



Scottish Housing
BEST VALUE NETWORK



ANNUAL REPORT 2009 - 2010

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FOREWORD FROM CHAIRPERSON

SHBVN has had another busy year in 2009/10. The role of SHBVN Chair is a varied one with SHBVN meetings to facilitate, driving forward the business change programme and representing the Network at various events.

Thirty one of Scotland's councils and forty housing associations are currently members of the SHBVN.

Now in its second year, SHBVN's business change process has gathered pace: the hosting contract was extended for one year (until April 2011); the Benchmarking system was brought in-house and the new website created. There has also been significant preparation work to lay the foundations to achieve the new legal status.

During this challenging time, we have continued to provide an effective and professional members' service to landlords in the following ways:

- Performance Benchmarking
- Practice Exchange Forums
- Self Assessment & Peer Review
- Working collaboratively to support landlords to achieve continuous improvement.

SHBVN is 15 years old this year and we have come a long way since 1995. A celebration of our history and the many achievements that members and officers have delivered can be found on the centre pages of this Annual Report.

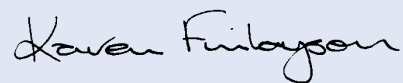
As ever the Scottish Housing sector has also seen much activity in 2009/10. The Scottish Government has been carrying out various consultation/discussion

processes on Housing issues, including: the discussion paper, "Housing: Fresh Thinking New Ideas", a consultation paper "Protection of Tenants with rent arrears"; a newly formed sounding board on "The Scottish Social Charter". The establishment of National Housing Trust and a focus on Housing Options are other key housing issues currently on the national agenda.

The Scottish Housing Regulator has been considering "Shared Risk Assessment in Local Authorities" as well as fine tuning its approach to regulation of RSLs.

SHBVN has once again been involved in working closely with national stakeholders to add their voice to these many debates and thus stay at the forefront of the national housing agenda.

What the future holds is difficult to predict, and the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review will have a huge impact. There is little doubt that there will be a significant impact on public sector services and in turn on tenants and customers. SHBVN's role of supporting its members to achieve continuous improvement within tighter budget restraints will be of even greater importance. Working innovatively and creatively together has been a major strength of the Network over the past 15 years. In the times ahead this approach will be a fundamental tool for balancing the efficiencies agenda and delivering quality services – the essence of Best Value.



Karen Finlayson, East Dunbartonshire Council
SHBVN Chairperson



ACHIEVEMENTS

We have experienced another busy and successful year. Listed below are our main achievements set out against our business plan activities, and which have been framed within the context of reducing costs and improving services. We have successfully achieved our goals and have increased our staff resources as a result. The Key Achievements in 2009/10 were:

BENCHMARKING:

- Completing the quarterly exercise in house
- Collecting the annual data via web based return for the first time
- Construction and launch of the new benchmarking website
- Facilitating 3 benchmarking seminars (about 70 attendees) including a dedicated event for LA stock transfer members
- SHBVN's Research and Development Coordinator carrying out 29 visits to feedback performance to individual organisations and challenge how improvements will be realised
- Expanding the RSL benchmarking service to include a new web platform and increase membership numbers (from 32 to 39)

PRACTICE EXCHANGE FORUMS:

- Forming the new Asset Management group
- Securing Scottish Government funding to continue to deliver the Private Sector Group support service until March 2011
- Increasing the number of members engaging with practice forums events – all member authorities attended at least one of the forums

