

Acuity Benchmarking

2025 Report

Acuity! 
intelligence. insight. improvement.



Foreword

Welcome to Acuity's Annual Benchmarking Report, bringing together key performance and cost data for community-based, smaller and specialist housing associations across England.

Each year, our members generously share their data and experience, enabling us to build a clear and practical picture of performance, pressures and emerging good practice across the sector.

This report is intended to support informed discussion, planning and assurance, and to help organisations understand their results in the context of their peers. We are very grateful to all those who have contributed, and we hope you find the report both useful and insightful.



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Acuity

Benchmarking Conference



Networking



Subject Matter Experts



Good Practice Sharing



Discussion and Debate

improvement in the
social housing sector.

Welcome to...

Acuity

Benchmarking for Better Housing

Yorkshire & Humberside, 2025

Hotel, Leeds

September

to 2:30pm



Introduction



Introduction

Welcome to Acuity's annual benchmarking report: key performance and cost data for community, smaller and specialist Housing Associations in England.

Acuity Benchmarking is the leading national benchmarking network for smaller housing providers, facilitated by Acuity Research & Practice.

Aimed at housing providers with up to 2,500 homes, the network has over 150 members owning/managing over 85,000 homes across eight English regions, with a median stock size of 370.

Providing the Data You Need

Acuity provides performance and cost benchmarking data that enables members to compare their results with a peer group of similar organisations facing comparable challenges. This insight is used by staff, boards, and residents to better understand performance, including what “good” looks like in practice, the context behind the numbers, and to support informed decision-making. The data also gives lenders, the Regulator and other stakeholders confidence that your organisation is well-governed, financially sound, and delivering on its social mission.



2025 Results

2025 data continues to present Acuity members in a strong light – performance compares favourably with the wider social housing sector across both satisfaction and “hard” operational metrics, as organisations have further embedded Tenant Satisfaction Measures.

There is no room for complacency, however. The sector faces heightened scrutiny with major changes including Awaab's Law, the introduction of heat network regulation, and the new Competence and Conduct Standard, alongside wider legislative reform. Using Benchmarking Club membership to share insight and good practice remains central to supporting effective responses and delivering the social housing mission.

“The real value isn't just the data, but the shared learning with similar organisations facing the same challenges.”

“Acuity's benchmarking gives our board confidence, sharpens our focus, and helps ensure we deliver what matters most to residents.”

“As a smaller provider, benchmarking gives us clarity on what good looks like and confidence in our decisions.”



What's Next?

What's Happening at Acuity

In 2025, we regrouped and consulted on changes to further improve the service.

One of these recognised the interrelationship between care and housing. Throughout 2025, we delivered a benchmarking pilot with the National Care Forum to test a suite of 14 new metrics across clinical and non-clinical performance. This is currently being evaluated ahead of a full service in 2026.

We have also focused on supporting members with research requests and have undertaken a variety of research projects for members, including developing governance frameworks, policies, support using AI tools, activity development, strategies for sheltered schemes, tender development, job description writing, and even helping with shortlisting for vacancies! The range has been broad and enjoyable.

New Forsta Platform

In 2025, focus shifted to building a replacement for the existing benchmarking platform Pact. Pact has been a long-serving resource for Acuity, but we witnessed the benefits that migrating to a new best-in-class system has made for our client satisfaction service, so we made the decision to develop a benchmarking platform using the same service.

This has now been built and includes:

- ✓ Streamlined and improved way of submitting data
- ✓ High-quality graphics, visuals and reports
- ✓ Community hub
- ✓ Calendar of events for all clubs
- ✓ Support request system
- ✓ A PI metric wiki



Demos have been rolled out and continue to be delivered in group and one-to-one settings to ensure members can make the most of the new platform.

Where there's a Web, there's a Way

In 2025, we delivered nine webinars exclusive to members covering a range of topics, including making better use of data, heat networks, Awaab's Law, the roles and responsibilities of being an RP, effective complaints handling, Board Member duties, and the impact of STAIRS. Over 1,000 people attended the webinar series, and we aim to surpass this in 2026, with five webinars already scheduled for the first quarter.

2025 also saw us immerse ourselves in the opportunities and challenges of AI, partnering with HAILIE, the Housing AI Leadership Implementation Exchange, a voluntary network supporting housing associations in safely using AI to improve the work they undertake. This continues to grow, with benchmarking members increasingly involved.

