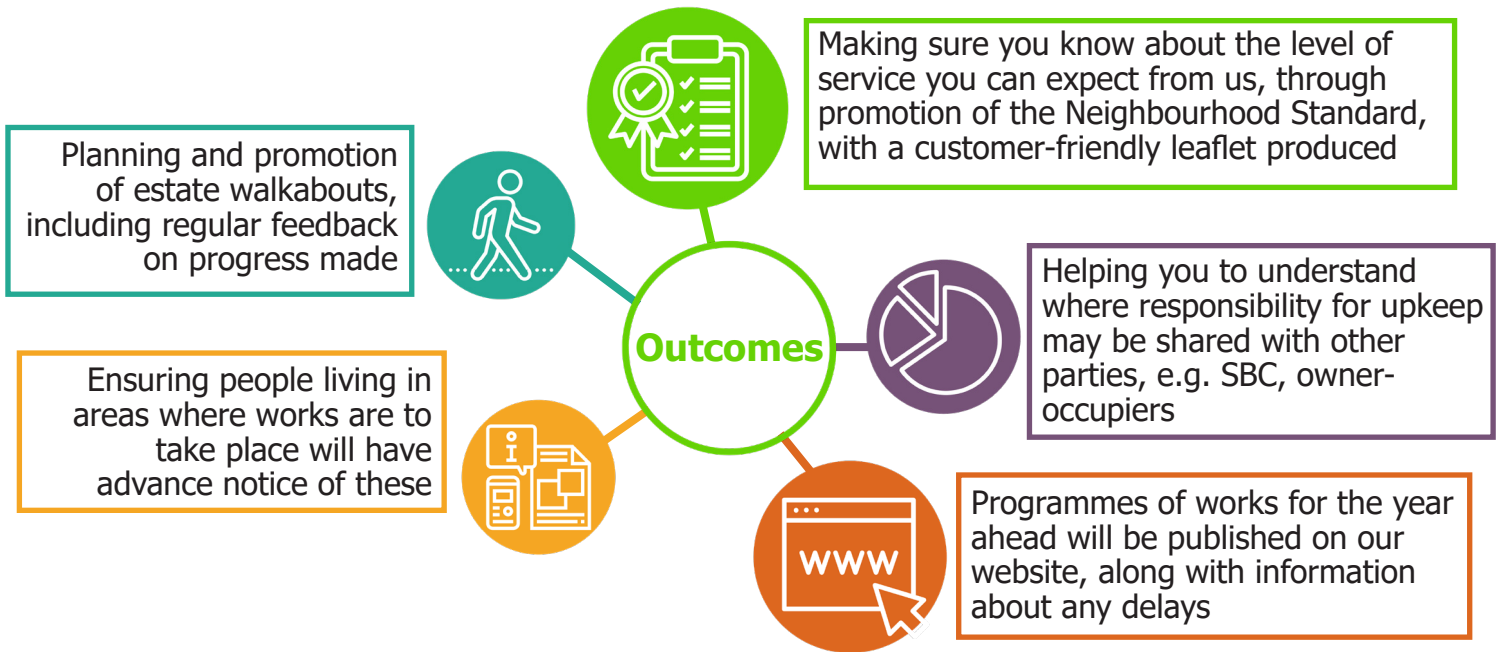
Making the improvements that matter

SBHA was 'Created by Tenants for Tenants', and we're hugely grateful to the many Tenants who have given their time over the years, working with us to help make improvements to services. It all started with Stock Transfer, when Tenants toured the region in a yellow bus (right), helping people to understand what the transfer from Scottish Borders Council to the new SBHA would mean for them.



One of the most impactful forms of Tenant Participation in more recent times is the yearly Scrutiny project. Last year the Tenant Customer Audit Team (CAT) carried out a Scrutiny project focused on our Neighbourhood Standard. This covers such things as external painting, grassed areas, drying areas, bin stores, guttering and communal entrances and stairwells.