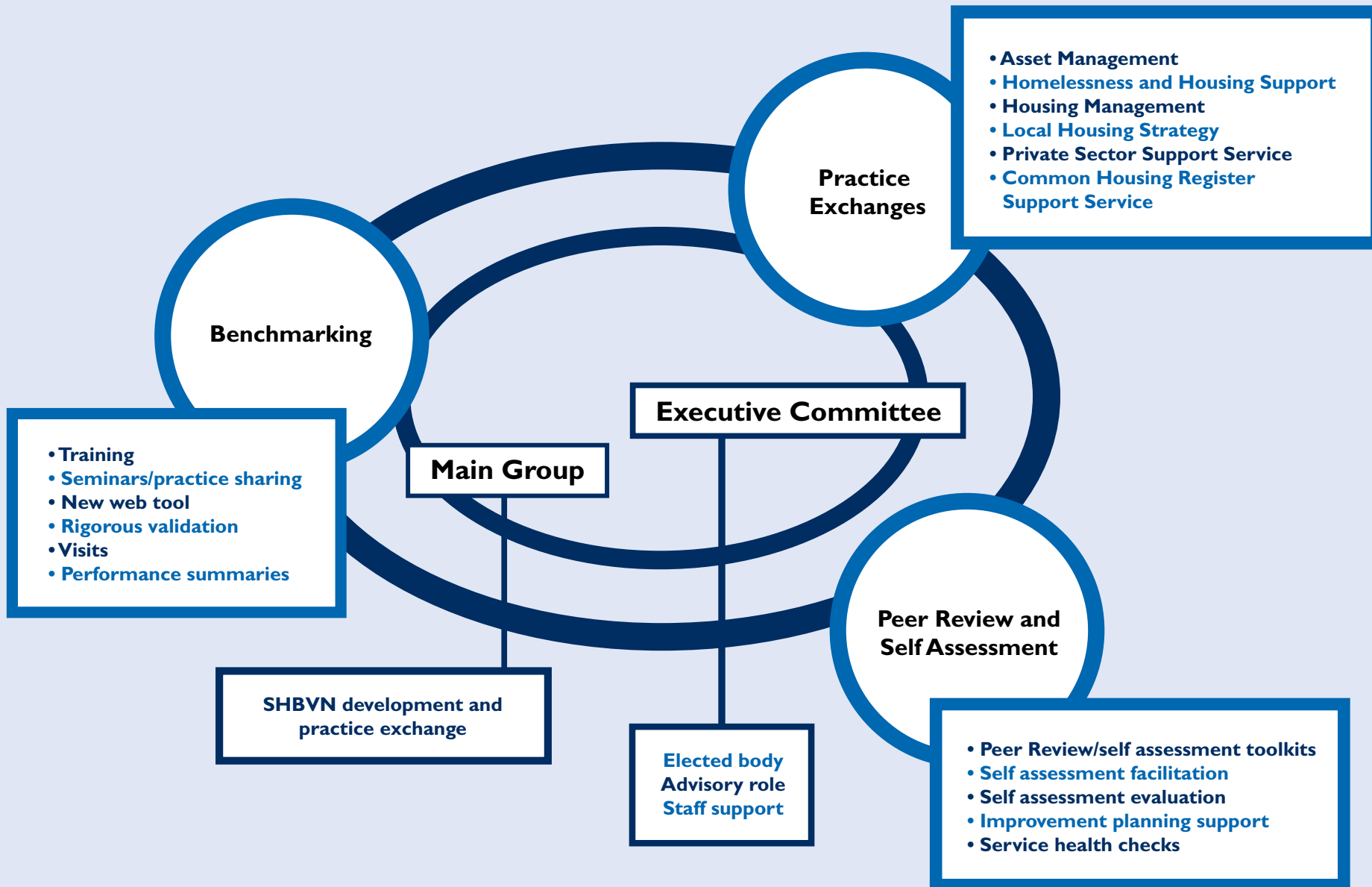
PEER REVIEW/SELF ASSESSMENT:

- Developing seven new self assessment toolkits through consultation (and peer assessment of formats) with members in:
 - Estate Management
 - Homelessness Prevention
 - Homelessness Assessment and Investigation
 - Homelessness Case Management
 - Homelessness Temporary Accommodation
 - Housing Support
 - Tenant Participation
- Supporting members in self assessment/improvement planning work

AND IN ADDITION TO ACHIEVING BUSINESS PLAN OBJECTIVES, SHBVN ALSO:

- Provided support to the developing Community Care Benchmarking Network
- Secured SG funding to facilitate four Action Learning Sets as part of the Scottish Regeneration Centre's Learning Networks

