

**Scottish Building Standards Hub (SBSH)
Periodic Operational Report
Covering Period
from
24th May 2024
to
31st December 2024**



Produced by the Scottish Building Standards Hub.

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Title: Scottish Building Standards Hub (SBSH) Quarterly Operational Report covering period from 24th May 2024 to 31st December 2024

Purpose: This document outlines progress of the Scottish Building Standards Hub (SBSH) against its business plan.

Version:	Date:	Notes:
1.0	24.01.2025	Initial draft.
1.1	10.02.2025	Minor amendments/additions.

Introduction:

This Operational and Performance Report details the progress made by the Scottish Building Standards Hub (SBSH) in relation to the implementation of its Business Plan.

Reporting also includes impact on measures to support the national building standards system as well as SBSH specific performance measures. Development and implementation of any plans to address any issues highlighted within this report are also included. (Refer to blue text under items 1.1.2, 1.2.2 and 1.3.2)

In addition to this quarterly reporting, the SBSH will also prepare separately and present to the Advisory Board an Annual Report on Hub activity. This will form part of its rolling Strategic and Operational Business Plan.

Report:

1	Implementation of Business Plan:
1.1	Business/Strategy/Transformation:
1.1.1	Successes against identified aims (2024/25):
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eight of the 10.5 SBSH roles have been recruited to.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SBSH fully embedded into Fife Council and its corporate systems/services.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff have been provided with IT equipment/software.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SBSH specific SharePoint library constructed and in test environment.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration and Technical Support Officer has been given Uniform access (case file management system).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SBSH website established interacting with LABSS website with single sign on facility to provide verifier access to learning management system platform.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It has been established that Fife Council business and corporate policy apply to the operations of the SBSH and are as such in place. Specific standing instructions relating to SBSH services and activities are being considered along with their process reviews, referred to elsewhere in this report.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular liaison and engagement between the SBSH and other forums, partners and stakeholders has been established, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advisory Board – Quarterly. ○ Building Standards Stakeholder Group – Quarterly. ○ SBSH Support Group – Every two months. ○ LABSS liaison – Monthly. ○ BSD liaison – Monthly. ○ Fife Council catch ups – Weekly. ○ SBSH team briefing/update sessions – Weekly.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular quarterly meeting dates are established between the Digital Hub and LABSS Digital Development Group (DDG). This also includes liaison with the BSD digital transformation team.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular liaison between SBSH, LABSS, BSD and idox as the national IT back-office system provider has been established.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local authority and stakeholder awareness of the support mechanisms provided by the SBSH to the DDG has been raised. Relevant material now published on the SBSH website and generic e-mail established to contact the DDG through Fife Council systems.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 27 of the 32 Scottish Local Authorities have completed and signed an MOU with the SBSH. This is further supported by the MOU between LABSS and the SBSH.
1.1.2	Outstanding actions against aims (2024/25):
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertise and recruit to the 2.5 vacant positions: The vacant Technical Support Surveyor post re-advertised in early January with interviews on 21st February. Vacant 0.5 FTE Administration and Technical Support position intended to be re-advertised once case file and workflow tools fully established. Learning and Development Officer post was advertised, and several candidates were interviewed. One candidate was identified as being suitable for the post, but unfortunately due to pending visa expiry issues, could not be appointed. The other candidates interviewed were not suitable for the position.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SBSH specific SharePoint library to be taken to live environment: The test platform is currently being assessed by Fife Council Records Management Team.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully establish Uniform and Enterprise tools specifically for SBSH cases: Administration and Technical Support Officer has assessed data formatting so that SBSH case files do not adversely affect other service performance recording and reporting tools or workflow. There are ongoing discussions with the Building Standards Service Manager to ensure proposals are suitable for integration onto the platform.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish single sign on facility for verifiers to access the new LXP learning management system: The present single sign on facility to the LMS is hosted on the LABSS website. Through discussion with LABSS, the new LXP platform will be accessed via a single sign on facility supported from the SBSH website. This solution has mutual benefits to both organisations. Both the LXP platform and website developers are taking this work forward.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh the Digital Hub and LABSS DDG terms of reference documents to acknowledge the change from the Hub Pilot to the SBSH: Work on this requires collaboration with LABSS and is subject to consideration by them under their ongoing reshaping exercise.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conclude the remaining 5 SBSH/LA MOUs: The SBSH has sent its last reminders to LAs but continues to have dialogue where approached. BSD and LABSS aware and will encourage completion with LAs. Other approaches being made directly to chief executives through SOLACE.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop other SBSH MOU's as necessary: BSD are currently drafting a working agreement between the SBSH and them. Whilst in essence it will be an MOU, it is likely to be called something different to suit SG policy.
