

# How are we doing?

## Foreword

### Welcome to 'How are we doing?'



**Councillor Jim Harkins**  
Leader of the Council

**Tom Scholes**  
Chief Executive



We believe reporting our performance is extremely important because it allows us to tell you:

- how well we perform;
- what we have achieved; and
- what actions we are taking to improve our performance further.

In the past, we have produced 'How are we doing?' each year as a one-off magazine sent to all residents. We now intend to report our performance more frequently and more imaginatively. We will include a four page section in each edition of Renfrewshire magazine and we will feature particular services and facilities in more detail.

More frequent reporting of our performance will mean that information is more up to date and relevant. Features on services and facilities will provide greater detail and will allow us to give you a behind the scenes look at why our performance is improving and why we are becoming acknowledged as one of the most improving councils in Scotland.

We believe we are delivering high quality, affordable, inclusive and sustainable services and we are proud of our success. However, we believe there is always room to improve our performance and we are constantly striving to do so.

This edition of Renfrewshire Magazine introduces our new corporate statement and focuses on some of the most important ways in which we are improving our performance.

Our corporate statement sets out our values which demonstrate the kind of organisation we want to be and the way in which we want to deliver our services.

They are:

- involving and empowering;
- listening and communicating;
- aiming to be the best;
- treating our customers well;
- valuing our employees;
- tackling inequalities;
- working in partnership; and
- representing the community.

We will use 'How are we doing?' to let you know how well we are delivering our values. We will highlight what the public, customers, employees and businesses have told us about how well we have performed.

We hope you find the information in 'How are we doing?' useful and interesting. If you have any comments or suggestions for improvement please contact David McCormick on 0141 840 3505 or e-mail him at [chiefexec@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:chiefexec@renfrewshire.gov.uk)

# How we achieve improvements in the performance of our services



## Customer service strategy

We launched our customer service strategy in February 2003. This sets out our vision for the delivery of modern, high quality, seamless and customer focused services. A key element of this strategy is our customers matters toolkit which sets out a range of practical ideas to help us build upon the quality of service that we currently deliver to our customers.

Our customers matters toolkit:

- draws on best practice from the public, private and voluntary sectors;
- provides us with the framework and the tools that will help us deliver our core values, achieve best value, modernise and improve our services;
- is supported by an extensive programme of training and support tailored to the needs of the service each of our employees works in;
- is available to almost 3,000 employees on our intranet.

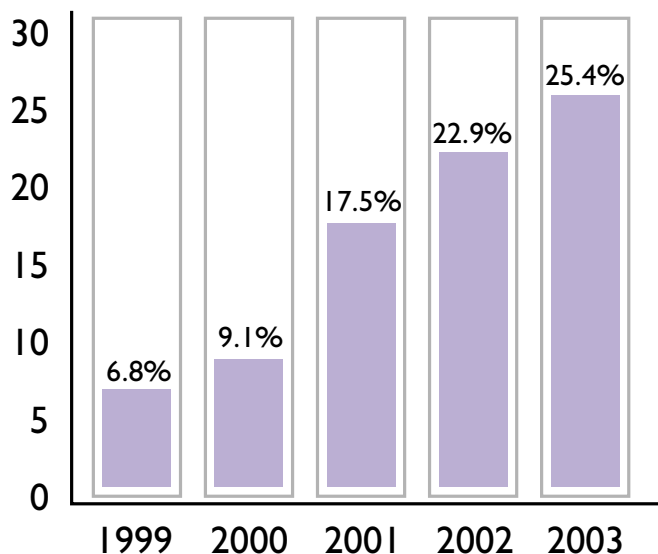
## Quality awards

To win national awards we have to show external assessors that we deliver quality services that meet customer needs. We have been especially successful in achieving Charter Mark which is the Government's award scheme for recognising and encouraging excellence in public services.

### Did you know that?

- We have 30 Charter Marks which cover over 25% of our workforce. This is many more Charter Marks than any other Scottish council.
- Our housing advice and homeless service and estates service are taking part in the pilots for the new Charter Mark assessment process. For the first time this will include an assessment of how well we contribute to improving opportunities and quality of life in the community. We are one of only two Scottish councils involved in the pilots.
- Customer satisfaction is higher for our Charter Mark services than for other services - it averages over 80% and can be as high as 100%.
- We have consistently been amongst the top performing councils in the Convention of Scottish Local Authority excellence awards. In 2002 we won three gold awards which are the highest form of recognition.

% of workforce covered by Charter Mark awards



## Planning for success!

Our Building Control and Development Control services received Charter Mark in 2001.

Our Building Control service makes sure that buildings comply with the law on the grounds of public health, safety, energy conservation and disabled persons' access.

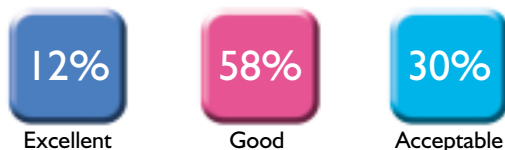
Our Development Control section processes applications for planning permission. They advise the public about the permissions they need to carry out work on land and property.

Both services achieve very high customer satisfaction levels.

### How we improved

We raised our customer service pledge to respond to letters from 21 days to 14 days.

