

## Evictions by Social Landlord: Statistics Update

This short briefing provides an update of the statistics on evictions by social landlords in Scotland. It predominately uses the recently published Scottish Housing Regulator's Annual Return of the Charter, as well as data on technical evictions from the Scottish Government.

### Overall evictions by social landlords:

Over the last 12 months evictions by social landlords have slightly risen (+1.5%) from the year before. In 2018/19 there were 2,301 social sector evictions, compared with 2,267 in 2017/18.



**Graph 1: Total evictions in the Social Sector, 2007/2008 – 2018/19<sup>1</sup>**

In 2007/08 social landlords evicted over 3,500 households. Over the next 6 years the numbers of evictions gradually decreased to a low of 1,571 evictions in 2013/14. Since 2013/14 the number of social sector evictions has slowly risen, despite the introduction of pre-action requirements. The number of evictions by social landlords in 2018/19 is 46.5% higher than it was in 2013/14.

### The evictions process<sup>2</sup>:

- **Notice of proceedings** - This is the first step in actioning an eviction in the social sector. The notice acts as a communication to tenants that their landlord has begun court action. This is not binding, and at this point many tenants may engage with their

<sup>1</sup> Note: there are reporting differences between the sources used in the tables.

<sup>2</sup> Shelter Scotland (2019) [Evictions by Social Landlords in Scotland 2016-2018](#)

landlord to agree a repayment plan or another action, which can then stop the eviction.

- **Court Action** - If the dispute isn't resolved, the tenant will next receive a court summons. A letter from the court will inform the tenant that court proceedings have begun.
- **Order for recovery of possession granted** - The case is then heard at court. If an order for recovery of possession is granted, the landlord has permission to go ahead with the eviction.
- **Eviction occurs** - The final stage of the eviction process. This includes removal of the tenant, and termination of the tenancy.

### Eviction actions:

Eviction Action	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	% change from 2013/14 to 2018/19	% change from 2017/18 to 2018/19
Notice of proceedings issued	34,804	34,414	37,557	38,826	40,415	<b>42,459</b>	+22.0%	+5.1%
Number of court actions initiated	11,881	13,541	13,235	13,565	13,459	<b>11,594</b>	-2.4%	-13.9%
Orders for recovery of possession granted	4,159	5,515	5,759	5,910	5,751	<b>5,429</b>	+30.5%	-5.6%
Eviction occurred	1,571	1,988	2,031	2,276	2,267	<b>2,301</b>	+46.5%	+1.5%

Table 1 shows that there has been an upward trend in social sector evictions since 2013/14. The numbers of notices of proceeding issued has continuously increased over the last 5 years by 22%. This suggests that social landlords are still using eviction as a threat when attempting to tackle problems in the tenancy.

Although the number of orders for recovery of possession granted has decreased since 2017/18, it still remains 30.5% higher than in 2013/14. The number of actual court actions

<sup>3</sup> Scottish Housing Regulator (2019) [Annual Return of the Charter](#)

initiated, after the notice of proceeding have been issued, is the only eviction action which has decreased when compared to 2017/18 and 2013/14.

<b>Table 2: Rate at which a notice of proceedings being issued resulted in a recovery order being granted.</b>					
2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
11.9%	16.0%	15.3%	15.2%	14.2%	12.8%

Table 2 shows that the rate at which a notice of proceedings results in a recovery of possession order being granted was 12.8% in 2018/19, an increase of only 0.8% since 2013/14. This is despite the number of notice of proceedings issued increasing by 22.0% since 2013/14, and the number evictions increases by 46.5% in the same time frame.

### Evictions by landlord type:

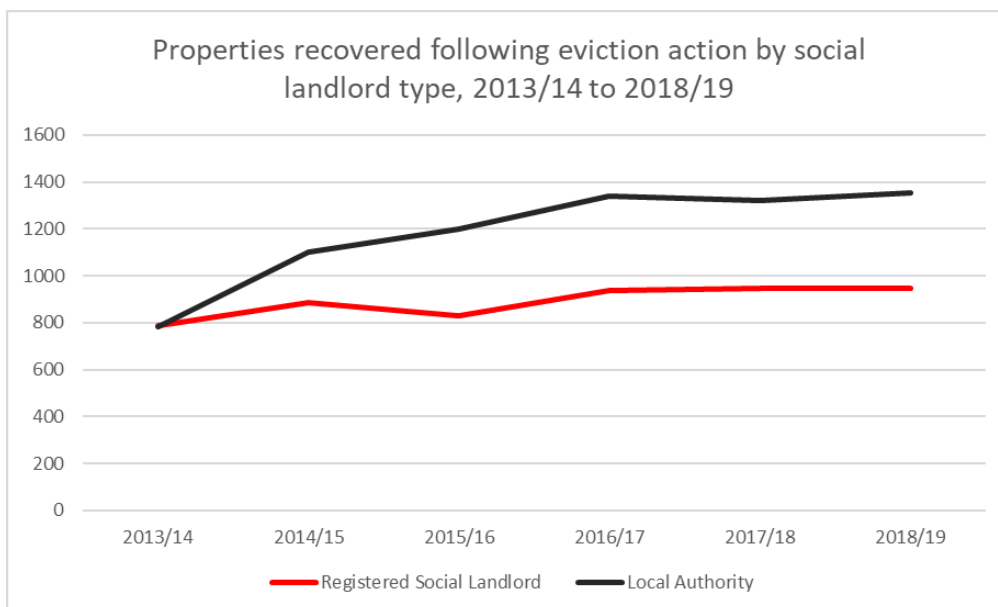
Of these 2,301 social sector evictions in 2018/19, 1,353 (59%) were carried out by Local Authorities (LAs), and 948 (41%) by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). LA properties made up 53% of socially rented dwellings in 2018, and RSLs 47%<sup>4</sup>. Therefore, it appears that LAs have a higher eviction rate than RSLs.