Finally, as many of you will know, Acuity is not just a benchmarking business; we are a long-established provider of satisfaction surveys and market research. Our team is on hand to help you with a variety of surveys you may want to undertake. To find out more, please contact: sean.brennan@arap.co.uk





Performance & Improvement

Performance Comparison & Improvement



Acuity benchmarking data provides smaller, community-based and specialist housing providers with comparisons between similar peers and the rest of the sector. The results on the following pages continue to demonstrate that members compare positively with the rest of the sector in key areas such as satisfaction, rent collection, arrears, voids and the cost and management of repairs.

The data in the following pages provides an insight into the performance of Acuity Benchmarking members for the period from April 2024 to March 2025. Two sets of data are provided for each key activity:

- 1 The median performance of all organisations submitting data to Acuity (referred to as 'Smaller Providers') and the median performance of all larger organisations Acuity provides TSM surveys for (referred to as 'All Providers')
- 2 Year-on-year data indicating the direction of travel in performance among Acuity members



We use a traffic light system to indicate whether the median for Acuity members is higher, lower or the same as the median for All Providers, and trend arrows to indicate whether performance among Acuity members has improved, declined or stayed the same. We have also used the RSH TSM Data issued on 4 November 2025 and the RSH Global Accounts Data published on 15 January 2026. The year-on-year trend is based on data from Acuity members who submitted figures for both 2023/24 and 2024/25. This ensures that trend comparisons are robust and not adversely affected by changes in the sample from year to year. This means that the Acuity medians compared against All Providers may differ slightly from the medians used for the same year in the trend analysis.

All resident satisfaction (TSM) data is based on the latest Regulatory guidance.

"Having access to clear benchmarking comparisons helps us understand how we are performing relative to our peers, giving us a valuable perspective and confidence in our decision-making."

"The benchmarking helped our Board pinpoint where progress was needed, ensuring we maintain focus and continue driving improvement in areas where we lagged behind peers."

"Our experience with Acuity and the Benchmarking network has been really beneficial. The quality of shared insight and data has played a key role in strengthening our organisation."



Voids & Lettings

Smaller providers continue to demonstrate strong void and lettings performance overall, outperforming All Providers across four of the six measures.

Void rent loss is more than twice as low in GN compared with All Providers (0.60p.p compared with 1.21p.p). Supported void loss remains higher than other tenures, consistent with sector-wide trends. HfOP outperforms All Providers for both rent loss and re-let times.

Compared with 2023/24, performance declined for four measures and remained stable for two, reflecting the challenging circumstances under which smaller providers continue to operate, despite outperforming their larger peers.

The biggest change has been for the average re-let time for supported, which has moved from 37.59 to 42.69 days.

(Please note that 'p.p' refers to percentage points.)



“The quality of the club reports, together with the insight gained from presenting and discussing the comparisons, was warmly received by both our staff and Board.”



	All Providers	Smaller Providers		2023/24	2024/25	
Percentage of rent lost due to void properties (GN)	1.21	0.60	●	0.51	0.52	↓
Percentage of rent lost due to void properties (HfOP)	1.68	0.94	●	1.05	1.05	↔
Percentage of rent lost due to void properties (Supported)	2.94	5.07	●	5.65	6.10	↓
Average re-let time in days (GN)	27.00	32.00	●	35.00	37.60	↓
Average re-let time in days (HfOP)	32.00	24.60	●	25.00	25.00	↔
Average re-let time in days (Supported)	55.00	43.00	●	37.59	42.69	↓



Rent Collection & Arrears

Following last year's performance, both Smaller and All Providers members are demonstrating strong management of income loss at a time when tenants continue to face financial challenges.

Compared with All Providers, Smaller Providers outperform their larger peers across five of the nine metrics, with one score tied.

Comparing Acuity members' performance from 2023/24 to 2024/25, performance for

two of the nine metrics here has improved, two have remained unchanged, and five have declined in performance.

Rent collection as a percentage of rent owed improved for GN and declined by a negligible amount for both HfOP and Supported, by 0.14p.p and 0.04p.p, respectively.

The standard tenant arrears have not declined for any tenure, with marginal improvement (0.03p.p) for GN and no

change for HfOP and Supported.

Arrears net of unpaid HB/UC have declined for all three tenures but not significantly, with the greatest decline in GN 0.30p.p.



