TTS SHR Liaison Group – 11 November 2025 (In Person)

Attendees:

TTS: Shona Gorman (SG), June Anderson (JA), John Duffy (JD), Margaret Dymond (MDy), Scott MacLeod (SM), Gordon Saunders (GS), Alasdair Mackenzie (AM)

SHR: Helen Trouten Torres (HTT – Chair), Marieke Dwarshuis (MDw), Kelda McMichael (KM), Caroline Cameron-Russell (CCR), Michael Cameron (MC – Items 1–2), Garry Coutts (GC – Items 1–2), Iain Muirhead (IM – Item 3), Tracy Davren (TD – Item 3)

Apologies: Liz McKnockiter (TTS)

Welcome and Introductions

HTT welcomed attendees, with a special mention for new TTS member Alasdair Mackenzie and SHR Board Chair Garry Coutts. HTT also welcomed SHR Chief Executive Michael Cameron.

Declarations of Interest

JA - Paragon Housing Board and Clackmannanshire Tenants and Residents Federation member
JD – North Lanarkshire Federation of Tenants
MDy – TPAS Board member
SG – Link Group Board member
GS – TIS Board member
SM – Albyn Housing Society Board member

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of 19 August 2025 were agreed.

Action Log

Three actions were outstanding at the start of the meeting; members agreed these would be addressed during today's agenda and revisited under AOB. Under AOB it was agreed to carry forward one action which had been partially completed but which would be reviewed again at the next meeting.

Q&A with SHR Chair and Chief Executive

GC introduced himself, outlining his background and commitment to tenant priorities, and his particular interest in rural areas. MC provided an overview of SHR's current focus and SG outlined TTS current priorities. The main talking points were SHR's role in:

- regulating damp and mould issues

- the housing emergency and homelessness

- monitoring the affordability of rent

- monitoring whether rent consultations are meaningful

MC committed to involve TTS in any upcoming review of the ARC damp & mould indicators within SHR's remit following the introduction of a Scottish version of "Awaab's Law" (which is planned for March 2026).

The group also discussed the importance of keeping a focus on the housing emergency; and how it was useful for tenants to receive annual feedback on how rent consultation shaped rent setting and the services provided to tenants.

Tenant Engagement and Communications

This session aimed to hear the views and suggestions of the group on how SHR communicate and include tenants and service users in its work. The key areas of the Group's feedback was that communication should be clear, consistent and concise but most importantly, relevant.

IM and TD presented SHR's approach to tenant engagement and communications, including information on: the review of the current communications strategy; SHR stakeholders; and National Panel feedback on SHR's current approach.

The group provided the following feedback:

- The group agreed on the importance of clear, concise, accessible, and relevant communication.

- Tenants usually need an existing interest in SHR's work before engaging with SHR. The group believed that there is a clear distinction between those invested in social housing and regulatory issues and those who are not, making it difficult to know how best to support the latter.

- Landlords could do more to promote the work of SHR, but that they may be hesitant to do so if they have a history of engagement with SHR. A suggested way to encourage buy-in was for SHR to highlight good practice, citing examples such as TIS and CIH awards.

- SHR's news items could be more engaging for tenants. One suggestion was to add biographical information to stories about new board members.

- SHR publishes thematic studies that are relevant to tenants, such as the recent thematic study on British Sign Language services in social housing. The group suggested these should be signposted more clearly in the "For Tenants" section of the website.

- Two-way communication channels are important – it was suggested that it may be helpful for the National Panel of Tenants and Service Users to be able to suggest topics and subject areas to discuss with SHR and that it may be useful for SHR to provide more ways to contact SHR online or via social media.

- The landlord comparison area of the website is useful, but further guidance on how tenants can make best use of the information in it could be helpful, especially for those who don't have more in-depth knowledge of the sector. The group suggested exploring ways to enable "like-for-like" comparisons between landlords of similar size or type.

- Using landlord websites and resources was seen as an effective way to share information about SHR with tenants.

- The "Complaints and Serious Concerns" leaflet should be made more prominent on SHR's website.

- The Group suggested that an AI answering tool on the SHR website might be useful, noting that AI tools are still in their infancy and the challenge would be to ensure the AI pulls information from the correct sources.

The group then went on to discuss other examples of tenant engagement including the Edinburgh Tenants Federation Public Information comic which was raised during the SHR Parliamentary Committee sessions.

The main feedback was:

- Material should avoid a 'parent to child' tone which can be patronising. Some websites/communications contain too much of the same information. An example of videos containing only text and music when this information is already available in text format was given. They noted there needs to be better ways to make data interesting.

