



**SDS CATALYST
Development Benchmarking Club for RPs
MEMBERS' USER GUIDE**

*Using the System and
Planning Your Data Collection*

VERSION

April 2011



Patrick Symington Consulting

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	3
2	PLANNING YOUR DATA COLLECTION.....	7
3	SCHEME DATA ENTRY.....	10
4	ANNUAL DATA RETURN.....	14
5	ON-LINE REPORTS.....	18
	Appendix 1 - Printing & Exporting Data.....	21
	Appendix 2 - Sample of 'Staff Cost Analysis' form.....	22
	Appendix 3 - Are you Short of Time? - Quick Tips for Beginners.....	23
	Appendix 4 - Getting a Quick Benchmark.....	24
	Appendix 5 - Glossary of Terms & Explanatory Notes.....	25

Version Notes

7 August 2003 – Updated and Annual Data Return procedures added.

14 August – Revision A – Updated, general amendments to annual data.

22 August – Revision B – Appendix 3 updated

June 2004 – Updated for various systems changes and rollover to new year

May 2005 – Additional questions added, general update.

August 2005 – Year descriptions made general (rather than as calendar dates)

May 2007 – General update. New appendices 1, 2, 3 and 5 added.

Attitude to “Works Only” schemes amended in definition of *Standard Development Units*.

June 2008 - General revisions, new Appendix 4 added.

April 2011 – General update

1. INTRODUCTION

About this Guide and further help

This Guide gives you a general introduction to the SDS Catalyst on-line system, which is at

www.sdscatalyst.co.uk

The Guide gives you an overview of the system and helps you plan your data collection.

All the detailed help you need to input data and use the system is available on line: - there is help text for every screen; and for each data input question if you click on the ‘?’ button you can see an explanatory note defining the data required.

For a quick illustrated tour of the website go to the website home page and follow the link.

Further help is available from our helpline and other contacts – see box below.

HELP CONTACT

Helpline (working hours) run by Shelton Development Services:

01483 278444

e-mail: support@sdscatalyst.co.uk

1.1. The SDS Catalyst benchmarking system

Catalyst is a specialist development benchmarking club for Housing Associations (RPs), ALMOS and other specialist social housing providers.

The main purposes of the SDS Catalyst system are to enable members to

- Benchmark **current and potential schemes** (either individual schemes or all schemes with particular characteristics)
- Benchmark the **cost efficiency and performance** of their development function.

To achieve this, the system collects data at two levels

- **Scheme data**, which can be input any time, but must be completed for all schemes in the previous financial year by 31 July each year¹.
- **Annual data**, which is input once a year, also by 31 July. This is mainly an analysis of staff involved in the development function, but also includes some additional data about your organisation.

The types of schemes benchmarked by the system are those producing 'standard development units' – see section 4.1 for an explanation.

¹ The financial year runs to 31 March. By end July scheme data must be submitted for any schemes for which units were completed during the previous year.

1.2. What you can use the on-line system for

You can use the on-line system to

- Enter scheme details and submit them for validation
- Produce Single and Multi-Scheme detailed reports
- Get a quick benchmark report without entering any scheme data for any kind of scheme
- Enter annual data for validation
- View annual schedules and charts of high level KPIs with overarching commentary (sent by post)
- View the Efficiency Report on your organisation (emailed)
- Have an Expert Commentary written on your Efficiency Report (optional)
- Administer your organisation details and users

Section 2 of this Guide helps you **plan your data collection**.

Section 3 gives a general introduction to using the **scheme data entry** part of the system,.

Section 4 gives an introduction to the **annual return**.

Section 5 gives an introduction to the **on-line reports**.

Appendices 1 to 5 give more information, including how to get a quick benchmark for any kind of scheme

1.3. Confidentiality and peer groupings

Your **scheme data** is kept confidential on a secure database, password protected with encrypted data transmission. When comparing a scheme with the database you and others will only be able to see comparative data aggregated with a minimum of other schemes². This means that it will not be possible for anyone else to identify your scheme, or to view individual scheme data.

