

Annual Assurance Statement

from the Management Committee of Cernach Housing Association – October 2023



Introduction

As a registered social landlord (RSL), Cernach Housing Association is required to submit an Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) before the end of October 2023. This document represents the Statement that the Committee considered and agreed at its meeting on 26 October 2023.

Format of Annual Assurance Statement

There is no set format for the Statement. We have retained the style used for the first submission in 2019 as we believe that it worked well for us and our customers, whilst also meeting the Regulator's expectations. It takes account of sector guidance, with the Committee evaluating the Association's performance in each of the following sections:

- Assurance and notification
- Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC) performance
- Tenant and service user redress
- Whistleblowing
- Equality and human rights
- Statutory guidance
- Organisational details and constitution
- Standards of Governance and Financial Management (SGFM)

Each section:

- Notes whether we, as a Management Committee, are sufficiently assured that we comply and, following on, that we are sufficiently confident that we can pass that assurance on to stakeholders
- Indicates where further action may be required because of material non-compliance

The Association can report that there are **no areas of material non-compliance**.

Supporting evidence and additional information

The Association has completed the *toolkit* issued by the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations. This was populated with supporting evidence that we have been gathering over a number of years, including periodic independent reviews. The independent reviews supplement other assurance-related activities, such as internal and external audit, independent surveys, in-house assessments and other internal organisational controls and checks. We would be happy to discuss this with any customer or other stakeholder – please contact our Director, Caroline Jardine on 0141 944 3860 or caroline@cernachha.co.uk, if you would find this useful.

**This Statement can be made available in other languages and formats free of charge
Please contact a member of staff if you, or anyone you know, would benefit from this**

Annual Assurance Statement

from the Management Committee of Cernach Housing Association – October 2023



Equalities and human rights

We take seriously our commitment to ensure that the way we deliver services and develop policies are consistent with a human rights approach, and seek to ensure that these are appropriately implemented. To assist us in analysing our approach towards human rights, we completed the self-assessment framework created by the Chartered Institute of Housing. This exercise did not highlight any areas of non-compliance.

We also carried out an internal audit on our approach to equalities in the last year for which we received 'full assurance' with no recommendations to action. We have begun collating equalities information in relation to our stakeholders and have a plan to collect data across all groups. Using this, and any other relevant guidance that is produced in the future, to inform our work to review our own approach and consider whether any changes might be needed to our services or policies.

Tenant and resident safety

The Scottish Housing Regulator asked all Associations to provide commentary on their approach to a number of areas of tenant and resident safety. Full information on these areas is contained within our main assessment matrices and supporting information, but we provide specific commentary on this area below.

We have done significant work in the past year to ensure our systems for monitoring, recording and actioning items related to safety are more up-to-date and accessible for all properties and will continue to do so.

- **Gas safety** – we have all gas safety inspections completed within timescale in the current year
- **Electrical safety** – for electrical safety, we have a system in place to track our electrical installation condition reports (EICRs) and had an internal audit carried out on this topic with all recommendations now implemented. Whilst a small number of the EICRs carried out in the current year (around 1% of our stock) were slightly after their five-year anniversary date, we have adjusted our timescales for access to prevent this further and have therefore not considered this to be material. All EICRs have been carried out in the year they were due for renewal
- **Water safety** – in reference to water safety, we have a prioritised programme in place to decommission redundant systems where possible. We have a relevant system in place for monitoring these, however, a recommendation will be made following this statement to ensure better recording of treatment and decommissioning data for each property
- **Fire safety** – all our properties have been upgraded to the interlinked smoke alarms and are serviced annually as part of the Association's gas safety contract.

**This Statement can be made available in other languages and formats free of charge
Please contact a member of staff if you, or anyone you know, would benefit from this**

Annual Assurance Statement

from the Management Committee of Cernach Housing Association – October 2023



- We do not have any buildings which are covered under the 2018 regulations, however this was checked and assessed in 2018 to gain assurance of this
- **Asbestos** – we maintain an asbestos register in line with best practice and conduct an asbestos survey in advance of all major works
 - **Damp and mould** – we have a register set up to record and track reports of damp, condensation and mould, as well as a new monitoring system to collect moisture data in specific properties
 - **Lift safety** – the Association does not operate any residential lifts

A final word.....

This assurance is given by the Management Committee following review and assessment of a wide range of documentation. Stakeholders can be assured that the Committee takes steps to ensure that the information it is being provided with is robust and accurate and this, in turn, allows us to issue this Statement.

This Statement is publicly available. Any interested party may ask for further information on the supporting evidence as it relates to any of the assertions made in this document. We would be happy to discuss this with you in more detail.

Next steps

The Association will keep this Statement under review and will notify the SHR and our customers if we become aware of any areas of material non-compliance prior to issuing our next Statement in October 2024.

Please contact the Association if you would like to be involved or if you wish more information.

Andrew Biddell – Chairperson

26 October 2023

**This Statement can be made available in other languages and formats free of charge
Please contact a member of staff if you, or anyone you know, would benefit from this**

📞 0141 944 3860 ♦ 📧 admin@cernachha.co.uk ♦ @CernachHousing  