We improved the information we provided because some of our customers were dissatisfied. All our users are now satisfied with the information we provide. 12% of our customers believe the information we provide is excellent, 58% good and 30% found it acceptable.



A user group market tests and agrees many service improvements before they are put into practice to make sure they work right first time.

Customers say that the most important part of the process is the speed that we make decisions on applications. We have targeted our efforts to improve and now 30% of applicants think the time taken to get their decision is excellent, 43% that it is good and 27% that it is acceptable.



## Customer contact centre

Our customer contact centre has streamlined the way we deliver services to our customers since it opened in October 2000. Our aim is for the customer contact centre to deal with your enquiry without having to pass your call to anyone else.

### Did you know that?

- Our customer contact centre is open from 8 a.m. till 8 p.m. and has handled over 500,000 calls from 92,000 customers since its launch;
- our highly trained employees are able to deal with 93% of calls without having pass the caller to someone else;
- our customer contact centre now deals with:
  - council tax;
  - collecting and getting rid of rubbish;
  - recruitment;
  - requests for school places;
  - the senior citizens' outings and voucher scheme;
  - a housing repairs service for all 9 neighbourhood areas; and
  - a telephone payments service.

How are we doing?

## Public services panel

We employ an independent research company to survey residents in Renfrewshire every three months using questionnaires with different themes. We use this feedback to identify areas where we need to improve services.

### Did you know that?

- there are 2,000 residents from all parts of Renfrewshire on our public services panel;
- our community planning partners help to cover the costs of the public services panel;
- our community planning partners have asked questions on health, community safety and access to information and communications technology.

88%

88% of the panel believe individuals and communities should be able to influence the planning and delivery of public services.

61%

61% of the panel use the internet. 52% of the panel have internet access at home which is considerably higher than national average of 42%.

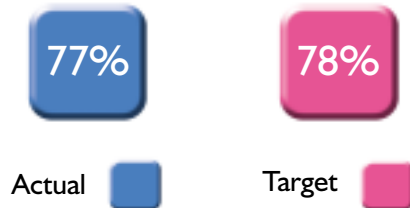
52%

## Common performance indicators

Each of our services monitors and reports its performance on certain key day-to-day matters. We believe it is very important to get the building blocks right that go towards the overall level of customer service we deliver. These performance indicators will soon also be reported to you on our website [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk)

### Did you know that between January and March this year?

- We received 141 formal complaints and responded to 77% within the timescale promised. Our target for 2003/04 is 78%.



- Our services answered 79% of phone calls within five rings. Our target for 2003/04 is 80%.



- We paid 85% of our invoices within 30 days. Our performance over the last year was 81%. Our target for 2003/04 is 82.5%.



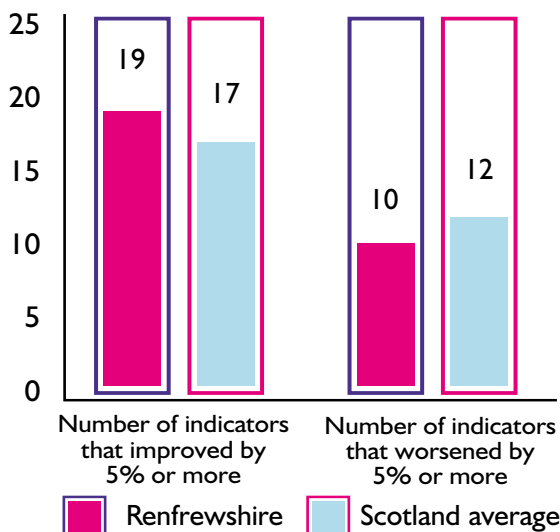
- Sickness absence was 5.7% which is lower for this three month period of the year than in recent years. Our performance over the last year was 6.1%. Our target for 2003/04 is 5.8%.



## An independent view of how we have performed

### Statutory Performance Indicators:

Performance between 1999/2000 and 2001/2002



Each year Audit Scotland produces its analysis of how Scottish councils have performed. Our performance has ranked consistently higher than most other councils. Audit Scotland show that:

- six out of eight of our services assessed by Audit Scotland show very high levels of best practice. This is the most any council achieved;
- we are the sixth best council out of 32 at improving our services. This is a remarkable achievement as generally our performance is already at a higher level than most councils which makes it more difficult to improve from an already good base performance;
- analysis of the 10 out of 67 indicators where our performance worsened between 1999/2000 and 2001/02 shows that in 2002/2003 our performance significantly improved. In eight out of the 10 indicators we improved by more than 5% and in five of them by well over 15%.

### Where else can you find out about how well we perform?

'How are we doing?' is just one way we report performance. There are many other ways you can find out how we perform. Here are some of the main ways:

- You can visit our website at ([www.renfrewshire.gov.uk](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk)). By the end of this month, the website will feature performance and targets for the statutory performance indicators we report to Audit Scotland.
- Larger departments produce their own public performance reports which are available at their reception areas. We make available all these reports at our main reception. Should you wish copies please phone David McCormick on 0141 840 3505 or e-mail him at [chiefexec@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:chiefexec@renfrewshire.gov.uk)
- Many of the reception areas at our offices display the performance and targets for the main services provided there.
- The Renfrewshire magazine itself will run features on services which highlight our performance.

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