SERVICES



A HISTORY OF SHBVN

Celebrating 15 years of SHBVN is important for recognising:

- that as a membership organisation, owned and managed by its members, how vital it is to our success that services are high quality and continue to meet the needs of members
- we have a unique approach to supporting social landlords to improve services which has grown and evolved as our members' practice has grown and evolved

Here are some of the key milestones in SHBVN's history:

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| 1995 | 1999 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 |
| SHBVN set up with 5 members | Contract with HQN to deliver cost and performance benchmarking exercises (12 members and 6KPI's) and Clackmannanshire Council take on "parenting role" | Peer Review in Estate Management established – a response to the acceptance that this activity is difficult to measure | SHBVN establish the full time coordinator's post and first business plan, formal decision making structures adopted, sub groups included: Homelessness, Voids, Tenant Participation, Performance Indicators, Investment Programme | SHBVN develops constitution to allow the election of executive members, SHBVN website goes live, new sub groups established in: Allocations, Equalities, Local Housing Strategy and Housing Support |

1995

"SHBVN, helping to deliver Best Value"

THE FUTURE FOR SHBVN

As we move into a new era for SHBVN we will support landlords to deliver better services in what will be the toughest financial period of our history. To support our move to establishing SHBVN as a company, we will introduce a new governance arrangement. A new board will be set up with explicit responsibility for managing the business.

In the future, we will develop in the following ways:

| BUSINESS/STRATEGIC | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up SHBVN as a legally recognised company and establish a new governing body • Move to new premises and consider joint working opportunities when current hosting arrangement expires • Implement results of the structure review to ensure the organisation continues to be fit for purpose • Conduct customer satisfaction survey | Benchmarking |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to improve new web system to reflect members' needs • Develop new indicators and improve on existing definitions • Consult with RSL members to consider demand for wider set of services |

SHBVN KEY AIMS

In this coming year, much of our efforts will be focused on consolidating our new services. Our key aims though remain unchanged as noted below

1. Contribute to the development of standards and good practice in housing.
2. Facilitate co-operation between Network members through benchmarking, peer review inspection, self assessment activities and exchange of information and good practice.
3. Promote the activities of the Network amongst Scottish housing providers, professional and national bodies such as Audit Scotland, the Scottish Government and the Scottish Housing Regulator.
4. Encourage and facilitate members' progress towards achieving Best Value and continuous improvement across services.

| 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|---|--|---|---|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| 27 members, officer post introduced, Business Plan process extended to a three year cycle | Peer Review models implemented in Homelessness and Tenant Participation, Service User Involvement project set up | RSL benchmarking service established, Homelessness and Housing Support sub groups merge | Scottish Government funded CHR post created | Business change programme agreed, new 3 year Business Plan 2008-2011, Private Sector Group support service established | Quarterly benchmarking exercise carried out in house and the benchmarking web system design starts | New benchmarking website is launched |

Value in Scottish housing for 15 years”

2010

| OPERATIONAL | |
|--|--|
| Practice Exchange Forums | Peer Review And Self Assessment |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to deliver effective events to support service improvement • Review forum numbers and themes by October 2011 • Improve methods of sharing outputs to achieve the maximum impact • Establish need for and bid for continued resources for continuing the PSG and CHR forums | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch new range of services • Increase take up of both new and existing services |

We will also continue to work collaboratively by

- consolidating existing opportunities for collaborative working arrangements with established partners
- establishing linkages with new stakeholders (including from the private sector, trade bodies etc)

PRACTICE EXCHANGE FORUMS

Our members highly value the opportunity to regularly network, share experiences and learn from each other through SHBVN practice exchange forums. These forums are a core business element and are integral to business effectiveness as well as critical to supporting improvement. Noted below is a summary of key topics and activities covered in each of the forums.

