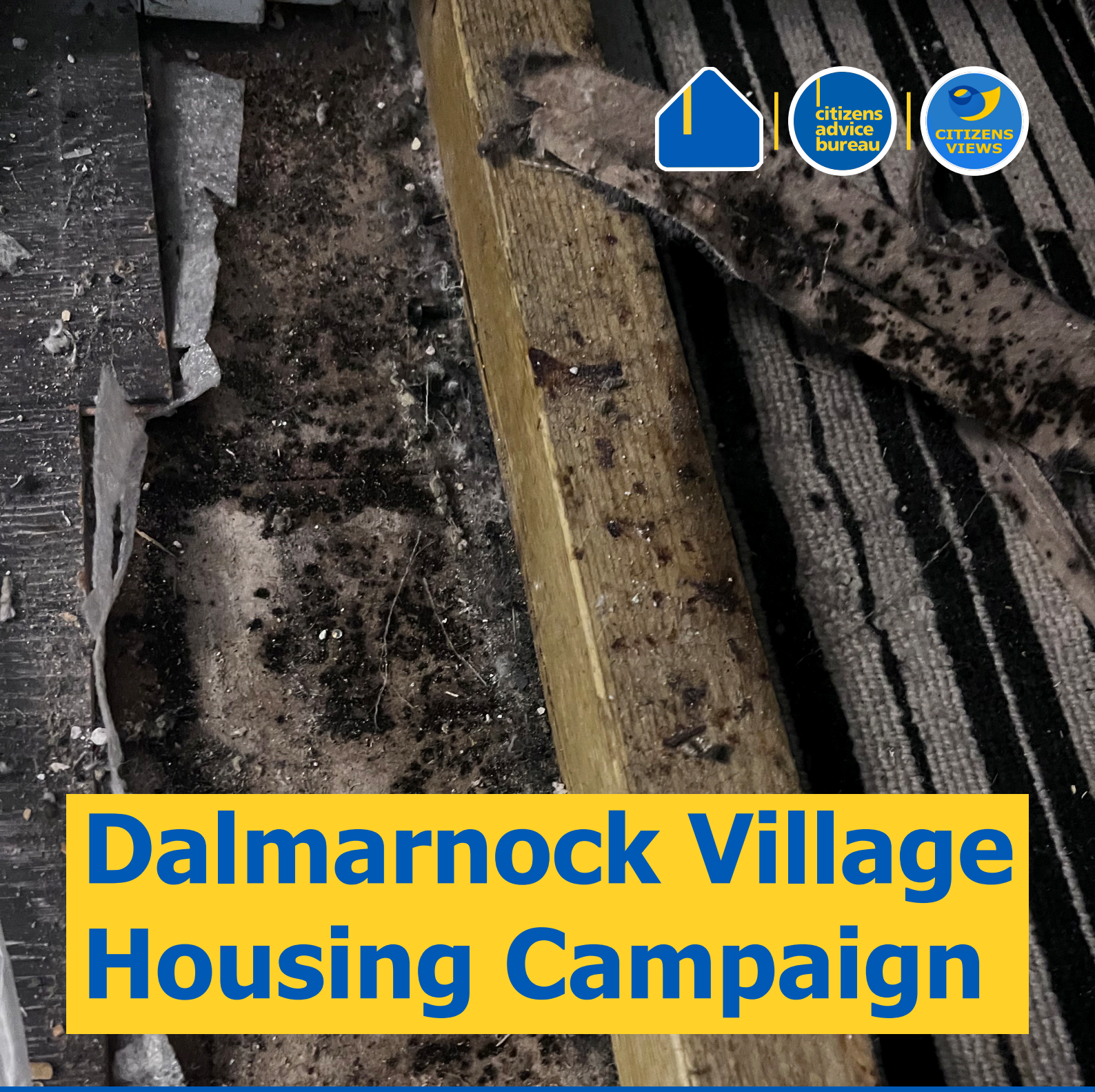


Dalmarnock Village Housing Campaign

A Much Deeper Rot: Housing Conditions in Dalmarnock Village Report Briefing

This briefing summarises the key findings and recommendations of A Much Deeper Rot: Housing Conditions in Dalmarnock Village.

The full report examines the evidence, residents' testimonies and the institutional failures uncovered by the research in much greater depth. Read the full report at **https://thetruelegacy.org/report** and the complete set of recommendations at **https://thetruelegacy.org/recommendations**.

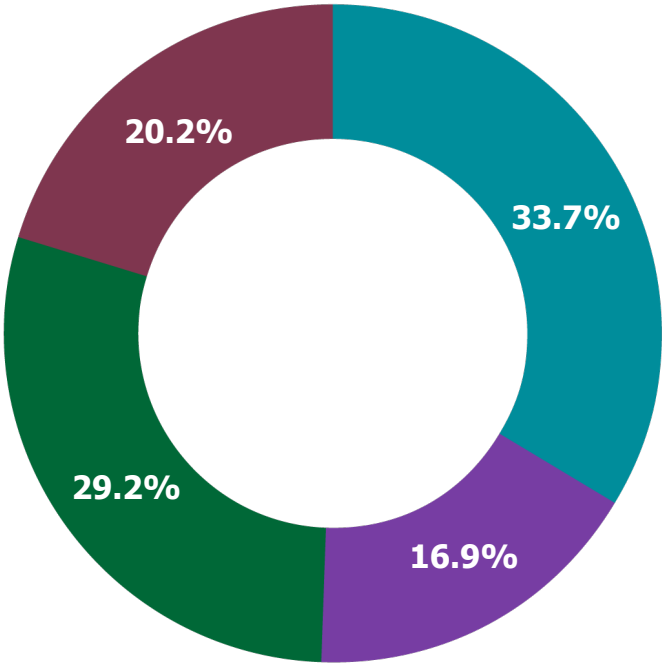
Introduction

Dalmarnock Village was built as a symbol of regeneration and promoted as an enduring legacy of the 2014 Commonwealth Games. More than a decade later, the reality experienced by residents stands in stark contrast to that promise. Persistent housing defects, years of failed repairs and prolonged institutional failure reveal a crisis extending far beyond the physical condition of individual homes. Damp and mould are its most visible symptoms; the much deeper rot lies in the institutions responsible for addressing them.