For the **annual reports** most members opt to share their data with the rest of their **peer group** and this is what we recommend as it allows members to get the best value from participating in the club. However, if you do not wish to share your data, your organisation name along with other members' names

² The scheme reporting system will not display benchmark data unless the benchmark sample contains a minimum number of schemes from a minimum number of organisations other than your own.

will be hidden in the annual report, so it will not be possible for anyone else to identify your data. Note that if you choose not to share your data neither will you be able to identify any other club members.

Your data sharing option and peer group can be viewed by clicking on '**My Organisation's Details**' on the Home menu. Note that when you are first added to the website your data sharing will be set to '**shares with peers**'. This can be changed by contacting the SDS Catalyst administrator.

There are three peer groups – the London group of large RPs, known as the G15 group, other RPs who operate in London and South East, and all others. We will introduce other peer groups in the future depending on demand and the number of members³.

1.4 Getting started and systems administration

To start using the system you need to be registered with a user name and password. This can be arranged by your 'Key Contact' for your organisation. If you don't know who this is or need help with being added to the system, ring the help line, or email Catalyst Support.

Once you have been set up as a user you can view your individual user ID details, by clicking on **My User Details** on the Administration menu. You can also change your password, e-mail address and DDI details.

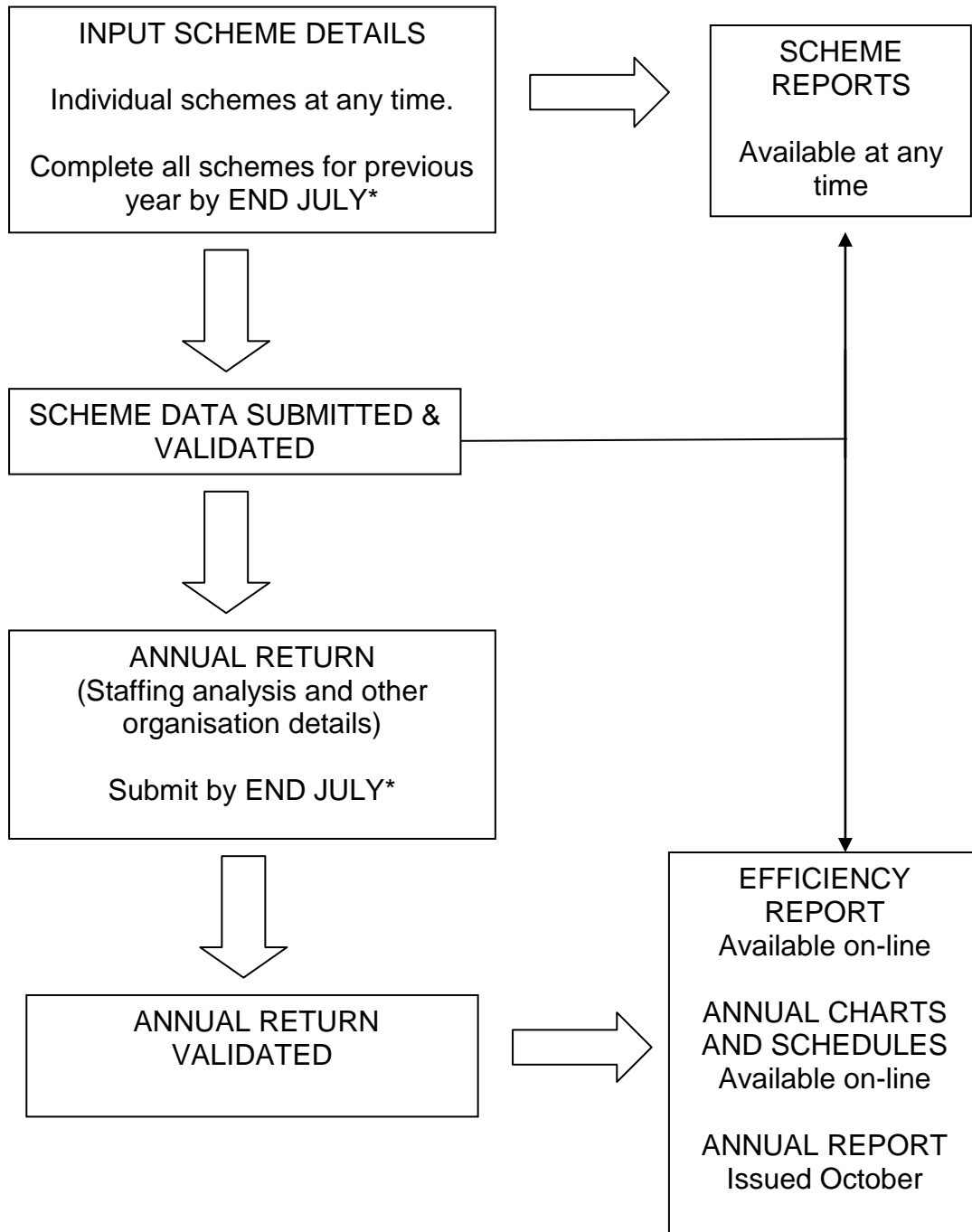
If you are the 'Key Contact' you should have been contacted when you joined SDS Catalyst and given an initial user name and password. This password will give you access to the systems administration part of the system. Click on **My Organisation's Details** on the Administration menu to view your organisation's membership details or to administrate access to the system for your organisation. The Key Contact can change their own user name and password as preferred and add other users.