1.1.3	Changes/new strategic goals against aims (2024/25):
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interim case file/performance monitoring/workflow system is in place until Uniform and Enterprise is fully established.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New role profile has been written to supersede Learning and Development Officer profile. New profile is more technical based to attract a different group of people to the role.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SBSH has received funding support from the BSD Development Unit to co-develop a national mobile app supporting customers interacting with the building standards system.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SBSH has agreed to look at what support verifiers require in the considerations of time recording for BSD reporting.
1.2	Technical/Operations/Services:
1.2.1	Successes against identified aims (2024/25):
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Fire Engineering Expert Hub working group is nearing conclusion in being able to formally agree the operational principles of the 'FireHub' which will support verifiers and wider stakeholders on complex fire engineering matters.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The means and scope by which the SBSH supports LABSS Consortium Technical Working Group (CTWG) is in place.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The communications strategy between the SBSH and CTWG is in place.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The series/means of organising dates that the CTWG will meet and be supported by the SBSH have been agreed.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local authority and stakeholder awareness of the support mechanisms provided by the SBSH to the CTWG has been undertaken. Relevant material now published on the SBSH website and generic e-mail established to contact the SBSH through Fife Council systems.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workload sharing template and associated guidance published on the SBSH website.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of the brokering facility, through the SBSH, of the facility to share workload in respect of the assessment of building warrant applications raised with verifiers.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details of local authorities whose business model accommodates a workload sharing capability are held by the SBSH to enable introductions to be made when a local authority seeks assistance.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The remit and scope of the SBSH's own fire expert support services has been developed and communicated to Local Authority Building Standards Teams. This includes the generic contact e-mail address and peer review request form.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The remit and scope of the SBSH's own energy/environment expert support services has been developed and communicated to Local Authority Building Standards Teams. This includes the generic contact e-mail address.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The remit and scope of the SBSH’s own technical and peer review support services has been developed and communicated to Local Authority Building Standards Teams. This includes the generic contact e-mail address.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process review of STAS service has commenced.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders and local authorities have been made aware that STAS applications are now being administered, managed and assessed exclusively by the SBSH. STAS processes are publicised on the SBSH website.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transfer the assessment of STAS applications from the ‘lead authority’ format to in house assessment has been concluded.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process review of current Information Papers has commenced.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process review of Dispute Resolution Process has commenced.
1.2.2	Outstanding actions against aims (2024/25):
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formally establish the FireHub together with details of its scope and remit: Working group is nearing conclusion.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise local authority and stakeholder awareness of the FireHub and publicise its presence and relevant material on the SBSH website: Stakeholders have been kept aware of developmental progress. Information already on website ready for enhancement when FireHub formally established.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From the experiences learned through the establishment of the fire engineering expert hub working group, develop, and establish the framework to enable the working group to consider the structural engineering expert hub (StructHub): Development to commence on conclusion of FireHub. Some working group members identified.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the remit and scope of the Structural Engineering Expert Hub: Development to be progressed through working group. See point immediately above.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise local authority and stakeholder awareness of the StructHub and publicise its presence and relevant material on the SBSH website: Stakeholders have been kept aware of developmental progress. Information already on website ready for enhancement when StructHub formally established.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal SBSH and LABSS CTWG terms of reference documents to acknowledge the relationship has still to be concluded: Work on this requires collaboration with LABSS, and subject to consideration by them under their ongoing reshaping exercise.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, agree scope, and publicise services that will be made available to local authorities, via the SBSH, through the FireHub: Working group is nearing conclusion and publicising the service will form the final piece of this process.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, agree scope, and publicise of services that will be made available to local authorities, via the SBSH, through the StructHub: Working group to be established and potential services delivered will be considered as part of the structural engineering expert hub working group.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise local authority awareness of the support services available through the Fire and Structural Engineering Expert Hubs and publicise on the SBSH website: Stakeholders have been kept aware of developmental progress. Information already