	All Providers	Smaller Providers		2023/24	2024/25	
Rent collected as a percentage of rent owed (GN)	99.64	99.55	●	99.10	99.16	↑
Rent collected as a percentage of rent owed (HfOP)	99.78	99.82	●	100.37	100.23	↓
Rent collected as a percentage of rent owed (SUP)	99.21	99.00	●	97.90	97.86	↓
Current tenant arrears (GN)	3.41	2.92	●	3.18	3.15	↑
Current tenant arrears (HfOP)	2.18	1.11	●	1.03	1.03	↔
Current tenant arrears (SUP)	4.92	6.00	●	4.16	4.16	↔
Current tenant arrears net of unpaid HB (GN)	2.74	2.74	●	2.85	3.15	↓
Current tenant arrears net of unpaid HB (HfOP)	1.63	0.20	●	0.47	0.52	↓
Current tenant arrears net of unpaid HB (SUP)	3.58	1.55	●	1.30	1.50	↓



Repairs & Maintenance

Repairs performance remains a key strength. Emergency repairs completed within target exceed All Providers and Regulator benchmarks, despite a small year-on-year reduction.

Non-emergency repairs remain broadly in line with All Providers and have improved slightly year-on-year.

End-to-end repair times have improved compared with last year and significantly

outperform All Providers by 3.35 days.

First-visit completion rates have also improved and, again, outperform All Providers, reflecting strong operational delivery among smaller providers.

Gas safety checks remain 100% this year, demonstrating full regulatory compliance and effective asset management.

Repair satisfaction demonstrates the starkest difference between Smaller Providers and larger landlords, with

satisfaction over 21 p.p higher for Smaller Providers. This is very encouraging.

Please note that all data is for General Needs, Supported Housing and Housing for Older People combined.



- Percentage of emergency repairs completed within target (TSM)
- Percentage of non-emergency repairs completed within target (TSM)
- Average end-to-end time for all reactive repairs
- Percentage of repairs completed at first visit
- Percentage of residents satisfied with last repair (repair completion survey)
- Percentage of gas safety checks completed on time (TSM)

	All Providers	RSH	Smaller Providers		2023/24	2024/25	
Percentage of emergency repairs completed within target (TSM)	94.75	94.9	95.32	●	99.20	98.46	↓
Percentage of non-emergency repairs completed within target (TSM)	81.50	82.5	81.29	●	93.19	93.33	↑
Average end-to-end time for all reactive repairs	12.50	n/a	9.15	●	9.25	9.10	↑
Percentage of repairs completed at first visit	89.00	n/a	91.10	●	90.50	91.30	↑
Percentage of residents satisfied with last repair (repair completion survey)	70.67	n/a	92.70	●	93.00	92.65	↓
Percentage of gas safety checks completed on time (TSM)	99.95	100	99.95	●	100.0	100.0	↔



Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)

Smaller providers continue to significantly outperform All Providers and the Regulator figures across all Tenant Satisfaction Measures.

Compared with RSH landlords, Smaller Providers outperform them by between 6.4p.p and 12.2p.p, with the largest differences seen in overall satisfaction (12.2p.p) and the time taken for last repair (12.2p.p). Compared with All Providers, this outperformance ranges from 4p.p to

12.0p.p, with the largest difference seen for listens and acts (12.0p.p), followed by overall satisfaction (10.0p.p).

As was the case last year, seven of 12 TSM measures have scores of at least 80% for Smaller Providers. By comparison, no measures for All Providers or RSH scores 80% or more.

While most measures have seen small year-on-year reductions, performance

remains well above sector benchmarks.

The largest reductions were seen in complaint handling and ASB handling, although satisfaction levels remain stronger than All Providers, demonstrating continued positive resident perception.