The Main Group

- Each member has reported back on their inspection experiences to share approaches and lessons learned.
- Presentation by Audit Scotland on the launch of their Best Value toolkits.
- Presentation from the SHR providing an update on the new joint scrutiny approach and the risk based developments.
- Presentation and discussion on the Scottish Government's Investment Reform agenda.
- Participating in a pilot to examine public sector efficiency.
- Asset Management in Local Government.
- Scotland's Public Finances - Preparing for the Future.
- Self Assessment.
- Assessment of the Improvement Service's Customer Satisfaction Measurement Tool and potential for benchmarking.
- Assessment of a report completed by GHA, "Measuring Customer Excellence".

Asset Management

- Asset management and the expectations of the regulator.
- The process of local asset management plans.
- Asset management and SHQS.
- Gas Safety processes.
- SHQS Standard Delivery Plan Midpoint Data Collection.
- Communication frameworks.
- Energy efficiency measures.
- Self assessment toolkits for asset management.

Homelessness & Housing Support

- Section 32A.
- Women's Aid Refuge provision.
- Business process mapping in homelessness and housing support.
- The work of the Supported Accommodation Working Group.
- Identifying information needs on Housing Support.
- Consulting on indicators for Homelessness and Housing Support.
- Temporary accommodation benchmarking results. (follow on exercise)
- Temporary accommodation cost analysis research outputs.
- Monitoring and cost benefit analysis for prevention activities.
- Homelessness service contributions to national outcomes.
- Housing Options.
- Developing self assessment models in homelessness and housing support.

Housing Management

- Local and national regeneration programmes.
- Approaches to Tenancy Sustainment.
- Single Shared Assessments.
- Housing Support and Homeless Prevention Activities.
- Financial Inclusion and Tenancy Sustainment.
- Partnership approach to early interventions with rent arrears.
- Scottish Social Housing Charter: Involving Tenants.
- Tenant Led Inspections: Edinburgh's partnership approach.
- New approaches to tenant involvement.

Local Housing Strategy

- Presentation on Climate Change Act by Scottish Government and a discussion on the implications for the LHS.
- Update on the national approaches to eradicating fuel poverty and sharing of practice.
- Presentation from Scottish Government on the establishment of the National Housing Trust and a discussion around the impact of this.
- Regular inputs from members providing an update on local LHS progress including the interpretation of guidance.
- A Training Needs Analysis is conducted every 18-24 months and a training programme delivered.
- Regular discussion on the assessment of particular needs to explore methodology and successes.
- Sharing approaches to producing SHIPs and informing the development of the methodology used by Scottish Government.
- Inform the development of the new LHS Peer Review system.
- Joint event with HSEU and SHFA "Making the Link: the role of Housing Support within Local Housing Strategies".

CROSS SECTOR SERVICES

Common Housing Register (CHR) Support Service

2009/10 has been another busy year for Debbie Burns the CHR Project Officer. Some of the key outputs achieved through the SHBVN and CIH Scotland partnership project this year have been:

Publications:

- CHR Position Study launched in August 2010
- Good Practice Pointers: "North Ayrshire Launching a CHR" and "Perth and Kinross Housing Options and Advice Service" (April 2010).

CHR Forums:

- 'Developing Commonality' with Debbie presenting an update on the national position
- 'Making Partnerships Work...Better'. Janet Williams (the Audit Commission) presented on how to conduct a housing partnership self assessment and a taster session using the Delivery Chain Workshop methodology (identifying the priority areas for improving local outcomes)
- 'Launching a CHR' with inputs from North Ayrshire Housing Register (NAHR) and South Lanarkshire 'Homefinder'
- 'CHR's and CBL Forum' with a look at EdIndex's integration of CBL systems within the context of a CHR.

CHR Workshops:

- Series of IT workshops, with focused independent IT Support, and Partnership Development workshops
- SFHA Housing Management Forum: Housing Options and CHR's focused IT support
- CIH Scotland Annual Conference: Increasing Choice and Access to Housing.

The CHR support service is available to assist all Scottish landlords – housing associations and local authorities – in the development and implementation of Common Housing Registers.

Private Sector Support Service

This support service is funded by the Scottish Government until end of March 2011 and SHBVN works in partnership with CIH to deliver this project.