The research grew out of Bridgeton Citizens Advice Bureau's longstanding work with residents of Dalmarnock Village. Through years of casework and community engagement, the same complaints about housing conditions, failed repairs and the refusal of institutions to accept responsibility emerged time and again. These concerns spanned homes managed by Wheatley Homes Glasgow, Thenue Housing Association and West of Scotland Housing Association, as well as owner-occupied properties. The question was no longer simply what had gone wrong in individual homes, but whether these experiences exposed a wider pattern of failure across the Village.

The research set out to answer that question, combining household surveys, in-depth oral history interviews and photographic evidence to document both the scale of the problems and their consequences for residents.

Of approximately **700** households, **89** completed the survey, a response rate of **12.7 per cent**. Responses were gathered primarily through door-to-door canvassing, with the remainder submitted through the campaign website. All households were eligible to participate, and responses were validated to prevent duplication.



Respondents by Housing Tenure

- Wheatley Homes Glasgow
- Thenue Housing Association
- West of Scotland Housing Association
- Owner-Occupier

Respondents included both social housing tenants (**66.3 per cent**) and owner-occupiers (**33.7 per cent**). A majority lived in households with children (**51.7 per cent**), while almost half (**47.2 per cent**) reported a long-term disability affecting their daily lives. Most respondents were women (**78.7 per cent**).

The survey was supplemented by ten in-depth oral history interviews involving twelve residents, conducted between November 2025 and March 2026, with all interviewees assigned pseudonyms to protect their anonymity. Oral history was used to place residents' voices at the centre of the research, challenging institutional accounts that can so often silence ordinary people's experiences and shift responsibility for poor housing conditions onto those forced to endure them.

Material Conditions

Residents across Dalmarnock Village have been forced to live with serious and persistent housing failures, including recurring floods, defective plumbing and drainage, damp and mould, structural deterioration, and ventilation systems that frequently failed to perform their most basic function. These were not minor defects or temporary inconveniences. They persisted for years, spread across homes throughout the Village, and became part of everyday life. Residents were left to endure conditions that should have demanded decisive intervention long before this report was written.

Leaks and Flooding

64% faced **flooding or poor plumbing**.

'I have had in the region of about ten floods I would say… there's been loads of leaks, there's been loads of issues with the plumbing itself. The drainage – basically the build quality of the whole house has just been terrible if I am being completely honest.'

(*Wheatley Homes Glasgow Tenant*)

'Loads of problems, like constant flooding, mould, dampness. I've had two toilets ripped out, I've had a toilet fixed, the washer in the toilet pan, that's come through my ceiling. [Their contractor] fixed it and then it's burst again and it's come through my ceilings again. I've had to replace umpteen bits of furniture, carpets, flooring, all of this kind of stuff… obviously they're fixing stuff, they replaced my full shower, my full toilet and now that toilet is now leaking again, so now it's my kitchen, flooring, everything is all damaged, all mould, all stained in black mould and dampness. Like I just feel as if my house is just a big ball of dampness to be honest. Everywhere, the windows, the toilets, everything.'

(*Thenue Housing Association Tenant*)

Sewage System Problems

38.2% experienced **sewage system problems**.

'The drains have been absolutely pathetic – they've been smelling constantly… the smell is coming up through the shower, and it is absolutely rank… the pipes are all blocking – they're all backing up or something… All our neighbours have got the same. Every one of them.'

(*Thenue Housing Association Tenant*)

'The problems kind of arose quite quickly. Not like physically as you could see them, but more so the smells. It started off with the drains, which were a problem right away, as soon as we moved in… the stench would get really, really bad… it would make you physically sick… it was revolting.'

(*West of Scotland Housing Association Tenant*)

Persistent Damp and Mould

50.6% reported **mould**.

53.9% experienced **damp**.

'It was on bedding. It was on the floor… it was on a multitude of things. I had mould coming up through the flooring. I had mould on shoes. I had mould on bedding that was in the cupboard. I had mould on pictures… There's been loads and loads of things that have just been ruined by it and can't be replaced.'

(*Wheatley Homes Glasgow Tenant*)

'Living with [damp and mould] was horrendous, because I was always trying to clean it… especially when you've got grandkids coming in and out, and the smell's horrendous… my floor was rotting away, my drawers were rotting away. The mould was that bad, my radiator caved my wall in, and they said that was "condensation"… I had mushrooms growing. My neighbour had slugs in hers. And my other neighbour had mushrooms in hers too… I don't even want to live there anymore.'

(*Wheatley Homes Glasgow Tenant*)

Structural Deterioration

50.6% had **faulty windows or doors**.