If a user leaves the organisation, ensure you change their status to *Suspended*. Alternatively, you may be able to delete them, as long as they have not entered any schemes.

³ Your peer group definition does not matter for scheme reporting, since the on-line system enables you to benchmark by LA and/or TCI area and to include all members who have developed in that area, regardless of their peer group.

2. PLANNING YOUR DATA COLLECTION

The sequence of the data input process is shown in the diagram below



We encourage you to input scheme details on an on-going basis as this enables you to use the on-line scheme reporting system. However all schemes (where units have been completed for the year ending March) must be submitted by END JULY*.

* You can submit your data at any time to get an Efficiency Report and Annual on your previous year's development programme.

Over August/September SDS Catalyst ensures that all annual returns and scheme data are complete and validated for the year, so that the annual report to all members can be issued by October.

What data will you need?

2.1 Scheme data

All the information required will normally be readily available from scheme files, as the data is also required for HCA submissions and internal monitoring. Our definitions of the data required are generally the same as HCA's⁴.

The data entry form is divided into 3 pages: 'data context', 'essential questions' and 'optional questions':

- 'Data Context' (Page 1) confirms the name, submission status and includes the Notes section. The first box is for queries raised by the Catalyst Validator which will also be sent by email to the user who submitted the scheme.

The second box is for the user to explain unusual aspects of the scheme which will assist the Catalyst Validator.

- 'Essential Questions' (Page 2) request the basic information about the scheme (units, floor area, type of development etc.) the scheme costs (acquisition, works, subsidy and on-costs), timings and quality data.

- 'Optional Questions' (Page 3) request additional information that members would like reported back to provide further context and/or benchmarking. It includes more details about the scheme (e.g. form of construction, whether flats or houses, client satisfaction ratings, etc.).

You cannot submit a scheme without answering all the essential questions. We encourage you to answer as many of the optional questions as you can, and of course the more data you put in the more benefit you can get out of the system. However, the scheme can be submitted without some or all of the optional data.

More guidance on answering the scheme data questions is given in Section 3 below, and a full list of the questions can be downloaded from the Documentation Menu.