We aim for our neighbourhoods to be attractive, well-maintained, and secure to those who live there. This makes people feel good about where they live, fosters a sense of community and discourages anti-social behaviour. The CAT made a number of recommendations to help improve services - some of the key agreed actions are outlined below.




Have you received a letter from us about access to carry out a stock condition survey? Don't forget to contact us to make your survey appointment!

It's really important that if you receive a letter, you contact us as soon as you can to arrange your survey appointment. The survey will allow us to assess the condition of your home to determine whether any work, for example a new kitchen or bathroom, is needed for your home and when so we can plan ahead.


The team will be pleased to help with any enquiries or queries you have. Please call 01750 724444, Freephone 0800 0193 222 or email enquiries@sbha.org.uk. You can also send us a direct message via our Facebook page.

Have we got your details?

Don't forget to keep your contact details up-to-date.

 Call 01750 724444 or Freephone 0800 0193 222

 email enquiries@sbha.org.uk

 or check and amend your details any time using the MySBHA App

New homes news

Meeting housing need in the Borders



Did you know - SBHA was not originally set up to be a provider of new homes? On March 3rd 2003, 6,728 homes were transferred across to SBHA. Right-to-buy reduced that number, but in 2015 we embarked on our new-build journey, with three new homes at Jessamine Cottages in Earlston. Over the years our ambitions have grown, and we have now completed 70 homes, with 18 under construction and a commitment to build a further 300 over the next 6 years!

We are delighted to confirm that we have approval for twenty-seven new affordable homes in the popular town of Lauder, following approval from Scottish Borders Council of our plans with Whiteburn HQ. We have also achieved planning success for the first of our innovative Garages-to-Homes sites, which will create 6 bungalows in Ramsay Road, Hawick, and 7 in Lothian Road, Jedburgh. Watch this space for more!

Meet your Neighbourhood Housing Officer

See our website, www.sbha.org.uk, for details of upcoming walkabouts. August's walkabouts are below. Not able to make it? You can still contact your Housing Officer to share ideas or raise any areas of concern. Find your Neighbourhood Housing Officer at <https://www.sbha.org.uk/about-sbha/whos-who/community-teams/>

Town	Date and time	Housing Officer	Areas & where to meet
Hawick	16th August, 2pm	Clair Wood	Stonefield/ Liddesdale. Meet at block 1 Stonefield.
Lauder / Oxton	17th August, 2.30pm	Jill Robertson	Walkabout covering Lauder and Oxton.
Hawick	22nd August, 2pm	Bev Richardson	Anderson Place and Howdenbank. Meet at Anderson Place garages.
Jedburgh	23rd August, 1.30pm	Guy Shillinglaw	Cairnmount, Jedburgh.
Newstead, Bowden & Darnick	23rd August, from 2pm	Jill Robertson	Walkabout covering Newstead, Bowden and Darnick.
Hawick	23rd August, 2pm	Clair Wood	Mansfield Gardens / Mansfield Road. Meet at junction of Gardens and Road.
Kelso	24th August, 9.30am	Helen Bulman	The Linn/Tweed Court/Springwood Terrace/Heiton. Meet at bottom of The Linn.
Peebles	25th August, 12.30pm	Debbie Morrison	Witchwood Crescent and Cademuir Drive Estate. Meet outside 1, Witchwood Crescent.
Newtown St Boswells	29th August, 2pm	Jill Robertson	Meet at entrance of Whitefield.
Hawick	30th August, 11am	Kaye Forsyth	Burnhead Road, Eildon Road, Kenilworth Ave, Queens Drive.
Hawick	30th August, 2pm	Clair Wood	Wellington Court.
Galashiels	30th August, 6pm	Kelly Mitchell	Lower Langlee, meeting at Winston Place.