'Dry rot. Every single window has got dry rot on it somewhere, which as a standard, shouldn't happen… I can't sleep because every time there's a wind… I'm like this will be the storm that takes everything out. This will be the storm where windows fall out… is it just going to be two cars that get hit? Is it going to be nothing that gets hit because we're at work? Or is it going to be a child?'

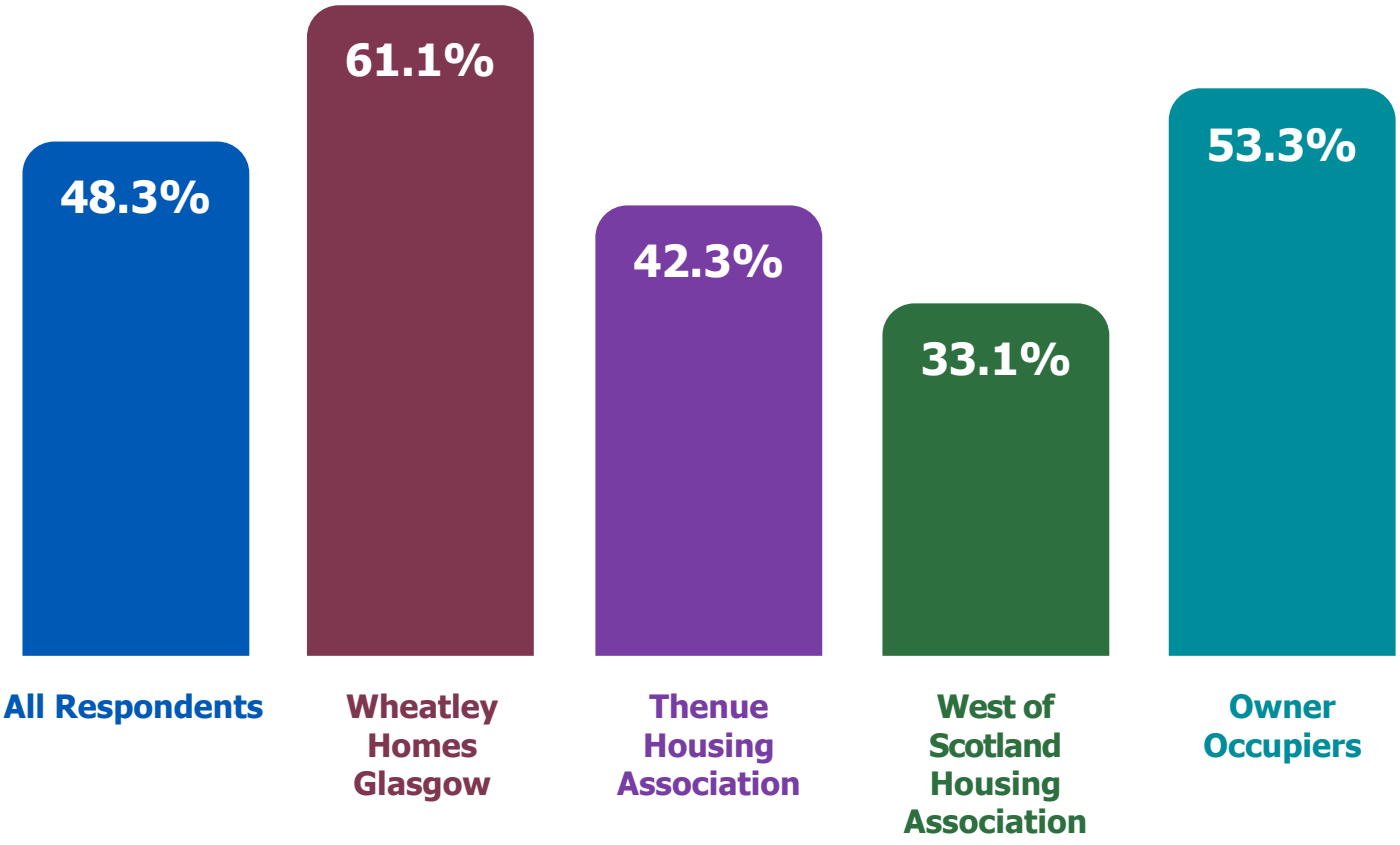
(*Owner Occupier*)

'The floor in the toilet has collapsed. Now, that's the disabled bathroom – that's collapsed, while my mother was in the shower… that took me about a month of fighting as well, just to get them to come out… it wasn't fitted properly in the first place… they've replaced it [now], saying it's top of the range and all that stuff. The first shower my mother went to have after that, it's leaking again… she can barely move – she's got a zimmer frame – and it's very, very dangerous for her to get in and out the shower.'

(*Thenue Housing Association Tenant*)

Defective Ventilation

Many residents **experienced problems with their ventilation systems**.



'They're pure clogged up to the back. They've got years' worth of dirt in them, that they've never came out and cleaned… they service the vents every so often… they don't take them out and clean inside them or anything like that, or blast it through to make sure it's all clean. They don't do any of that. They just… put new filters in and then leave.'

(*Wheatley Homes Glasgow Tenant*)

'It doesn't exist, the extractor in the kitchen is for show.'

(*Owner Occupier*)

'My housing association repair team told me that the vent system was installed "backwards".'

(*Thenue Housing Association Tenant*)

'The extractor wasn't connected to the ventilation system!'

