

## **New Tenant Survey**

### **Service Improvement Scrutiny Group May 2025**

#### **Method Statement**

200 applicants were randomly selected from the housing list. These applicants were sent a letter from the Service Improvement Scrutiny Group inviting them to complete the survey using the online platform Participate +. There was also an option to complete a hard copy of the survey with a prepaid envelope enclosed with the letter. 41 responses were received. This survey was for those who have accepted an offer of housing within last 12 months.

#### **Have you recently accepted an offer of housing with Falkirk Council**

Yes  
65.9%

No  
34.1%

#### **How long did you wait for a council home?**

6 - 12 months  
29.6%

Less than 6 months  
25.9%

Over a year  
25.9%

Over 3 years  
18.5%

#### **Did you find it easy to bid for properties**

Yes  
70.4%

Not Sure  
14.8%

If no - please tell us what would have made bidding for properties easier

Several respondents highlighted difficulties with the online bidding process, particularly among elderly tenants and those with limited English proficiency, indicating a need for more accessible or assisted options. One respondent noted they did not need to bid due to living in sheltered accommodation. No positive feedback about the ease of bidding was provided. The main trend is that the current system poses challenges for vulnerable groups, especially the elderly and non-native English speakers.

### **Does your home meet your needs ?**

Yes  
66.7%

Mostly  
18.5%

If no - could you tell us why you feel your home does not meet your needs  
14.8%

Several respondents indicated that their homes do not meet their needs, with the most common issue being that properties are too small, particularly with bedrooms that are either too few or too small. One respondent highlighted a concern about having to remove medical points from their application in order to secure a house, suggesting possible issues with the allocation process. No other significant themes were raised.

### **Did you get enough information about the property before accepting it?**

Yes  
66.7%

If no - could you please tell us what kind of information you would have liked to have been given that would have helped you make a decision  
33.3%

Most respondents felt they did not receive enough information about the property before accepting it. The most common request was for photographs of the inside (and sometimes outside) of the property prior to viewing or bidding. Several respondents mentioned confusion or lack of clarity about key property details, such as the type of heating, whether the property had a garden or which floor it was on, and outstanding repairs or garden maintenance. Some also wanted information about what previous tenants had left (e.g. carpets, blinds) and details about the local area, such as proximity to GPs and dentists. A few respondents expressed a desire for more time to move or to be offered something more suitable if available soon.

Overall, the main trend is a strong desire for clearer, more comprehensive information—especially interior photos—before making decisions about accepting a property.

### **Did you feel supported during the process of getting your new home?**

Yes  
74.1%

Somewhat  
14.8%

No  
11.1%

**How long did it take from the point at which you were offered the property to when you got the keys?**

Most respondents reported waiting around 2 months from being offered the property to receiving the keys. Several mentioned that this delay was due to ongoing work in the property, such as fitting new kitchens or bathrooms, or workmen being present during viewings. A smaller number of respondents received their keys much more quickly, within a week or two. One respondent described a split process: a long wait for viewing (2 months), but only 2 weeks from viewing to getting the keys. Another reported a 6-week wait, and one experienced a particularly long delay of 4 months due to major works.

**If you had any problems, was it easy to get help from Falkirk Council?**

Yes  
70.4%

No  
18.5%

Did not have any problems  
11.1%

Most respondents indicated they did not have any problems as new tenants. However, among those who did seek help, there was frustration with the support received from Falkirk Council, with one respondent describing being passed from "pillar to post" and receiving conflicting information. Overall, the main trend is that while many had no issues, those who did found the help process lacking in clarity and efficiency.

**Overall, how satisfied are you with the housing allocation process?**

Satisfied  
48.1%

Very Satisfied  
40.7%

Dissatisfied  
11.1%

Very Dissatisfied  
0%

**What could Falkirk Council do better to improve the process for future applicants?**

Several respondents highlighted issues with communication and information during the application and allocation process. Poor communication about property allocation and outstanding repairs was noted as a source of stress, and some found it difficult to contact housing officers or navigate the online application system. There were also requests for more detailed information about properties before bidding or accepting, particularly regarding floor level and access. Several respondents expressed concerns about repairs: delays in moving in due to outstanding repairs, having to carry out repairs themselves to move in quicker, and dissatisfaction with the quality of repair work, especially regarding accessibility and maintenance for elderly tenants. A few respondents commented on the allocation system, with some preferring the previous points-based system over the current bidding process, and one calling for the restoration of the right to buy. There were also calls for more support in finding properties suited to individual needs and for prioritising local applicants. A minority of respondents felt that nothing needed to be improved or had no specific suggestions.