

# SCRUTINY GROUP

SESSION 3 REPORT - JANUARY 2025

## Why Scrutiny?

Scrutiny involves our tenants working in partnership with us to scrutinise, provide feedback and recommendations on how we are doing and help to shape and improve our services. This enables us to be the best we can be and provide the best service for our tenants. This is good value for money, how do we know how good we are doing if we don't ask.



## How are the groups made up?

Stereotypical scrutiny is classically made up of a very small select few tenants who are already involved in other parts of the organisation. Since COVID 19 pandemic there has been a higher level of apathy and a need to rebuild trust and relationships.

Our approach to scrutiny is moving away from traditional to be more open and inclusive and for all needs and abilities and levels of commitment that people can give. This is to enable a wide range of feedback and recommendations from across the whole tenant base and not a select section.

I was asked to bring together two groups for different localities, one in Dundee and one in Angus. We need to be 2 groups in Dundee and Angus as each area have their own views on services in different localities it is relevant to what matters to them. It is engagement from different parts of the community.

## Dundee Group

The Dundee group is made up of tenants from different backgrounds and educational achievement. These tenants are quite new to Angus Housing Association and have lived experience in different parts of the housing sector.



## Angus Group

The Angus group is made up of tenants from different parts of Angus – Arbroath, Carnoustie, Montrose and Auchmithie. These tenants have lived in their properties between 5 and 15 years. The age range for both groups are between 40 and 80 years of age.

Further action is to try and get younger people aged 18 to 40 involved in scrutiny.

### Session plan

Each session will have a detailed session plan and will have an icebreaker quiz. To ensure consistency and valuable feedback each session three questions will be asked (these will be adapted)

- Is there anything you liked?
- Is there anything that surprised you?
- Is there anything you think we can do better?

There will be an evaluation and self-reflection at the end of each session which will be used to help shape and design future sessions ensuring that tenants feel comfortable and keep coming back.

## Feedback from Session 3 – Standards for Letting Void Properties

The aim of this session was to find out the level of understanding from the two groups on what a Void property is and what the acceptable minimum standard is for all Association properties.

We had a quick true/false quiz with 6 questions on what tenants rent money is spent on. The quiz was used a knowledge checker and overall results showed that half of the participants (8 tenants) did not know what a lettable standard is. The group were impressed that the Association took on average 26 days to bring a void to a lettable standard compared to the average of 61 days.



This was followed by a conversation about why we have lettable standards and legislation such as the Scottish Housing Quality Standards.



Our guest speaker from the Maintenance Team went through the process of what is involved from when a notice period is given and the keys are handed back to the Association and the various procedures that are involved.

The groups were then shown a video of a Void when the keys were handed back to the Association and when it has been relet.



### Dundee Group

- “Its good that the Association treats voids as a priority”
- “I was surprised by the amount of Voids, 120 for last year. I thought this would be more”
- “Its encouraging that Angus Housing Association goes over and above the minimum lettable standards”

### Angus Group

- “Glad to know there is a recharge and the Association tries to get some money back”
- “It is good that when it is a property transfer, it is the outgoing tenants responsibility to bring the property up to standard”
- “I was surprised by the costs from trades, especially for decorating”

## Recommendations/Suggestions from Session 3

Both the Dundee and Angus groups benefitted from having a guest speaker and appreciated the structured process for handing over and receiving properties. The attention to detail and transparency were very positive.

- Change the term “void” to empty home
- Keep doing videos, these are really helpful and save time and money for prospective tenants viewing properties before making a decision
- It might be helpful to include a detailed diagram or floor plan for each property. This would make it easier to review and understand the general condition of the property during handover.

## Evaluation of Session 3

At the end of each session the group will be asked what they liked about today’s session, was there anything that surprised you and is there anything you think that I can do better for the next session? This feedback will help shape the next session.

It was useful to have a guest speaker

There was lots of good information

This was my first session, I really enjoyed it and learned a lot

The video of before and after was helpful to see what a void is like

Lots of chances to ask questions