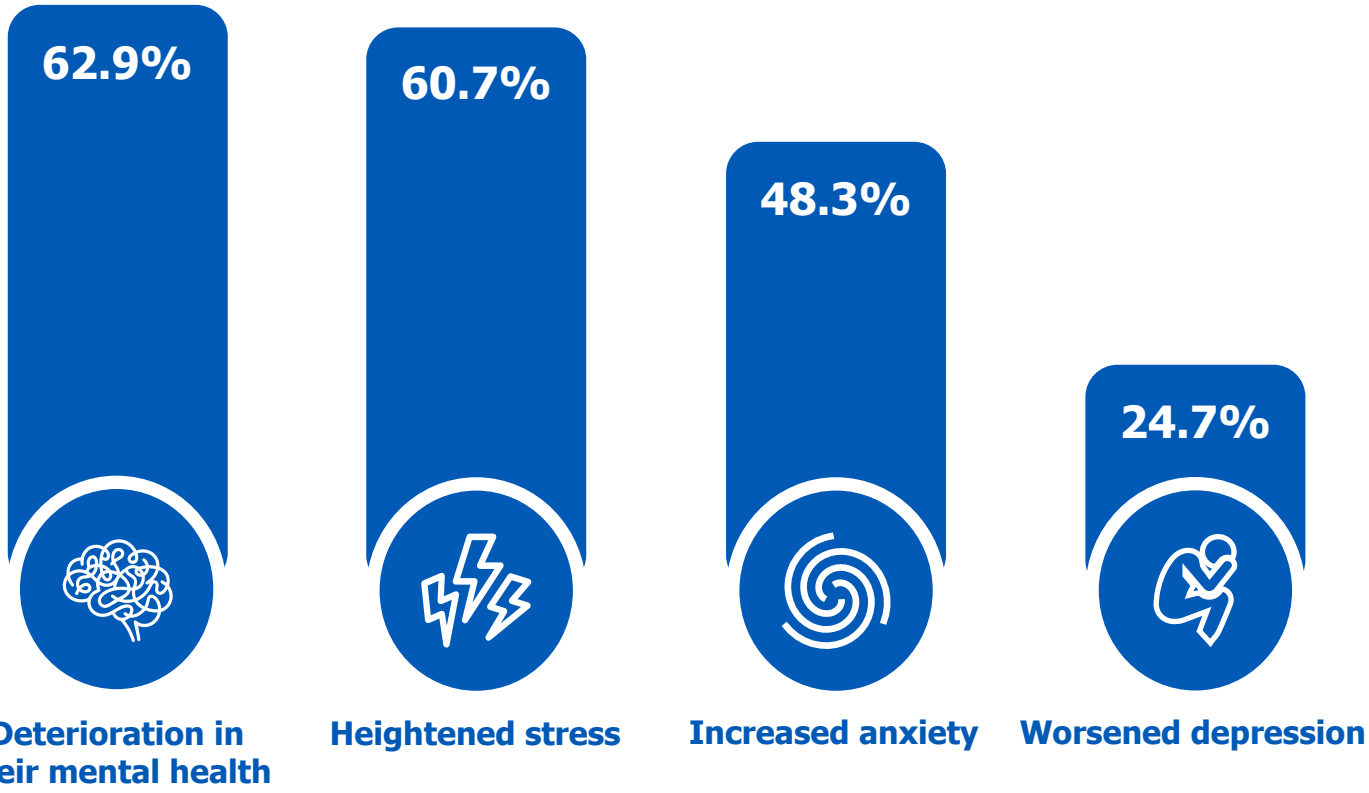
(*Owner Occupier*)

Human Consequences

The consequences for residents extended far beyond bricks and mortar. Homes that should have provided comfort, security and refuge instead became sources of sustained psychological harm, declining health and constant disruption to everyday life. Residents described stress, anxiety and exhaustion, the loss of comfort and dignity, and the gradual erosion of their sense of home. These experiences reveal the profound human cost of allowing serious housing failures to remain unresolved year after year.

Housing Conditions as Psychological Harm

70.8% say their **overall wellbeing has declined** because of housing problems.



> 'I used to go to the gym every day. I had a job. I had a normal life. And now I don't leave my house… I know it sounds crazy, but if I leave my house for any longer than a couple of hours, I need to turn the water off at the mains in case the house floods when I'm not there, because you don't know what you're coming back to… every time you hear water you just panic because you think that the house is flooding. You shouldn't have to live like that.'
>
> *(Wheatley Homes Glasgow Tenant)*

> 'The housing, they say they've got a duty of care, but they don't – they don't have that valid approach like when it comes to people's lives. How it actually affects them mentally.'
>
> *(West of Scotland Housing Association Tenant)*

'You're scared to go home because you don't know if something else is burst when you get in… it deteriorates your mental health so much when you know every day you're going home from work to a mouldy house… You don't want to go home sometimes, because [it's] like, "going home to this tip again"... it's just constant damp, mould, you're constantly going about with bleach… All I want is a house… just a home that I'm comfortable in and can live in and I'm happy to go home to.'

(*Thenue Housing Association Tenant*)

'It was depressing. Let me put it that way. Very depressing… it got me to the stage where my child didn't even want to be round me. Neither did my grandchild, because I was constantly on my hands and knees scrubbing… [I was] constantly on edge… it was chaos… the stress and anxiety… I'm surprised I've never had a mental breakdown to be honest. But I stopped eating. I stopped sleeping. Ended up with insomnia. I lost 4 stone in weight.'