- One member explained that sometimes humor is a good way of spreading a serious message – sighting a Scottish Fire and Rescue Service video where a serious subject (fire) was made more interesting and personable. However the group recognised that in the regulation setting, such an approach may be difficult.

- The group liked a human approach – where people and communities are featured in communications.

- Accessibility felt important to the Group, noting that the current website is designed with accessibility at the heart.

- On person commented that the website homepage image—a house shape formed by a crowd—might not clearly convey housing to all users.

The group next discussed SHR's 2026-29 approach to including tenants and service users in its work. The group considered the current strategy for 2023-2026.

- The group felt that the three main areas (understand, involve and communicate) still felt relevant.

- The group felt the strategy was very corporate and that while this might be required, a 'tenants version' which is simple and to the point would also be useful.

KM noted that SHR would be recruiting a new set of Tenant Advisors in early 2026 and said SHR hope to reach a diverse range of tenants in the advertising of this. SHR will work with TIS on this project.

The group had been provided in advance with an updated draft version of the tenants' leaflet on complaints and serious concerns for their consideration. They told us:

- More examples of what a serious concern is could be provided and give further details on the examples already there.

- A visual representation of what we SHR could and could not be considered as a serious concern might be useful (for example as seen at [OSCR | Raise a Concern](#)).

- They found it hard to find the tenant leaflet on the SHR website– but they agreed this would be solved by the 2 click from front page change IM and TD proposed.

- They noted a web form rather than a word document would be most appropriate for tenants to use to provide serious concerns information, saying the current method of downloading a word document to complete was out of date and not user friendly. IM noted this was something SHR could consider but would depend on resources, and if possible would take some time to create.

- In terms of how SHR 'advertise' the serious concerns process, while the group thinks SHR could do more to promote itself, they believe the heavy lifting should be with landlords and SHR should require landlords to do more to provide information on SHR and serious concerns. They said this should not just be in the form of adding information to websites but in other ways e.g. newsletters, CX, discussing at tenant events/forums, or physical leaflets available in their offices.

- The Group felt that more examples of what a serious concern looked like should be provided – an earlier example on the OSCR website was referred to where ticks and crosses were used for what they could and could not deal with, group felt SHR could use this to demonstrate what could and could not be considered as a serious concern.

The group had also been provided in advance with a new 'jargon buster' for tenants that had been created by SHR. The Group liked this and felt it would be useful to have to hand and provide to interested tenants. They indicated that it covered all required areas.

Item 4 – TTS Update

SG provided updates on TTS activities, including recent and future events and speaking engagements:

- Attended a Cairn staff event to promote the work of TTS and tenant engagement

- Attended Housing Industry Leaders' conference

- Attended SHARE's "Meet the Regulator" event

- Attended Scottish Tenant Engagement Network (STEN) meetings – this is a new professional network focusing on innovation in tenant engagement developed by CX-Feeback.

- Involved in TIS rent setting consultation event in September

- Part of the CIH awards judging panel and will attend the awards ceremony on 14 November

- Will attend and sit on panels at CIH conference in March 2026

- SG advised that TTS were considering opportunities to run a "meet the office bearers" event

- Continuing to build good working relationships with SFHA and CIH

- Members have been invited to join a Changeworks working group which is considering literature for the social housing sector on energy and decarbonization issues.

SG advised that TTS are still working toward gaining more members, particularly underrepresented groups such as young persons and in geographical areas such as the central belt. They are moving forward with their strategy and are meeting with TIS later in November to progress their work here.

SM noted that TTS were about to launch on social media (X, Bluesky, Linkedin, Facebook) and hope that this will also increase interest in and knowledge of TTS.

SG suggested that she could provide this information in writing prior to the next meeting in an effort to reduce meeting length as per Action TTS013. The meeting agreed this approach.

Item 5 – SHR Updates

The meeting turned to SHR news and Board updates since the last meeting in August, members had been provided with a full summary of this in advance as agreed to test reducing meeting length (Actions TTS013) and KM offered to take questions, there were none.

Item 6 – Terms of Reference

HTT confirmed the updated Terms of Reference, including changes to minute process and addition of blog publication. Members noted and agreed.

Any Other Business

Members agreed that TTS008 (TTS Liaison Group members to consider good examples of tenant communications and to share these with SG for onward distribution to SHR) and TTS11 (KM to organise for a presentation of the National Panel report to be given at a future TTS SHR Liaison Group meeting) should be closed, but that TTS013 (SHR and SG to consider Liaison Group meeting content and length) should be tested at a standard meeting in February with the addition of SG providing a TTS update in advance, and would remain open.

HTT reminded the group of the 2026 meeting dates.

No further business raised.

Close

HTT thanked all attendees and noted the next meeting would take place online on 3 February 2026.