<b>Table 3: Evictions by landlord type<sup>5</sup></b>							
Landlord type	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	<b>2018/19</b>	% change from 2013/14 to 2018/19
RSL	787	886	830	936	945	<b>948</b>	+20.5%
LA	784	1,102	1,201	1,340	1,322	<b>1,353</b>	+72.6%
Total	1,571	1,988	2,031	2,276	2,267	<b>2,301</b>	+46.5%

LAs are largely responsible for the increase in evictions since 2013/14, with an increase of 72.6%. This can be compared to an increase of 20.5% for RSLs in the same time period.

<sup>4</sup> Scottish Government (2019) [Housing Statistics: stock by tenure](#)

<sup>5</sup> Scottish Housing Regulator (2019) [Annual Return of the Charter](#)



**Graph 2: Properties recovered following eviction action by social landlord type 2013/14 to 2018/19**

**Reasons for eviction:**

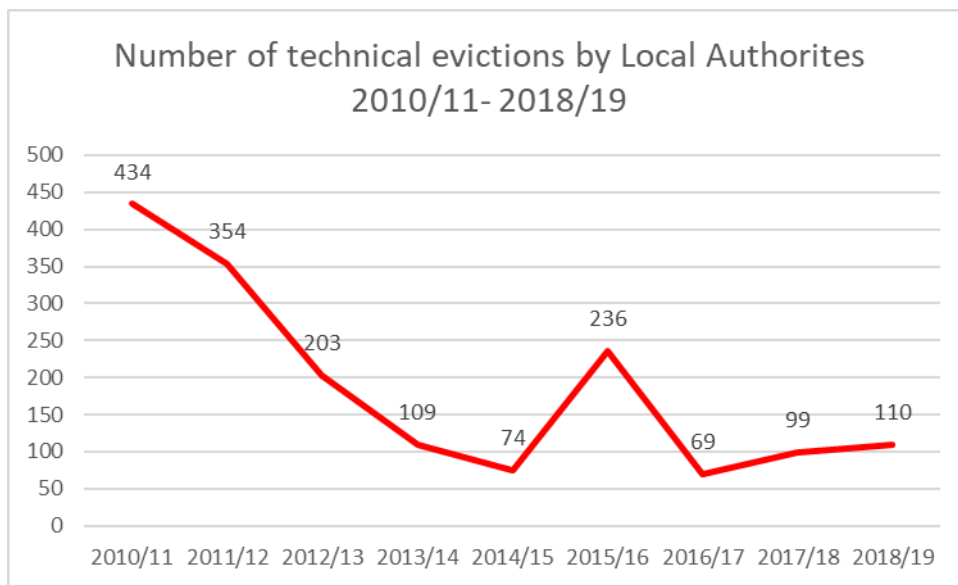
**Table 4: Reasons for eviction by social landlords 2013/14-2018/19<sup>6</sup>**

Reasons for eviction	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	% change from 2013/14 to 2018/19	% change from 2017/18 to 2018/19
Properties recovered because rent had not been paid	1,413	1,818	1,872	2,110	2,113	<b>2,138</b>	+51.3%	+1.2%
Properties recovered because of anti-social behaviour	131	123	126	115	130	<b>129</b>	-1.5%	-0.8%
Properties recovered for other reasons	27	47	33	51	24	<b>34</b>	+25.9%	+41.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,571</b>	<b>1,988</b>	<b>2,031</b>	<b>2,276</b>	<b>2,267</b>	<b>2,301</b>	+46.5%	+1.5%

<sup>6</sup> Scottish Housing Regulator (2019) [Annual Return of the Charter](#)

93% of evictions by social landlords in 2018/19 were carried out because the rent had not been paid, and 6% of evictions were carried out for anti-social behaviour.

### Technical evictions:



**Graph 3: Number of technical evictions by Local Authorities 2010/11 – 2018/19<sup>7</sup>**

There were 110 technical evictions in 2018/19. This is lower than the 2010 level, but higher than the previous two years. ‘Technical eviction’ is the term used when a social landlord is granted an order to evict and carries out that order, but simultaneously offers the tenant a new tenancy so that they can stay in their home.

While any effort to keep a tenant in their home is welcomed, technical evictions are not an efficient strategy to manage evictions. By the time the technical eviction is carried out the tenant will have already gone through a very stressful process.

<sup>7</sup> Scottish Government (2020) [Housing Statistics for Scotland](#)