	on website ready for enhancement when FireHub/StructHub are formally established.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conclude process review of STAS service: Review underway and exercise will include a peer review of the proposed process.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider re-branding of STAS to make more relevant to the transfer of service operation and perception. I.e., Scottish Type Appraisal System: Process and service review underway.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and develop new fees scales for STAS applications of differing type, size, and complexity: Process and service review underway.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conclude process review of Information Paper service: Review underway.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conclude process review of Dispute resolution Process: Review underway.
1.2.3	Changes/new strategic goals against aims (2024/25):
	None identified to date.
1.3	Learning and Development:
1.3.1	Successes against identified aims (2024/25):
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SBSH business plan and budget has built-in a programme of two high end virtual learning environment (VLE) programmes, containing 4 to 5 modules, each year. Order has been placed to develop two programmes from this financial year's budget. In addition to the high end VLE material, a range of other digitised training materials and courses are being developed in house.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using past and validating with current research, the subject matter for all developed training material has been established on a priority basis. This could however be subject to change depending on altering development needs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SBSH Learning and Development and other staff have received training to develop their knowledge and skills in the use of 'Adapt Builder' and other training development tools to enable in-house development of quality digitised training modules/courses.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SBSH Learning and Development and other staff have received training to develop their knowledge and skills in the use of 'The Learning Management System (LMS)' to enable continual development of the platform. (See references to LXP below under changes to strategic goals.)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through purchase of the Learningpool Enterprise platform, development of the Skills Builder package continues. (See references to LXP below under changes to strategic goals.)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A monthly programme of CPD events has been established.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SBSH staff contribute to university lecturing.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional online and in person training has been organised as opportunity arises.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have engaged with universities and colleges to support MA/GA initiatives as well as investigate further training opportunity. (See references to HNC below under changes to strategic goals.)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SBSH continues to support national training initiatives, including MA and GA schemes and actively participates in the 'Competency Steering Group' to further the work outlined in the workforce strategy closure report.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SBSH has engaged with LABC, RIAS and other bodies in relation to the sharing of training resource material.
1.3.2	Outstanding actions against aims (2024/25):
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify areas of training to industry stakeholders that will develop a mutually beneficial outcome to understanding and delivery of the building standards system: Although several stakeholders have been engaged with, formal training to external partners has still to be programmed.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In conjunction with LABSS, identify mechanisms and priorities that will support the Ambassadors network: Work on this requires collaboration with LABSS, and subject to consideration by them under their ongoing reshaping exercise.
1.3.3	Changes/new strategic goals against aims (2024/25):
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learningpool’s Enterprise package, combining their LXP and skills builder platforms, has been purchased to enable full integration between learning material and skills/competence attainment. The LXP platform is the next generation of the LMS platform which allows this integration to take place. LMS held material has been moved to the LXP. Skills builder development has commenced, but will be accelerated early in 2025.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledging that Skills Builder will be the tool for verifiers to record skills and competence, through the Competency Steering Group, recent research has identified that this platform could allow local authorities to validate their own staff’s skills and competence before any potential external assessment is introduced. With the suggestion that this mechanism could be used as the verifier self-validation tool, the SBSH will require robust validation of the platform in terms of how the recording mechanisms work, etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In conjunction with Barnsley and Barnsley, the SBSH has been able to develop a programme/series of training that supports verifiers in how they approach evidence gathering for enforcement.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In conjunction with Verdancy Group and Fife College the SBSH has been able to develop a programme/series of practical training that supports verifiers identifying issues with air tightness in construction.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support the continuation of the building standards specific MA course, the SBSH in conjunction with Fife College is looking to develop interest from verifiers in a funded HNC for members that would enable a sufficient number of people participating on the course to preserve it as a dedicated building standards resource.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SBSH has received funding support from the BSD Development Unit to develop a Leaders Development Programme specifically for Building Standards to support managers and team leaders development and of their respective teams. This programme will contain a variety of training methods and platforms as well as toolkits to assist developing building standards teams/services and navigate reporting/development requirements.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding support to LABSS from the BSD Practice Unit has been transferred to the SBSH to develop a VLE programme of training to assist in compliance and the