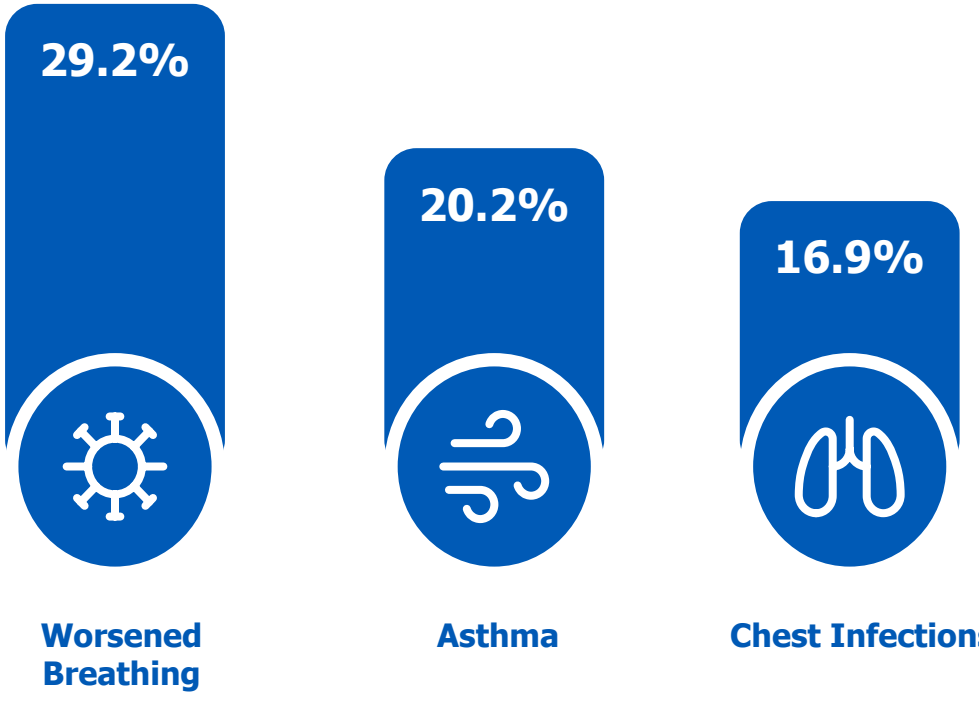
(*Wheatley Homes Glasgow Tenant*)

Housing Conditions and Health*

Many residents believe their **housing conditions have harmed the health of people in their household**.

36% believe **the health of adults has been impacted.**

43.5% of respondents with children believe **their children's health has been affected by their housing conditions**.



*CAB has not verified any medical information referred to by residents.

'I've ended up not well. My kids have ended up not well. My daughter's been basically unwell from 2021. There's been recurring issues and I've got medical reports to say this. I've got a form of lung disease, I can't breathe properly, it's been horrendous if I'm being honest.'

(*Wheatley Homes Glasgow Tenant*)

'One of my [children]… was struggling with breathing, lots of chestiness… [I had to] take my son to hospitals, take them to doctors, and each and every time I was told that it was bronchiolitis… it's not normal for a child to have that many trips to the hospital, doctors, for bronchiolitis. Since we've moved [away from the village], I kid you not, I think we've maybe been to the doctors once.'

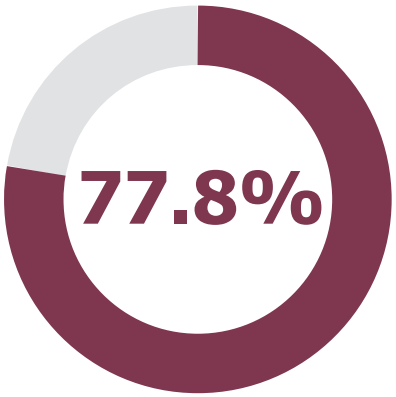
(*West of Scotland Housing Association Tenant*)

Institutional Failure

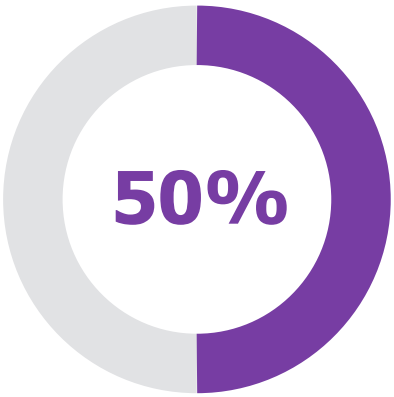
Residents did not simply endure failing homes; they described repeated failures by the institutions responsible for maintaining and repairing them. Serious problems remained unresolved for years as repairs repeatedly failed, complaints reached dead ends and residents struggled to have the conditions inside their homes taken seriously. Many described being ignored or dismissed; others reported hostility, intimidation and victim blaming. The institutions residents depended upon for solutions too often left them carrying the consequences of failures they had no responsibility for creating.

Years Without a Fix

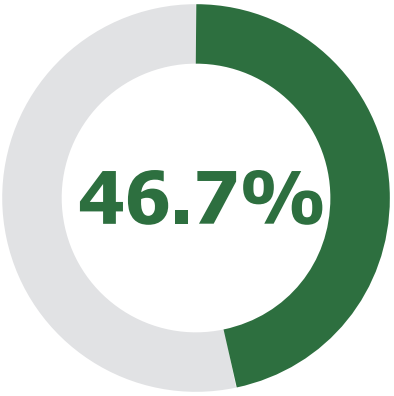
Many social housing tenants reported living with housing problems for **five years or more**.