You can enter scheme data at any stage in the life of a scheme. We encourage you to enter estimated data as soon as a scheme is approved, or the *start on site* stage is reached. This enables you to get some immediate comparisons for the scheme against benchmarks (see section 5 below on 'Scheme Reports'). You can subsequently re-submit your scheme data if

⁴ However, we also collect data on some non-social housing schemes, for which we follow the same definitions.

more information becomes available, but there is no requirement to do so unless there are significant changes.

By July each year we ask you to do a 'round-up' of all scheme data for the previous year, so we are able to get a complete picture for the year. We need to have details on all the 'standard development units'⁵ completed in the year, so we must have scheme data for any scheme for which such units were completed during the year⁶. As part of the annual return validation process the total completions for the year is cross-checked to scheme data.

2.2 Annual data

The main part of the annual return is a Staff Cost Analysis form, which asks you to identify all staff that work directly on development and to apportion their time to the standard development activities and any other activities. The main purpose of this is to enable us to benchmark indicators such as the staff per unit developed and staff costs as a % acquisition & works cost. These indicators apply to the year as a whole.

To do this analysis you will need information (for the year just finished) on numbers of development staff⁷ and their pay and other direct costs. The staff concerned or their manager will need to spend a few minutes doing the apportionment of their time over the activities – however, this should be a very straightforward exercise.

Other data required for the annual return is

- total number of units completed in the year just finished and estimated completions for the coming two years.
- resident feedback information.
- non-standard developments – summary information on numbers of units developed only.

More guidance on completing the annual return is given in Section 4 below. A full list of the annual return questions is available on line. A sample of the Staff Cost Analysis form is given in Appendix 2.

⁵ See Section 4 for further notes on 'standard development units' and what types of scheme are included.

⁶ Scheme data is entered for the scheme as a whole even if completion is phased over a number of years. One of the essential questions is how many units were completed in the financial year being benchmarked. The system uses this data to apportion automatically the scheme costs etc into the financial year.

⁷ This may include staff in other departments such as Finance if they work directly on development schemes.

3. SCHEME DATA ENTRY

3.1. What is a scheme?

Normally you can follow your own definition of what constitutes a scheme, for example a particular development site. It doesn't matter if the development is completed over a number of years, but you can enter different 'phases' as separate schemes (and then link them together as a Project – see below) if this is more convenient.

'Schemes' and 'Projects'

A '**scheme**' is the lowest level of scheme data held on the system, and all data is entered at this level. Schemes can be linked together under a '**project**'. However, note that the project data is not aggregated, it is just a convenient way of linking schemes.

For each scheme you must uniquely specify the 'development type' (e.g. new build), whether 'self-contained' or 'shared' and the 'product type' (e.g. 'General Needs' or 'Homebuy'). If a development is split across any of these categories you may wish to consider splitting the development into two or more schemes and linking them as a project.

Whether or not to split a scheme depends on how significant the 'minority' units are. If there are just a few units of a different type from the majority, or if no significant distortion will be introduced by entering them all as one type, then you don't need to split them out.

However, we suggest that you always split out Homebuy units as a separate scheme (unless they are such a small part of the development as to be immaterial). This is because you can only enter sales marketing costs for schemes for the Homebuy product type.

To create a new project name go to the main 'Schemes Data' screen and click on 'Add a New Project'. Schemes can be assigned to a project using the 'scheme set-up' screen, which lists all projects on a drop-down menu. If a scheme is an ordinary stand-alone scheme select 'Not part of a project' on this menu, which is the default option.

The types of schemes you can enter on the system are those producing what we call *Standard Development Units*.

Definition of 'Standard Development Units'

INCLUDE

All New Build, Rehab, ESP and P&R developments

- whether or not they attract SHG or other public subsidy
- whether developed for rent or sale
- whatever the product type (GN, Homebuy, etc.)