	compliance plan process. This programme will be developed in conjunction with the Compliance Plan Working Group.		
2	National and SBSH Measures and Outcomes:		
2.1	Building Standards System Services:		
2.1.1	Scottish Type Approval Scheme:		
	SBSH Measure:	SBSH Outcome:	Related National Outcomes:
	Total number of valid STAS Certificates.	38 <i>(Note: Most STAS certificates cover multiple house types)</i>	Drive Efficiencies. Increased Capacity to Deliver Across All Types of Work.
	Number of new STAS applications.	7	
	Average time taken to respond to STAS applications from receipt of valid application.	Data not available under interim recording system. <i>(Target is 95% of applications within 20 working days.)</i>	Increased Consistency.
	Average time to issue STAS certificate from receipt of last piece of competent information.	Data not available under interim recording system. <i>(Target is 90% of applications within 10 working days.)</i>	
	Number of STAS enquiries.	5	
	Average time taken to respond to STAS enquiries.	Data not available under interim recording system. <i>(Target is 95% of applications within 10 working days.)</i>	
	Key reported outcomes from STAS customers. <i>*based on 2.5 hours assessing surveyor time per unit @ £30.46 per hour and 0.25 hours administration/technical support time per unit @ £19.63 per hour including employer contributions.</i>	Cala Homes: 2022 – 486 STAS approved units built. <i>(Verifier saving - £39,393.95 and 1,336.5 hours)*</i> 2023 – 563 STAS approved units built. <i>(Verifier saving - £45,635.37 and 1,548.25 hours)*</i> 2024 – 531 STAS approved units built. <i>(Verifier saving - £43,041.53 and 1,460.25 hours)*</i>	
2.1.2	Information Papers:		
	SBSH Measure:	SBSH Outcome:	Related National Outcomes:

	Total number of live information papers.	32	Drive Efficiencies. Increased Capacity to Deliver Across All Types of Work.
	Number of new information papers produced.	2	
	Number of information papers revised.	0	
	Key reported outcomes from information paper customers.	<i>TBA</i>	Increased Consistency.
2.1.3	Dispute Resolution Scheme:		
	SBSH Measure:	SBSH Outcome:	Related National Outcomes:
	Number of disputes received.	15	Drive Efficiencies. Increased Consistency.
	Number of disputes considered and resolved at a regional level.	15	
	Number of disputes referred to and resolved at Consortia Technical Working Group (CTWG) level.	0	
	Average time taken to establish the outcome from a dispute resolution case reviewed at national level.	N/A as all regional resolution. (Target is 95% of applications within 30 working days.)	
	Key reported outcomes from dispute resolution customers.	-	
2.2	Scottish Building Standards Hubs of Expertise and Advice:		
2.2.1	Fire Engineering Expert Hub (FireHub):		
	SBSH Measure:	SBSH Outcome:	Related National Outcomes:
	Number of panels held.	FireHub not yet established – No recording.	Increased Capacity to Deliver Across All Types of Work. Increased Resilience.
	Number of projects considered by the fire engineering expert hub.	FireHub not yet established – No recording.	
	Number of matters of national interest considered by the fire engineering expert hub.	FireHub not yet established – No recording.	