Keeping you Informed

Summer Scrutiny project focuses on customer contact

Back in 2015, a Customer Audit Team carried out its first Scrutiny project on behalf of Tenants, scrutinising the services SBHA provides and helping to ensure that these remain dynamic to meet the needs and expectations of Tenants. Since then, 7 further services have been improved with 109 recommendations from the Tenant Scrutiny team being implemented, demonstrating SBHA's commitment to listen and act on Tenant feedback to continue to improve.

This Summer, the CAT carried out its eighth scrutiny project, focussed on customer contact and we will bring you outcomes from this in the Winter edition of this Newsletter.



Thank you, Izzy!

Student Izzy Folan has joined us for the Summer as a Tenant Engagement Assistant, to help run the Scrutiny project.



Hi, my name is Izzy Folan, I am the Tenant Engagement Assistant Intern for this summer. I have just graduated from University in America studying Public Health and will be going back to complete a Master's in health and wellness. It was great to be back in Scotland for the summer, and to be involved in an important project that can make positive change for SBHA tenants.



Congratulations to SBTO members on their new qualifications



Being a member of the Tenant Organisation is much more than attending meetings and meeting new friends; members also have opportunities to learn new skills to help with their roles.

Last year Tracey Glover (below) and Gordon Saunders (left, at the TPAS conference with host Michelle McManus) took an online course in Tenant Participation and Community Development run by TPAS.

Tracey says: "This was a 12-week course covering the legal and regulatory aspects of Tenant participation in Scotland, such as the various Housing Acts, and the different approaches to Tenant involvement and community development.

"I learned a lot about how Tenant participation benefits tenants, and their landlord, in helping to improve services, standards, and neighbourhoods. If you're interested in finding out how you can get involved, please contact Louise McNeilage on lmcneilage@sbha.org.uk"



Twenty years with SBHA

Meet some of our longest-serving Team members



"Over the years, keeping people safe has become more and more important - which is as it should be. I enjoy the variety of the work – from fitting new kitchens, to repairs, to working on getting empty homes ready for new Tenants. I like meeting people and having a blether. "

Craig Pritchard, Electrician

"We recognise that recent times have been very challenging for Tenants. I remain dedicated to understanding people's needs and supporting them.

It gives me satisfaction to know that I'm making a difference in people's lives."

Helen Bulman, Neighbourhood Housing Officer



"Over the 25 years I've worked with SBHA and SBC before that, I've built up strong relationships with many Tenants. I enjoy making someone's day with a chat. Over the years I've met a few characters and had lots laughs which has kept me going!"

Margaret Ramage, Amenity Housing Cleaner

"Keeping people safe is the most important thing, whatever the challenges. Covid was tricky - at one point I was fixing windows and kept trapping the fingers of my protective gloves with the screws!

We do all that we can to look after Tenants and keep their homes in good order. I take pride in that."

Keith Monks, Joiner



Meet your new Neighbourhood Property Officer!



Welcome to the newest member of the Neighbourhood Team, Property Officer David Cassidy. David had taken over as the Property Officer for Central and the West End of Hawick, along with Newcastleton, Newmill, Denholm, Bonchester, South Dean and Lilliesleaf. You can join David and Clair, your local Community Team, on estate walkabouts and share your thoughts and ideas for improvement (see Page 5)

David says: "SBHA's values really resonate with me. I am passionate about delivering quality services that meet the needs of all Tenants and look forward to engaging with Tenants to ensure I achieve this in everything I do."

No matter how long they've been with us, our Team members are dedicated to Tenants!

Kaye Forsyth is absolutely amazing at her job. She has been amazing over the past few months with everything what has been going on - nothing is ever too much for her and she is very helpful and understanding. She will always do her best to help and will always reply to enquiries and sort out problems if she can. She is great!

Tenant in Burnfoot



Housing heroes

Building on Warm and Well success



One of our commitments at stock transfer was to expand direct Tenant services, including financial support to help you in your home.

In our Spring edition shared the fantastic news that our Warm and Well service is expanding. We are now delighted to introduce our new Warm and Well Adviser, Terry Brown, who

will be working alongside Matt Rorison to ensure that we're able to support as many Tenants as possible with affordable energy advice as the cost of living crisis continues.