	All Providers	RSH	Smaller Providers		2023/24	2024/25	
Overall satisfaction (LCRA)	74	71.8	84.00	●	85.0	83.2	↓
Overall repairs service (LCRA)	77	73.6	83.00	●	86.5	82.5	↓
Last repair time taken (LCRA)	73	69.5	81.75	●	80.6	80.0	↓
Well maintained home (LCRA)	74	71.9	83.00	●	83.0	82.0	↓
Safe home (LCRA)	78	77.6	86.70	●	89.0	86.9	↓
Listens & acts (LCRA)	61	61.6	73.00	●	76.3	75.1	↓
Kept informed (LCRA)	73	72.0	80.00	●	84.1	80.5	↓
Treated fairly & with respect (LCRA)	78	77.9	87.00	●	87.0	86.0	↓
Complaint handling (LCRA)	36	35.5	45.50	●	62.0	50.0	↓
Communal areas (LCRA)	68	66.7	76.50	●	76.2	75.0	↓
Neighbourhood contribution (LCRA)	67	64.6	71.00	●	74.4	73.0	↓
ASB handling (LCRA)	61	59.5	69.60	●	75.0	69.3	↓



Staff Engagement

As with previous years, Acuity members reported that, on average, they lost significantly fewer working days to sickness absence than larger providers.

Time lost to sickness absence has decreased again in 2024/25 by 0.04 days, following a 1.92-day decline in 2023/24.



“Since joining Acuity, we’ve quickly seen the benefits of membership. The benchmarking, webinar opportunities and shared learning have been particularly valuable in supporting our day-to-day operations. Being part of a trusted network of similar organisations provides reassurance and practical insight, and we would encourage other small providers to consider getting involved.”

“The quality of the reports, together with the deeper insight and context shared through the meetings, was greatly valued by our team.”

“This is very useful and a real resource for us.”



Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence

		All Providers	Smaller Providers		
				203/24	2024/25
		9.1	4.14 ●	5.04	5.00 ▲



VFM/Cost Measures

These unit cost metrics were developed to enable sector comparisons and are more robust than those derived from statutory accounts, as they require members to apportion costs in accordance with a methodology that is more consistent than that used in accounting practice. The cost per property measures are 'direct' and exclude overheads.

Compared with All Providers, Acuity members reported a lower average cost

per property for housing management, responsive repairs, void works, and major and cyclical works. This bucks the trend seen last year and further demonstrates the efficiencies Smaller Providers are achieving despite cost pressures.

Comparing year-on-year performance for Smaller Providers, performance has slightly declined, for housing management, responsive repairs and void works, although this is negligible. Costs have fallen for major and cyclical works.

Overhead costs as a percentage of turnover have increased since last year and are over 3p.p higher than All Providers. This is to be expected due to structural economies of scale, fixed cost dilution, and regulatory minimum requirements.



- Cost per property of Housing Management
- Cost per property of responsive repairs and void works
- Cost per property - Major and cyclical works
- Overhead costs as a percentage of turnover

	All Providers	Smaller Providers		2023/24	2024/25	
Cost per property of Housing Management	1,294	656	●	520	536	↓
Cost per property of responsive repairs and void works	1,168	1,029	●	899	901	↓
Cost per property - Major and cyclical works	1,984	1,309	●	1,071	1,040	↑
Overhead costs as a percentage of turnover	16.07	19.66	●	18.80	18.99	↓



Regulator of Social Housing

In 2018, the RSH introduced a requirement that all regulated HAs report their accounts against defined Value for Money (VFM) metrics.

The RSH intention is that these metrics provide a starting point for associations to assess and evidence VFM, drawing on additional data and supporting evidence (such as that included in the rest of this report) to 'unpack' the headline position.

In the table below, the median values for Acuity members (Smaller Providers) are compared with the medians from RSH Global Accounts data for providers who own or manage more than 1,000 homes.

Overall operating margins and reinvestment rates for social housing lettings are lower for Smaller Providers. Cost per unit is also considerably higher (93%) for Smaller Providers. As a Smaller Provider-only comparison in costs since

last year, however, this median increase is smaller (13%).

Compared with last year, five metrics have declined, with two improving. These are Gearing and reinvestment rates, although they remain lower than All Providers.



	All Providers	Smaller Providers	2023/24	2024/25	
Operating margin (overall)	17.30	15.37	16.60	15.52	↓
Operating margin (social housing lettings)	22.10	17.30	18.82	18.52	↓
EBITDA MRI (as a percentage of interest)	87.00	192.00	218	200	↓
Gearing (RSH and Scorecard measure)	52.00	13.80	16.00	17.30	↑
Reinvestment %	6.20	3.40	2.63	2.70	↑
Return on Capital Employed (ROCE) %	2.80	3.10	2.64	2.53	↓
Headline social housing cost per unit	3,382	6,524	5,720	6,447	↓

*The median from the most recent Regulator for Social Housing Value for Money data, published with the global accounts in January 2026 for providers owning / managing > 1000 homes: [2025_GA_Final.pdf](#)

Salaries Survey



Each year, Acuity runs a survey comparing salaries and terms and conditions for smaller housing providers. This year was the 15th edition of the survey.