Wheatley Homes Glasgow



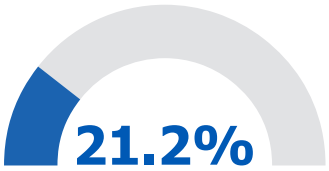
Thenue Housing Association



West of Scotland Housing Association

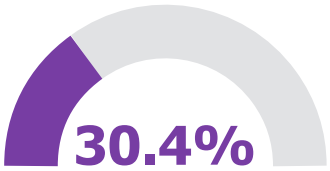
Levels of (Dis)Satisfaction

Levels of satisfaction with housing associations were **extremely low**.



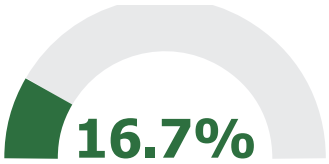
21.2%

All Housing Associations



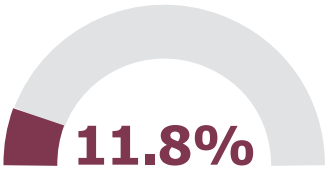
30.4%

Thenue Housing Association



16.7%

West of Scotland Housing

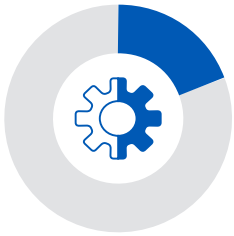


11.8%

Wheatley Homes Glasgow

Failure as Standard Practice

Most social housing respondents were **not able to have their housing issues resolved**.



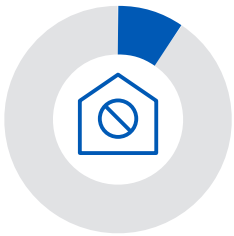
19.2%

received **only a partial or temporary repair**.



57.7%

reported their housing problems were **still ongoing or had no resolution**.



9.6%

stated that **no action had been taken at all**.



7.7%

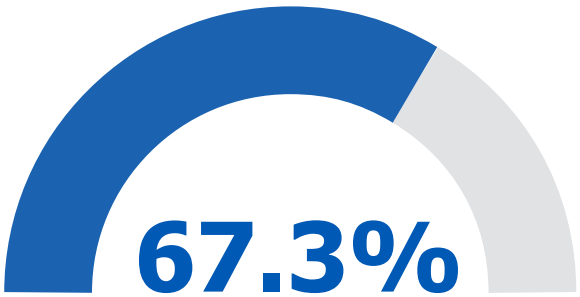
said their housing issue had been **fully resolved**.

> 'I had my bottom toilet ripped out so there was nothing in it. Just pipes sticking up the wall right down to nothing. They come out and they said they repaired it. Literally three weeks later? Same thing. I let them back in to rip it out again! Over the period of a week... "fixed it" they said. Literally two months later? The same thing. Then my kitchen, they fixed it. Literally a month later? They had to come back out… nearly five years. It's got to the stage now I won't even let them in… they know what's wrong, they just don't know how to fix it.'
>
> (*Wheatley Homes Glasgow Tenant*)

> '[They] came out and they had sealed the leak in, so it was behind the tiles. They must have thought they were fixing it. They sealed it in and to the point that the tiles started popping off the walls – because it was that damp in the background.'
>
> (*Thenue Housing Association Tenant*)

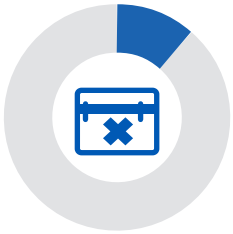
Ignored and Dismissed

Among social housing tenants who had **contacted their housing provider**:



67.3%

had to **make repeated calls before maintenance was scheduled**.



11.5%

said **no maintenance had been scheduled at all**.



21.2%

reported that maintenance was **scheduled immediately after raising the issue**.

'I go through the public line and then I'll constantly have to phone back because they never get back to you. And then, you're in an argument – you're getting sent between Thenue and [a contractor]. [The contractors] are saying it's Thenue's problem and Thenue are saying it's [the contractors] problem.'

(*Thenue Housing Association Tenant*)

'[I] don't trust them at all. I mean anything you're saying to them, they're not taking it into consideration. They're going: "Right ok, we're listening, but we're not actually listening. We're hearing what you're saying, but we're not hearing what you're saying. We understand, but we don't want to get involved". They just don't care.'

(*Wheatley Homes Glasgow Tenant*)

Victim Blaming and Denial

'I had quite bad mould upstairs in the shower, because it kept flooding and stuff upstairs. That was the one that was coming through my ceilings, and they were saying my daughter must be leaving the shower door opened… they basically accused us of taking a seal off, the bottom seal.'

(*West of Scotland Housing Association Tenant*)

'They tried to blame my two daughters for issues with the shower (extensive black mould, pipe blockages), they said that it was their body fat blocking the pipes and causing the mould to appear on the walls. We tried to get a complaint in about the housing officer as she ignored us, the same housing officer responded and said, "they won't be taking it any further".'

(*Wheatley Homes Glasgow Tenant*)



Conclusion

Taken together, the evidence presented in this briefing paints an unmistakable picture of a community that has **spent years living with serious housing failures** while the institutions responsible for addressing them repeatedly failed to provide lasting solutions. There is a limit to what can reasonably be attributed to bad luck. **Dalmarnock Village is living through the consequences of prolonged institutional failure.**

The physical condition of homes alone should have prompted decisive intervention years ago. Persistent flooding, damp, mould, defective ventilation, structural deterioration and recurring repair failures were not short-lived defects, but problems that persisted year after year until they became part of everyday life.

The consequences reached far beyond bricks and mortar. People described the gradual destruction of their comfort, dignity and sense of home. Years of disrepair turned homes from places of safety and belonging into sources of chaos and dread. At the same time, residents described the expense, labour and responsibility of managing unresolved housing problems increasingly falling upon them, even as they continued to pay full rent for homes that were often only partially usable.