If you're experiencing difficulties with your home energy costs, or would like some advice, please call us on 01750 724444, or email enquiries@sbha.org.uk.

Supporting survivors of domestic abuse



Last year, we renewed our commitment to make a stand against domestic abuse. As a part of this commitment, we reached out to our Tenants and Applicants to gather feedback on a potential amendment to our Allocations Policy, which would award the highest priority to those experiencing domestic abuse.

The response we received was overwhelmingly supportive, and we are pleased to say that this change has now been made. We believe this change will make it easier for people to escape abusive situations, and we are grateful for your support. To view our policy, see our website.

Protecting your digital footprint

Everything you do online adds to your digital footprint. And anyone can see it, including employers, schools, colleges, universities, or sports teams.

You, family members or friends could fall victim to fraud or identity theft ... or both. Your children could be at risk of criminal activity threatening their online or physical safety. Tech companies can track and record what you've searched and viewed.

Top tips to stay safe

Think twice before sharing information about yourself, family members or friends. That goes for social media, forms on websites and apps, texts and messages and taking part in surveys and quizzes.

Think before you post. Even if your social media privacy settings are set up correctly, your posts

What goes online, stays online.

What does your digital footprint look like?



or photos could still be shared beyond those who you want to see them.

Read terms and conditions and data privacy policies on websites and apps before providing any personal data or making transactions. If you're not comfortable with the information being requested, don't provide it.

Check geolocation settings on mobile devices, apps and cameras. If you don't want anybody to know your whereabouts – or where you've been – disable them.

For more tips, go to www.getsafeonline.org



Housing heroes

What makes a great neighbour?

Since moving to their home in Cleland Avenue, Peebles, Stephanie and Chris Newington have established themselves as key members of their local community.

They have used recycled fencing to make fences for several of their neighbours, and provide support to some older residents with online admin. They also take it turns with neighbours to cook for each other - ensuring a good supply of home-cooked meals.

Asked what makes a good neighbour, Stephanie says: "Being a good listener and helping when needed. Having compassion for people and treating them as you would like to be treated yourself."

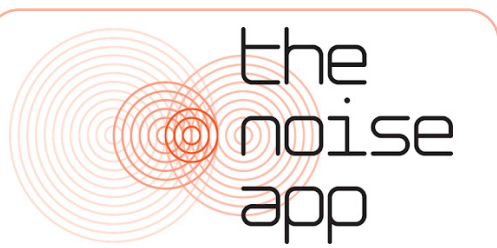


Be a Good Neighbour this Summer

Each year, over the Summer, we see an increase in reports from Tenants and residents of anti-social behaviour. There are reasons for this - for example, windows are open so you may be able to hear your neighbours more, people may be spending more time in their gardens and children are playing more outside.

This Summer, we are asking everyone to consider the impact their behaviour might have on their neighbours and communities. Think about how loudly you're playing music, or about the best time to do noisy DIY jobs or mow the grass. Normal sounds of children playing are not considered to be anti-social, but for example repeatedly kicking a ball into someone's garden may cause them distress or upset their dog if they have one.

Where there is repeated anti-social behaviour, we work with the Police and SBC's Anti Social Behaviour unit to help people who are affected by it. Call us on 01750 724444, Freephone 0800 0193 222 or email enquiries@sbha.org.uk



The Noise App is free to download from Google Play or the App store, and will help you to keep an accurate record of noise that is disturbing you in and around your home. When you set up your account, select 'Scottish Borders Housing Association' as your Investigator/Housing Provider. We will be notified of your recordings via a secure site. We will then contact you to discuss the next steps.

A reminder of our Pets Policy

If you want to keep a pet in your SBHA home, you need to apply to us for written permission. This includes domestic pets, exotic or caged animals, poultry, ducks, pigeons, rabbits, bees or other livestock or breeding animals.