Temporary social housing (acquisitions of leases over 2 years)

Units developed **by** you under an agency agreement

EXCLUDE

Stock acquired by transfer*

Major repairs to stock you already own**

Social Homebuy and similar schemes***

Units developed **for** you under an agency agreement

*Transfer could be from a local authority or another RP, or for example, acquisition of a nursing home or similar as a going concern. If in doubt, the test for what counts as a transfer is whether it involves the full range of development administration activities.

** If you have a significant programme of "Works-Only" units, we will accept them, but the acquisition value must be set to the estimated market value at the time of development. Please contact us to discuss this.

*** Again the test is whether it involves the full range of development activities.

In the case of Existing Satisfactory Properties (ESP) and Purchase and Repair (P&R) units we suggest you group together units for the year in each local authority area as one scheme, but do not mix ESP and P&R units together in one scheme. Note that each scheme must have a unique local authority reference.

3.2 Scheme data 'versions' and 'submission status'

The system can hold different 'versions' of the scheme data for a particular scheme. So, for example, you can hold a draft version of a scheme before you actually submit it, or you can create a new draft version by editing a previously submitted version. The system keeps control over the various versions of the scheme data, and tracks their progress through the validation process, via the scheme's *Submission Status* (see box below).

Submission Status

Each version of a scheme's data has a submission status which can be one of the following:

New – before you start entering data for the scheme. Just the scheme set-up details have been created.

Draft – Your current working draft. When you first start entering your data it becomes the draft version until you submit the scheme for validation. After you have submitted the scheme you can create a new draft version from an earlier pending or validated version.

Pending – if it has been submitted to us for validation, but has not yet been validated.

Validated - when it has been validated by us.

Superseded – when a previously validated scheme is replaced by more up to date data.

Note: you can only have one 'draft', one 'pending' and one 'validated' version at any one time.

Warning! As soon as you save any version it automatically becomes the draft version, overwriting the previous draft version.

3.3 Entering scheme details

To enter new scheme data go to the Schemes Data menu and click on '**Add New Scheme**'. This brings you to the **Scheme Set-up Screen** . Enter data as prompted and click Save. You will then have the menu option to **Begin Data Entry** for the scheme.

A full definition of the data required for each question, with explanatory notes, can be downloaded from the website and printed for reference. (Go to the Documentation Menu). The definitions and notes for each individual question can also be accessed whilst you are entering data, by clicking on the '**i**' button alongside the question.

The system checks your input against a broad range of typical values. Where your data lies below this range the input box will have a pink line around it. Where it appears too high the input box will have a red line around it. Values within range are ringed in green. Please check any values which fall outside the range. The main purpose of this is to prevent typing errors occurring when entering data. Values which lie outside the range do not imply that the data is necessarily wrong, but unusual values should be explained in the Notes section in the Data Context (Page 1) of the data submission screen. This will avoid unnecessary queries being raised by a Catalyst Validator when reviewing your data.

Additionally, several inputs have the ‘*i*’ button showing to the right of the input. This displays a normal distribution curve of all the data in the database and shows where your entry lies. This will give a much more accurate indication of how 'extreme' your input is, in comparison to the database.

3.4 Submission and validation of schemes

Once you have entered all the ‘essential’ data for the scheme, click the *Save & Exit* button. A ‘Check and submit data’ button will appear against the ‘draft’ version of the scheme on the ‘Scheme Summary’ screen.

When you are ready to submit your draft scheme details for validation, click on the ‘Check and submit data’ button. This will take you to a ‘**Scheme Validation Report**’. This report calculates key performance indicators (KPIs) for your scheme and compares them to a benchmark of other schemes with similar characteristics. You can vary the characteristics of the benchmark to give a good comparison⁸. The report also confirms other data that you have input.

We strongly recommend that you review this report very carefully. If your scheme is very different from the benchmark for any of the KPIs, you should check your input data and/or satisfy yourself that you understand what makes your scheme different. To help you with this, if the KPIs lie outside a range of typical KPIs this will be highlighted in the data input screen as explained above and may indicate that your data is incorrect, or that there is something unusual about your scheme. Please check the data and if appropriate explain the circumstances in the notes section in the Data Context Page of the ‘Data Entry Screen’.