38 smaller housing providers participated in 2025, and the feedback from participating organisations has once again been excellent.

Participants received a detailed report with a comparison and analysis of salaries and other benefits in November 2025. The report was developed with considerable input from members and is intended to help them and their boards assess how the pay and rewards they offer compare with those of others.

Would you like to see the full details underpinning these figures? If so, please contact Acuity about taking part in the 2026 survey. The survey is free for all members.

“We consistently find these reports invaluable, and the data they provide plays a key role in informing our annual salary reviews and reward decisions.”

Summary of 2025 Findings

Staff numbers: General Needs providers employ an average of 2.37 FTE staff per 100 properties. This is a 0.17 decrease from last year.

Staff turnover: Median staff turnover is 12.6%. This is 0.9% lower than last year.

Salary costs: Median total salary costs are 21% of turnover, slightly lower than last year (23%).

CEO salaries: The median salary for chief executives is £93,525, 4% higher than last year.

Salary increases: The median salary increase is 3%, down 2% from last year.

Overtime & bonuses: 21% of organisations pay overtime, and 21% pay bonuses.

Pensions: The median cost of pensions for employers is 6.2%. This is a 1.8% reduction from last year.

The average employee contribution is 5% of their salary, the same as in 2024 and 2023.

On average, 88% of staff participate in pension schemes.



Sickness benefits: 63% of organisations offer enhanced sickness absence entitlements.

Training & development budgets: Organisations spend on average £629 per FTE member of staff. This is 26% more than last year (£500).

Other benefits packages: All participants receive a range of other benefits as part of their staff reward packages, with the most common being homeworking, time off in lieu (TOIL), payment of professional fees, provision of study time, and employee assistance programmes.

Boards & board remuneration: The average board has nine members; this has remained stable for several years. 34% of participants remunerate the chair, and 24% remunerate other board members.



Benchmarking Clubs

Benchmarking Clubs



Existing Clubs

We have 7 benchmarking clubs in England:

-  London and South East
-  Housing for Older People
-  North West
-  South West
-  Supported Housing
-  West Midlands
-  Yorkshire & Humberside

And in Ireland

-  The Housing Alliance

Acuity brings member organisations together in regional and specialist benchmarking clubs, offering the opportunity to meet with colleagues from similar organisations facing similar challenges, to move beyond purely numeric comparisons.



How Clubs Work

Clubs generally meet quarterly, primarily online, with the annual club report presented to each club at the in-person Autumn meeting. The meetings are a chance to network, share ideas and learn from each other in a safe peer space. Members chair the meetings and determine how they operate, with some choosing to hold more face-to-face meetings to take advantage of the richer networking it enables. Members who are unable to travel can still join remotely.

Current challenges that clubs have identified to focus on include: Awaab's Law, heat network regulations, the professionalisation of the sector, renters reform, and the new competence and conduct standard.

We run a variety of ad hoc working groups, this year focusing on how we manage the heat network regulations coming into force.

Future Clubs

In 2025, we launched two new Clubs. In England, we piloted a Care Benchmarking Club in partnership with the National Care Forum and 12 care providers. This project continues until March 2026 and will become a core part of the benchmarking service.

In Ireland, a supported housing club was launched in partnership with the Irish Council for Social Housing and 18 providers. Conversations are underway to continue this as a mainstream benchmarking service and group.

In 2026, we will launch our Rural Benchmarking Club, Asset Management Group and Board Member recruitment campaign following discussions at the clubs and steering group.

“The meetings are just as valuable as the data itself, providing a space to share insight, challenge thinking and take practical good practice back into our organisation.”



About Acuity

Acuity provides consultancy services to help social housing providers improve services and engage with their residents.

We support the benchmarking activities of housing providers in Ireland and the UK, carry out tenant satisfaction surveys, customer research and insight, and we work with staff, Board members and residents to support their learning and development needs.

Our philosophy is to build relationships with clients that enable them to achieve performance and service improvements through access to the highest quality information and learning experiences. Our services are highly flexible and always carefully tailored to the requirements and budgets of our customers. We have been providing consultancy services to the social housing sector since 1998.



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