In SBHA flats, only one pet is permitted. Dogs must be kept on a lead in communal areas at all times and not allowed outside your home alone.

Pets should not cause noise nuisance, fouling or damage either within the tenancy, their



neighbour's property or the neighbourhood.

Our Pets Policy is available on our website. You can also request a copy by getting in touch with us.

You Can Cook

Cooking on a budget

SBHA has always been about so much more than bricks and mortar. We've always had a strong ethos of community involvement, and recently we've been working with You Can Cook to deliver free cookery sessions for SBHA Tenants in various locations in the Borders.

SBTO member Greg attended a session held at Cafe ReCharge in Galashiels, and was very impressed!

"Today was AWESOME!!!! - I was given the opportunity by Alex Wilson from You Can Cook to demonstrate how to make one of my favourite Greek dishes - spanakopita. Thank you, Alex, for the opportunity and for all the amazing recipes you gave us all over the last 5 weeks (I learned a lot). Thank you also to all the team at Cafe ReCharge for the great atmosphere and your brilliant service - keep up your good work.

"I would also like to say a big thank you to SBHA and Matt Rorison (Warm & Well Co-ordinator) for all the time and effort they take to put these sessions together for Tenants. The You Can Cook sessions have been a great way for people to make friends and socialise, while learning new skills and getting involved in their communities, plus have fun! I hope to see more of these sessions in other areas in the very near future."

Greg's Spanakopita

- 1 leek or a bunch of spring onions, thinly sliced
- A dash of vegetable oil /mild olive oil
- 2 packs fresh spinach/or frozen
- 1 pack feta 200 gms, crumbled
- 1 tub ricotta
- 2 eggs
- Pinch salt and pepper to taste
- 2 ready rolled puff pastry



1. Heat oven to 180 degrees.
2. Wilt the spinach and squeeze in a muslin to remove any liquid. It needs to be really dry. Chop small.
3. Heat the oil in a medium pan, then add the leeks/spring onions and melt until softened.
4. Mix in the spinach and saute briefly.
5. Mix in the feta, ricotta and 1 egg.
6. Line your dish with one sheet of puff pastry. You can blind bake at this point if you wish.
7. Add the filling
8. Place the other sheet of pastry on top and score.
9. Brush with beaten egg and bake for 45 - 50 minutes till golden.



Time Hop

Our dedicated Team members regularly go above and beyond for Tenants and communities.

Raising money for charity has been a bit of a recurring theme at SBHA, and so has cake...

So here's a picture that combines the two – from a 'Wear it Pink' day in support of Breast Cancer Care in 2011.



How are we doing?

New TSS provider appointed

SBHA uses an independent provider to carry out regular surveys to help determine how satisfied Tenants are with our services. This gives us the information we need to keep improving, making the changes that you, our customers, want to see.

We have recently re-procured this service, and we are delighted to announce that our new Tenant Satisfaction Survey provider is Research Resource Scotland Ltd.

Our next survey will be carried out later this Summer - if you receive an invitation, please consider taking part - your feedback helps us to improve.