	Average time taken to respond to projects referred to the Fire Engineering Expert Hub.	FireHub not yet established – No recording. <i>(Target is 95% of applications within 30 working days.)</i>	
	Average time taken to respond to projects referred to the Fire Engineering Expert Hub.	FireHub not yet established – No recording. <i>(Target is 95% of applications within 30 working days.)</i>	
2.2.2	Structural Engineering Expert Hub (StructHub):		
	SBSH Measure:	SBSH Outcome:	Related National Outcomes:
	Number of panels held.	StructHub not yet established – No recording.	Increased Capacity to Deliver Across All Types of Work. Increased Resilience.
	Number of projects considered by the Structural Engineering Expert Hub.	StructHub not yet established – No recording.	
	Number of matters of national interest considered by the Structural Engineering Expert Hub.	StructHub not yet established – No recording.	
	Average time taken to respond to projects referred to the Structural Engineering Expert Hub.	StructHub not yet established – No recording. <i>(Target is 95% of applications within 30 working days.)</i>	
	Average time taken to respond to matters of national interest referred to the Structural Engineering Expert Hub.	StructHub not yet established – No recording. <i>(Target is 95% of applications within 30 working days.)</i>	
2.2.3	Scottish Building Standards Hub – Fire Expert Advice:		
	SBSH Measure:	SBSH Outcome:	Related National Outcomes:
	Number of SBSH Fire Expert enquires/peer reviews.	8	Increased Capacity to Deliver Across All Types of Work. Increased Resilience.
	Average time taken to respond to a SBSH Fire Expert enquiry/peer review.	7.9 days average. 100% within 20 working days. <i>(95% of enquiries/applications within 20 working days.)</i>	
2.2.4	Scottish Building Standards Hub – Energy/Environment Expert Advice:		
	SBSH Measure:	SBSH Outcome:	Related National Outcomes:

	Number of SBSH Energy/Environment Expert enquires/peer reviews.	3	Increased Capacity to Deliver Across All Types of Work.
	Average time taken to respond to a SBSH Energy/Environment Expert enquiry/peer review.	13.3 days average. 66.6% within 20 working days. <i>(95% of enquiries/applications within 20 working days.)</i>	Increased Resilience.
2.2.5	Building Standards Hub – General Technical/Procedural Advice:		
	SBSH Measure:	SBSH Outcome:	Related National Outcomes:
	Number of SBSH Technical Expert enquires/peer reviews.	44	Increased Capacity to Deliver Across All Types of Work.
	Average time taken to respond to a SBSH Technical Expert enquiry.	3.8 days average. 100% within 20 working days. <i>(95% of enquiries/applications within 20 working days.)</i>	Increased Resilience.
2.3	Operational Partnerships:		
2.3.1	Consortia Technical Working Group (CTWG):		
	SBSH Measure:	SBSH Outcome:	Related National Outcomes:
	Number of CTWG meetings supported by the SBSH.	3 annually. <i>(Target is 4 annually.)</i> 2 within reporting period.	Increased Consistency. Increased Resilience.
	Number of projects/matters considered by the CTWG.	3 in reporting period.	
	Number of stakeholders engaged with through the CTWG.	7 in reporting period.	
2.3.2	Digital Delivery Group (DDG):		
	SBSH Measure:	SBSH Outcome:	Related National Outcomes:
	Number of DDG meetings supported by the SBSH.	4 annually. <i>(Target is 4 annually.)</i> 3 within reporting period.	Ensure Investment in Skills and Technology. Increased Resilience.
	Number of projects/matters considered by the Digital Hub/DDG.	5 in 2024. 2 in reporting period.	
	Number of stakeholders engaged with through the Digital Hub/DDG.	8 in 2024. 6 in reporting period.	
2.3.3	Workload Sharing:		

	SBSH Measure:	SBSH Outcome:	Related National Outcomes:
	Number of workload sharing introductions brokered.	1 in reporting period.	Increased Capacity to Deliver Across All Types of Work. Increased Resilience.
2.4	Learning and Development:		
	SBSH Measure:	SBSH Outcome:	Related National Outcomes:
	Number of live digital training modules developed.	49 in total. 26 in reporting period.	Ensure Investment in Skills and Technology.
	Number of SBSH direct training events delivered.	0 in reporting period.	Increased Resilience.
	Number of SBSH organised, externally presented training events delivered.	4 in reporting period.	
	Number of SBSH delivered lectures.	3 lectures directly delivered in reporting period. 7 lectures facilitated in reporting period.	