

Cloch Housing Association
Annual Assurance Statement 2023



In reviewing the evidence and assessing compliance, we have taken account of good practice advice using the Scottish Federation of Housing Association and Scottish Benchmarking Network's toolkits as a guide.

We have obtained external support to provide us with additional assurance that our approach is effective and robust and conducted external surveys of tenants in both Equalities, (August 2022) and Tenant Satisfaction, (January 2022) and we are currently carrying out a further external Tenant Satisfaction Survey, (October 2023), which also incorporate equalities data collection.

In reviewing compliance, we have adopted an improvement focus and by reviewing appropriate evidence, have also identified a few improvement actions which we will progress during the year. To support effective implementation, these actions form an Improvement Action Plan which is monitored by the Board at agreed intervals to ensure successful achievement.

The Board of Cloch Housing Association, (Cloch) is satisfied that, to the best of our knowledge, Cloch is compliant with the requirements of Chapter Three of the Regulatory Framework and the Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management. We have gained this assurance from a review of a comprehensive bank of evidence and from ongoing oversight and scrutiny of Cloch's affairs throughout the year, (2022/23).

The evidence which supports this statement includes:

- Reports about performance in key areas including finance, service delivery, asset management, tenant and resident safety, and risk.
- Tenant involvement activity, reports, and outcomes from specific consultation.
- Data analysis about our tenants and customers.
- Benchmarking.
- Reports, advice, and information from the Leadership Team.
- Advice from external and specialist advisers.
- Internal Audit and External Audit reports, with the following audits complete by our contracted Internal Auditor from April 2022 to October 2023:

Procurement	Substantial Assurance
Equality and Diversity	Substantial Assurance
Planned & Cyclical Maintenance	Reasonable Assurance
Budgetary Control	Substantial Assurance
Corporate Performance Management	Substantial Assurance

We are assured that Cloch has the necessary arrangements in place to identify any risks to compliance in the course of the conduct of our business and governance arrangements.

In terms of specific areas of compliance with the Regulatory Framework, we are assured that we have established appropriate systems for the collection of equalities data, and we are assured that we are working towards using this data to take account of equality and human rights issues in our decisions, policy-making and day-to-day service delivery.

In reviewing our compliance with relevant obligations in relation to tenant and resident safety, we are assured Cloch meets all its duties, and we are working on recommendations from a recent audit referenced as low risk areas for improvement. The evidence which supports this statement includes:

- Membership of EVH Landlord Facilities, Health, Safety and Welfare System, which is a professional, specialist resource that provides guidance, legislation, and policies to assist in meeting health and safety compliance requirements.
- An annual report is provided to the Board detailing updates on Health and Safety, including Board approving of the Annual Safety Statement.
- The membership includes an annual Landlord Safety Audit, most recently undertaken in August 2023.
- The outcome of the recent audit was noted as: *“Overall, this audit was good and demonstrated a good level of compliance at Cloch HA. There are a few areas for improvement which have been highlighted in the Management Plan section of this report, though the organisation were already aware of most of them.”* Improvement actions identified form part of our Improvement Action Plan, which is monitored by the Board.
- An internal “Duty of Care” audit was also carried out in December 2021 which provided “Substantial Assurance” re: ensuring safety compliance on areas including gas, asbestos, fire safety and legionella.
- EICR, (Electrical Installation Condition Report) compliance is 99%, with the variance reported to the SHR as an abeyance.
- A new Damp & Mould Policy was introduced in August 2023, with changes also made to the Property Services Quarterly Performance Report to bring all compliance reporting data into one table for Board to review.
- The 2023-2026 Business Plan has been refreshed with a new objective added relating to tenant and resident safety. In support to this, the staffing structure is also being reviewed and Cloch has appointed a specialist consultant to assess the requirements for a Tenant Safety & Compliance Officer and there is a recommendation for a new post, associated with the review.

The Board can confirm that we have seen and considered appropriate evidence to support the level of assurance we have.

As Chair, I was authorised by the Board at the meeting held on 24th of October 2023 to sign and submit this Assurance Statement and I confirm this Assurance Statement will be published on our website on the same date that it is submitted to the SHR.

Signed:

Name: Kelly Ferns

Position Held: Chair of Cloch Housing Association Board

Date: 25th of October 2023