Once you are satisfied that the data is accurate, scroll down to the bottom of the validation report and click on ‘Submit data’. This now becomes a ‘Pending’ version of the scheme data (see box in Section 3.2). An SDS Catalyst consultant will then review the scheme data, and if there are any queries you will receive an e-mail or phone call. Queries will added in the ‘Validator’s Notes’ section on Page 1 of the ‘Data Entry Screen’. Once the Validator is satisfied that the data is valid, it will be released into the live database of comparative schemes and will then have the status of ‘Validated’.

If you need to amend data to a scheme which is either Pending or Validated status, return to the data input page and make the changes. Afterwards, click *Save & Exit*. You have now created a cloned version of the data and it has been assigned the status of Draft. This scheme can now be re-submitted for validation as described above. If the scheme was previously Pending then the latest data will replace it. If its status was Validated then once the new draft has been submitted you will have a Pending Version of the data and once that has been validated, the previous validated version will be replaced and the old version will be given a Superseded status.

⁸ The Scheme Validation Report has the same lay-out as the Scheme Detail Report – see section 5 below.

4. ANNUAL DATA RETURN

4.1 Steps in completing the annual return

1. Make sure you have submitted **scheme data** for all units completed in the year (see 4.2 below).
2. Complete the '**Staff Cost Analysis**' form (see 4.3 below and sample in Appendix 2).
3. Complete the **Other Annual Data** Questions (see 4.4 below).

4.2 What kinds of schemes are included in the benchmarking system?

The main performance indicators in the annual report relate to '**standard development units**' as more fully described in 3.1 and as shown in the box below. The intention is to provide measures such as 'staff numbers per unit developed', which are consistent between different organisations. We want to include in our measures as much as possible of the development activity carried out by development departments. However, we have to exclude activity such as large-scale stock transfers and asset re-developments, as these would distort the measures.

In order to complete the annual return you will first need to ensure that all schemes with standard development units completed during the year have been entered via the 'Scheme Data' part of the system.

Definition of 'Standard Development Units'

INCLUDE

All New Build, Rehab, ESP and P&R developments

- whether or not they attract SHG or other subsidy
- whether developed for rent or sale
- whatever the product type (see Scheme Data Entry Q5)

Temporary social housing (acquisitions of leases over 2 years)

Units developed **by** you under an agency agreement

EXCLUDE

Stock acquired by transfer*

Major Repairs to stock you already own**

Social Homebuy and similar schemes***

Units developed **for** you under an agency agreement

*Transfer could be from a local authority or another RP, or for example, acquisition of a nursing home or similar as a going concern. If in doubt, the test for what counts as a transfer is whether it involves the full range of development administration activities.

** If you have a significant programme of "Works-Only" units, we will accept them, but the acquisition value must be set to the estimated market value at the time of development. Please contact us to discuss this.

*** Again the test is whether it involves the full range of development activities.

The annual return also asks for brief details on development activity other than 'standard development units'. The information required is simply the total number of such units in the year (by type of development). This is used as background information to provide some context on the activity of the development department as a whole. The 'Staff Cost Analysis' form also identifies staff time spent on these 'other' activities. Again this is used only to provide some context, and to ensure that such time is excluded from the time spent on 'standard development activities'.

4.3 Completing the 'Staff Cost Analysis' form

Go to the Home menu. From the '*Annual Data*' menu, select '*Add new submission*' and follow on-screen instructions.

The 'Staff Cost Analysis' form is a simple matrix. A sample is shown at Appendix 2.