Those responsible for putting these problems right too often compounded the harm. Residents described years of incompetent and failed repairs, complaints disappearing into bureaucratic dead ends, and a culture in which they were ignored, dismissed, blamed and, in some cases, subjected to hostility and intimidation. Some were made to question their own experiences; others were worn down until they no longer believed that complaining would make any difference. Those who persisted too often found themselves treated as problems to be managed rather than people whose homes required repair. The result was not simply unresolved disrepair, but the destruction of trust in the very institutions entrusted with people's homes. No organisation committed to social housing should recognise itself in these experiences without profound shame.

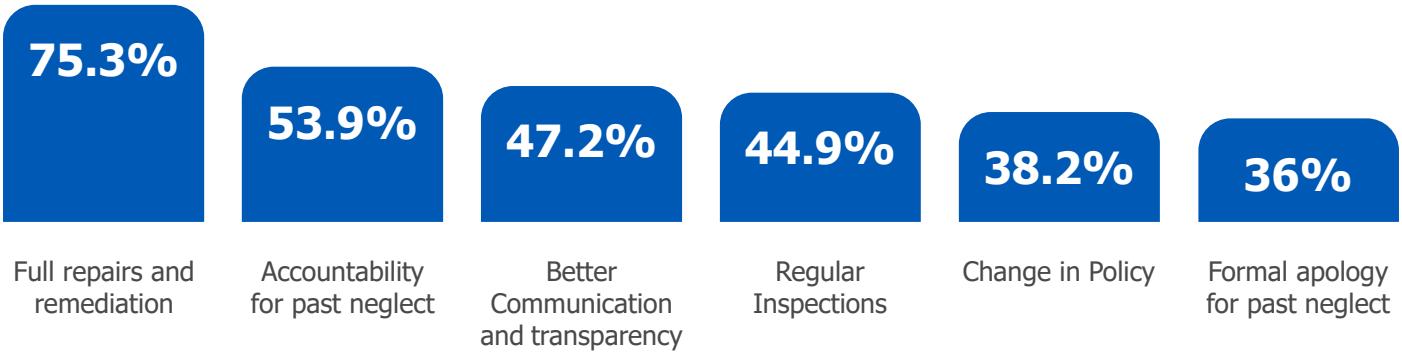
There comes a point at which the repetition of the same failures across the same community can no longer be dismissed as coincidence. That point was reached long ago in Dalmarnock Village. The same patterns appeared across different streets, housing associations, tenures and households, as residents who had spent years believing they were alone discovered that their neighbours had been fighting the same battles. Once those experiences were brought together, the fiction that these were simply isolated cases became impossible to sustain. What they expose instead is a profound failure of accountability and a gulf between the picture presented by housing providers and the reality inside residents' homes.

What happened in Dalmarnock Village should never have been allowed to continue for this long. Residents have spent years living with conditions that demanded action, carrying consequences that were never theirs to bear, and fighting simply to secure the standard of home they should have been able to take for granted. Their experiences now demand more than sympathy or acknowledgement. They demand an answer to the failures documented here, and a reckoning with the housing system that allowed them to persist for so long.

Recommendations

Throughout the campaign, residents expressed a remarkably consistent aspiration: to live in homes that were safe, free from damp and mould, and properly maintained. The recommendations that follow combine immediate proposals to deliver justice for Dalmarnock Village with wider reforms to establish a more accountable, democratic and resident-centred housing system across Scotland.

Respondents' Priorities for Action



Immediate Justice for Dalmarnock Village

Residents have borne unacceptable financial, physical and emotional costs because of prolonged housing failure. Justice requires immediate action to remedy unsafe conditions, provide restitution for avoidable harm and reimburse residents for costs that should never have fallen upon them.

1. Establish an Independent Dalmarnock Village Remediation Programme

The Scottish Government should establish an independent Dalmarnock Village Remediation Programme to identify, investigate and permanently remedy housing defects, supported by appropriate funding, independent governance and statutory powers requiring all relevant organisations to cooperate fully. The programme should offer independent stock condition surveys to all households wishing to participate, regardless of tenure, with intrusive investigations where necessary and with residents' consent. It should provide emergency intervention for immediate risks to health or safety, a public programme of remedial works with clear timescales and named responsibilities, and regular reporting on progress and outstanding defects.

2. Restitution and Rent Rebates

The programme should also provide comprehensive restitution for prolonged disrepair, covering years spent in defective housing, damaged possessions, avoidable costs, repeated failed repairs, loss of use of rooms and facilities, and deterioration in health and wellbeing. Housing association tenants should separately receive proportionate rent rebates for periods when serious defects rendered their homes partially or wholly unusable. Both should be independently assessed against transparent criteria, with responsible organisations required to implement awards and repayments within specified statutory timescales.

3. Democratic Oversight

A representative Community Remediation Committee, comprising residents across different housing tenures, should exercise genuine democratic oversight and strategic authority over the programme. Its powers should include scrutinising findings, approving repair priorities, commissioning independent technical advice, requiring explanations for delays and failures, and monitoring delivery. It should also oversee restitution and rent rebate arrangements without determining individual awards.

Building a More Accountable Housing System

The failures documented in Dalmarnock Village expose wider weaknesses in Scotland's system of housing regulation, repairs and accountability. The following reforms seek to ensure that serious defects are identified and addressed earlier, while giving residents effective rights and remedies where housing providers fail to meet their obligations.