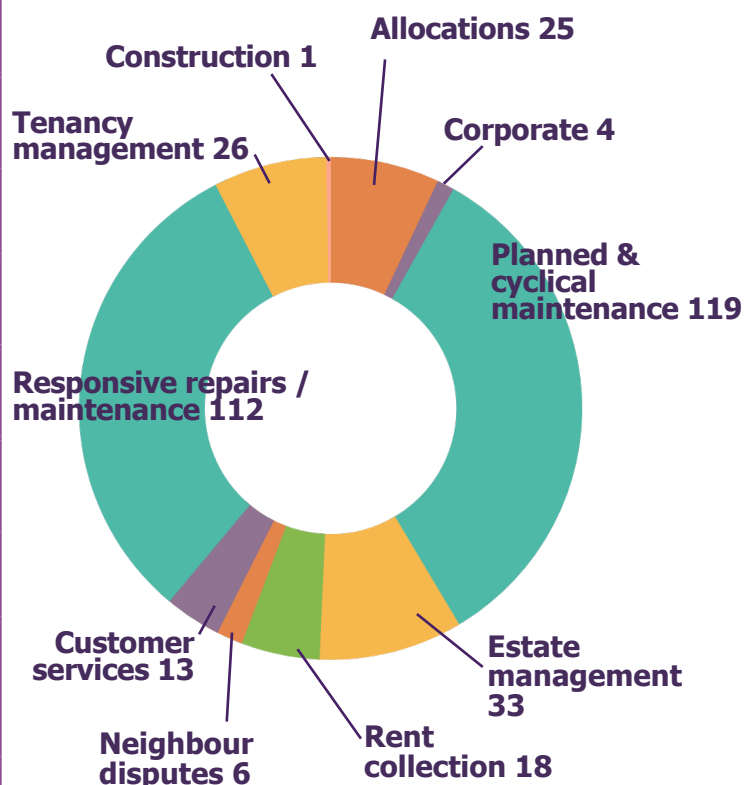
Tenant satisfaction

	2021-22	2022-23	😊 😐 😞
Tenants satisfied with overall service	75%	76%	😊
Tenants satisfied with how they're kept informed	69%	71%	😊
Tenants satisfied with opportunities to participate	58%	59%	😊
Tenants satisfied with a repair they've had carried out in the last 12 months	81%	82%	😊
Time taken to carry out an emergency repair	2hrs 7mins	1 hr 54 mins	😊
Time taken to carry out a non-emergency repair	10.6 days	10.7 days	😐
Percentage collected of rent due	98.6%	98.1%	😞
Days to re-let an empty home	34	36	😞
Calls resolved at first contact	89%	87%	😞

Complaints outcomes

	2021-22	2022-23	😊 😐 😞
Total complaints responded to	284	357	😞
Complaints resolved	77	51	😞
Not upheld	71	112	😊
Partially upheld	28	66	😊
Upheld	108	127	😞
Average days taken to respond - Stage 1	5	4	😊
Average days taken to respond - Stage 2	13	17	😞
% of complaints responded to within SPSO timescales - Stage 1*	80%	87%	😊
% of complaints responded to within SPSO timescales - Stage 2	100%	90%	😞

Complaints received by service area - 2022-23



* Timescales for responses are set by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman - www.spsso.org.uk/spsso

SBHA's Rent & Service Charge Review we need your views!



*Carly Stewart,
Director of Finance*

SBHA aims to ensure that all Tenants and customers feel that they receive good value for money from us. We will soon be asking all of you for your thoughts on our rent and service charge policy review across SBHA as we are in the process of reviewing our current model.

The aim is to continue to ensure that our rents and service charges are fair, transparent, and affordable for everyone.

A special newsletter will be with you around the beginning of September to let you know more about our plans and what this could mean for rents and service charges.

There are various opportunities for you to have your say, including paper and digital surveys, giving your feedback via email or over the phone, plus SBHA will also be holding a series of consultation events out in your communities. We encourage you to take part in this consultation as it is important that we hear the views of as many Tenants and customers as possible.

Time Hop

Working together through the years - SBTO members with SBHA's first Chair, Oliver Angus, and Chief Executive Janice Cambridge.



SBTO and SBHA work together to produce your Tenant newsletters - please get in touch if you have any suggestions for content - email communications@sbha.org.uk or call 01750 724444.



When we first started out, we had no website - and Facebook hadn't even been invented yet! The web and social media are a huge part of our world now, and while we know it isn't for everyone, if you would like to check out our channels you can do so by scanning the QR codes below. We can also offer you support with getting online - call 01750 724444.



If you've attended any of our Summer events, you will have met our Birthday Bear, who we've asked Tenants to name for a chance to win him! We've hidden cartoon bears throughout this edition - find them for a chance to win a £10 voucher. Send us an email with the correct number by the 31st August - jmcrobbie@sbha.org.uk.



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