3 Steps to Complete the 'Staff Cost Analysis' Form

1. Identify any staff who spent any time directly on the development activities listed on the form (for sample see Appendix 3). Remember to include Development Dept. Admin and secretarial staff, Development Finance staff and the Chief Executive where appropriate. You don't need to include indirect staff such as Central Finance and IT.
2. Use one column on the form for each convenient group of staff. For each group enter at the top of the column
 - a group description (e.g. 'Project Officers'),
 - number of WTEs*
 - staff costs (gross salary + NI/Pension)
 - cost of staff cars and travel.
3. Estimate by percentage the time spent on 'standard development' and other development activity for each Staff Group. This will be a judgement and will inevitably be approximate. Ensure there is no Unallocated percentage showing at the bottom of the form.

Further notes, including the definitions of the activities, are on the form itself.

Warning! – Keep it simple! This should not be a long time-consuming exercise. For the time apportionment an accuracy to the nearest 5% to 10% should be sufficient, from a 'desk-top' estimate by the relevant managers and/or staff.

*A 'WTE' (Whole Time Equivalent) is one person working full time. If a part-timer works half the time of a full-timer, this counts as 0.5 WTEs. The WTE figures should be an approximate average for the previous financial year.

The staff numbers and costs should be an approximate average for the previous financial year. The apportionments should relate to time spent on each kind of activity, irrespective of the year in which specific schemes were completed.

4.4 Completing Other Annual Data Questions

After completing the Staff Costs Analysis scroll down to complete the Other Annual Data questions.

A full list of the Other Annual Data Questions can be downloaded from the Documentation menu. The definitions and notes for each individual question can also be accessed whilst entering data, by clicking on the ‘*i*’ button alongside the question.

These questions are in 2 sections – **Essential** and **Optional**. Please complete all the Essential Questions and as many of the Optional questions as possible, but you can submit the Annual Data for validation without having entered any of the optional questions.

4.5 Submission and validation of annual data

Once you have entered your staff costs and answered the essential questions a ‘Check and submit data’ button will appear on the ‘Annual Data Summary’ screen against the completed Draft version.

When you are ready to submit your draft for validation, click on the ‘Check and submit data’ button at the bottom of the report. This will take you to a ‘**Annual Data Validation Report**’. This report summarises your input and calculates some key performance indicators for your organisation (which will be used in the Annual Report).

We strongly recommend that you print off this report and review it carefully. If your data looks unusual, please check it before submitting. In particular, please check the total number of ‘Standard Development Units’ for the year (see box below).

Cross check Number of Units Developed to Scheme Details

The Annual Data Validation report provides a comparison between the total number of ‘Standard Development Units’ completed in the year (entered on the Annual Data Return) and the total number of units derived from the scheme details (entered via Scheme Data Entry). **Please check that these two figures are the same. If not, you need to check your scheme details.**

The Validation report also lists all validated schemes with units completed in the year, so you can check that you have entered all relevant schemes.

Note that on the Annual Data Validation report you can see a summary of any indexation that has been applied to your scheme data.

Once you are satisfied that the data is accurate, scroll down to the bottom of the validation report screen and click on 'submit data'. This is now shown as 'Pending' status. An SDS Catalyst consultant will then review the scheme details, and if they have any queries they will contact you by e-mail or phone. Once the consultant is satisfied that the data is valid, it will be released into the live database and become a 'Validated' version.

You can re-submit your annual data at any time by amending existing data. Once it has been saved a new draft version of the data will have been created following which the submission procedure as described above must be completed.

5. ON-LINE REPORTS

To obtain reports go to the Home menu and click on the report options in either *Scheme Data* or *Annual Data* menus.

5.1 Introduction

The system has two types of on-line reports as follows:

Scheme Reports compare your scheme (existing or proposed) with other schemes having similar characteristics. The reports can be for an individual scheme, or for all schemes with specified characteristics (Multi scheme report).

Annual Schedules and Charts compare the cost efficiency, resources and performance of your organisation's development function with other organisations.

A brief explanation and illustration of the various reports available can be seen in the 'Tour' of the website (available on the SDS Catalyst home page). Further explanation of each report can be found using the help button at the top of each report.