1. Independent Evidence for Housing Regulation

A housing regulatory system cannot provide meaningful accountability when reported performance is fundamentally disconnected from residents' lived experiences. Given the imbalance of power between landlord and tenant, the use of external survey companies does not, in itself, guarantee independence where housing providers remain responsible for commissioning assessments of their own performance. Scotland should establish an independent national system for measuring tenant experience, with confidential participation, transparent publication and direct reporting to the Scottish Housing Regulator, providing a more reliable basis for identifying systemic failures and taking effective regulatory action.

2. National Standard for Recording Housing Repairs

Scotland should establish a national standard distinguishing completed repairs from unresolved recurring defects. A repair should not be regarded as complete simply because work has been undertaken. Repeated failures should be recorded as ongoing problems requiring further investigation, rather than successive completed jobs.

3. Residents' Right to Property Repair Histories

Residents should have a statutory right to access the complete repair and defect history of their home, including previous investigations, outstanding problems and planned works. Information about a property's condition should belong not only to housing providers, but also to the people whose lives are directly affected by it.

4. Financial Protection during Repairs

Residents should never be required to incur avoidable financial loss to access repairs. Housing providers should meet reasonable costs arising from remedial works, including the protection, removal and reinstatement of flooring, furnishings and other property. Where inadequate financial protection prevents work from proceeding, this should not be recorded as a resident's refusal.

5. Collective Insurance for Social Housing Tenants

Social housing providers should establish collective arrangements protecting tenants against losses arising from defects and repair failures for which the provider bears responsibility. Compensation should not depend upon tenants purchasing optional insurance or navigating complex claims procedures.

6. National Standard for Repair Appointments

Repair systems should respect residents' time as well as their homes. National standards should establish defined appointment windows, prompt notification of cancellations and automatic compensation for missed appointments. Residents should not repeatedly lose income or annual leave because of poorly coordinated repairs.

7. Public Funding Should Require Public Accountability

Public funds should not continue to be paid to housing providers persistently failing to meet their legal obligations. The Scottish Government should examine mechanisms for withholding, redirecting or holding public housing payments in escrow where independent investigation establishes serious unresolved breaches, with safeguards protecting tenants from financial detriment.

8. Addressing the Imbalance of Power in Housing Complaints and Disputes

Residents should not be disadvantaged in enforcing their housing rights because they lack the financial resources, legal representation or technical expertise available to housing providers. The Scottish Government should review the complaints and redress system to ensure residents can secure effective, timely and enforceable remedies without disproportionate procedural, evidential or financial barriers. Housing providers should also have a statutory duty to proactively inform residents of their rights and routes to redress, including written notification where their home is found to fall below the Tolerable Standard or other legal housing requirements.

9. Collective Complaints and Collective Redress

Scotland should establish mechanisms allowing residents to pursue collective housing complaints. Where multiple households report similar defects, these should trigger investigation of potential systemic failures rather than being treated as unrelated cases. Where wider failures are established, housing providers should be required to implement collective remedial action plans.

10. Strengthening the Implementation of Awaab's Law

Awaab's Law should be the foundation for wider reform of housing accountability, rather than the limit of it. The Scottish Government should regularly review its effectiveness and extend equivalent statutory duties, repair timescales and enforcement mechanisms beyond damp and mould to serious defects including flooding, drainage, plumbing, ventilation and structural failures. These protections should be supported by independent investigations, effective enforcement, appropriate remedies and meaningful resident participation in the legislation's future development.

Democratic Public Ownership of Social Housing

Social housing should be publicly owned and democratically governed. At the heart of the failures documented in Dalmarnock Village lies a profound imbalance of power between residents and the institutions responsible for their homes, reflecting wider weaknesses in the democratic accountability of Scotland's social housing system. Addressing these problems requires more than stronger regulation. Scotland should begin a long-term transition towards bringing social housing back into public ownership, combining the collective capacity of the public sector with meaningful democratic power for the communities who live within it.

1. Bring Social Housing Back into Public Ownership

The Scottish Government should establish a national programme to progressively bring housing association stock back into public ownership, supported by the necessary legislation and investment. This should create a coherent public housing system capable of pooling resources, expertise and risk, and directing investment according to need rather than the capacity or priorities of individual landlords.

The purpose should not be to change the name above the door while preserving the same concentration of power underneath it.

2. Local Democratic Power within a Public Housing System

Public ownership must be accompanied by a redistribution of power. Residents should have guaranteed democratic authority over local investment priorities, major works, neighbourhood management and housing services, rather than being confined to consultation exercises while decisions remain elsewhere.

Professional bodies should remain responsible for technical delivery, while residents exercise power over priorities and direction. Resources should be pooled collectively, while power is exercised democratically and as locally as possible.

3. Public Investment Should Build Public Wealth

Public money should build permanent public wealth. New social housing substantially funded by the state should remain publicly owned, with public land retained wherever possible and public acquisition expanded. Communities should not see the value created through public investment pass out of public control.

4. From Tenants to Citizens: A Democratic Right to the City

Scotland should recognise a Right to the City, giving communities meaningful democratic power over regeneration, development, land use, public space and neighbourhood investment, moving beyond consultation towards a genuine share of decision-making authority.

People should be recognised not simply as tenants or service users, but as citizens with a democratic stake in the places they call home.

Further Information

For the full report, follow the link here:
https://thetruelegacy.org/report

For the full set of recommendations, follow the link here:
https://thetruelegacy.org/recommendations

Website