The work undertaken by this group is wide ranging and continues to support local authorities to implement the requirements of the Housing (Scotland) 2006 Act. The structure includes a full group with a set of four sub groups. The full group meets quarterly and examines high level issues. The sub groups are small and meet regularly to work on particular issues. The sub groups at present cover:

- Mixed tenure,
- Lending Advice,
- Strategy and Performance,
- Learning and Development

The group has developed strong ties with a range of external bodies including the newly established Scottish Empty Homes Partnership, Inclusion Scotland, the Construction Licensing Executive & the financial sector. These relationships build on the much established links with other agencies such as Trusted Trader and Care & Repair.

In the coming 6 months the support service will produce a number of outputs with a number of publications in the pipeline including a newsletter and good practice guide.

The officer responsible for delivering the service is Douglas Munro – formerly a Principal Officer with Glasgow City Council (Private Sector). Prior to taking up this post Douglas represented COSLA on the Scottish Government Working Group on Property Management accreditation and his experience is invaluable.

Action Learning Sets

In April 2010, SHBVN was awarded £40,000 funding by the Scottish Government (Scottish Centre for Regeneration) to deliver 4 Action Learning Sets (ALS). ALSs are a training and learning tool to help individuals to discuss and resolve a particularly challenging issue they are dealing with at work. The Action Learning Sets that SHBVN are facilitating are:

- Mainstreaming Performance Improvement
- Planning for LHS
- Energy Efficiency & New Technology
- Climate Change & SHQS

At the time of writing this report, each ALS has met at least once and started producing different outputs for their Set members.

The ALSs, part of a wider programme, are being delivered until March 2011. Another part of the initiative is two Learning Networks: Housing Management & Efficiencies and Housing Energy Efficiency. Designed to support practitioners' learning in topical housing issues and increase their understanding of their own work practices, this collaborative piece of work sees SHBVN working alongside CIH, SFHA and other national organisations.

LIST OF MEMBERS 2010

CORE MEMBERS

Aberdeen City Council
Aberdeenshire Council
Angus Council
Argyll and Bute Council
The City of Edinburgh Council
Clackmannanshire Council
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
Dumfries & Galloway Council

Dundee City Council
East Ayrshire Council
East Dunbartonshire Council
East Lothian Council
East Renfrewshire Council
Falkirk Council
Fife Council
Glasgow City Council

Glasgow Housing Association
The Highland Council
Inverclyde Council
Midlothian Council
The Moray Council
North Ayrshire Council
North Lanarkshire Council
Orkney Islands Council

Perth and Kinross Council
Renfrewshire Council
Scottish Borders Council
South Ayrshire Council
South Lanarkshire Council
Stirling Council
West Dunbartonshire Council
West Lothian Council

RSL BENCHMARKING MEMBERS

Aberdeenshire Housing Partnership
Albyn Housing Society Ltd
Atrium Homes
Ayrshire Housing Association
Barrhead Housing Association
Cadder Housing Association
Cairn Housing Association
Cassiltoun Housing Association
Cloch Housing Association
Cube Housing Association Ltd
Cunninghame Housing Association

Dumfries and Galloway Housing Partnership
Dunbritton Housing Association
Eildon Housing Association Ltd
Fyne Homes Ltd
Govan Housing Association
Hebridean Housing Partnership
Hillcrest Housing Association
Home Scotland
Horizon Housing Association
Hunters Hall Housing Co-op Ltd

Irvine Housing Association
Link Group
Loretto Housing Association
Margaret Blackwood Housing Association
Milnbank Housing Association
Moray Housing Partnership
Muirhouse Housing Association
North View Housing Association
Ore Valley Housing Association
Paragon Housing Association

Perthshire Housing Association
Port of Leith HA
River Clyde Homes
Shettleston Housing Association
Southside Housing Association
West of Scotland Housing Association
Williamsburgh Housing Association
Wishaw and District Housing Association



Scottish Housing
BEST VALUE NETWORK



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