All reports can be viewed on screen or printed - See Appendix 1.

5.2 Selecting benchmark characteristics (Scheme reports)

The system is designed to enable you to select the most appropriate benchmark for your comparison. You can select specific scheme characteristics for the benchmark (see box on next page) to match your scheme. However, if there is insufficient data to give a good comparison you will have to widen the range of characteristics. For example, if you select a particular local authority area there may not be a sufficient schemes in that area to provide you with a confident benchmark. You can then try widening the sample by selecting 'all local authorities' in the TCI area.

Note that for reasons of confidentiality you cannot get a benchmark unless a minimum number of schemes matching your criteria and other members are available. The sample size for the benchmark (measured in number of units) is shown on the report. This is not necessarily the same for every KPI on the report, as some data for some schemes may be missing.

The box below shows the characteristics that can be selected for your benchmark:

<u>Benchmark Characteristics</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of development (new build, rehab, ESP or P&R) • TCI Area, this is used solely to group LAs which have a similar cost base. • Local Authority area • Year* • Product type (General Needs, Homebuy etc) • Self-contained or shared • Peer group • Section 106 Schemes <p>* The system holds scheme data by the year (to March) of practical completion of the units. Schemes phased over more than one year are apportioned between years. Data for previous years is automatically adjusted for inflation using appropriate building industry indices. Accordingly it is recommended that you include schemes from All Years.</p>

Members also receive the following reports.

- **Efficiency Report**
- **Annual Report with Charts and Schedules**
- **Optional Expert Commentary**

An '**Efficiency Report**' is emailed to each member following completion of the annual data validation exercise for all members. It can also be downloaded from the on-line benchmarking system. The Efficiency Report is based on your data compared with your peers at the date and time shown on the front page. Subsequent changes to your own or your peers' data may affect your results. When you download this report it will be refreshed and recalculated.

This Efficiency Report is designed to assemble and summarise the information that SDS Catalyst has on your development efficiency. The thrust of the report is to show your results compared to your peer group. It contains vital information to help you assess your efficiency using a range of measures across different aspects of your development activity. This should help you to

formulate your efficiency action plans and targets, which can be monitored in future with the help of SDS Catalyst.

The **Annual Charts** and **Annual Schedules** are posted to members following completion of the annual data validation exercise for all members and these are also available on-line. They show the overall benchmarking results for each member of the club (subject to confidentiality). These are collected together in our main **Annual Report** on the data which includes an overarching commentary. This is usually issued around the end of the October. The schedules concentrate on high level data to give a broad overview. Around 20 schedules cover the following main areas of your development activity:

1. Cost Efficiency
2. Subsidy
3. Quality
4. Cost indicators
5. On-Costs (fees, interest).
6. Staff costs and number
7. Resident Feedback
8. Timings, Speed and Predictability of Delivery
9. Satisfaction with Service Providers
10. Other Miscellaneous Data
11. Analysis of S106 Discounts

We also offer an optional '**Expert Commentary**' report which is an enhanced version of the Efficiency Report that includes a commentary highlighting the implications of your benchmarking results. If you would like this please contact SDS Catalyst .

APPENDIX 1

Printing & Exporting Data

Any data and information that is viewable on screen can also be exported to another application or printed.

Schedules can be exported to Excel, or included in Word documents.

Other information can also be printed, including all screens.

To print or export data simply go to the page where the information is showing and then *right mouse click* on the screen.

We recommend that before printing, you paste the data into an Excel spreadsheet where formatting can be adjusted before printing.

For a full explanation download the document in the Documentation Menu.

APPENDIX 2**Sample of Staff Cost Analysis**

Click on the 'i' button for on-line help on completing this form and for definitions of 'activities'.

<i>Staff Cost Analysis</i>						
<i>i</i> Help						
Staff Group <i>i</i>		Dir's	Sen Mngrs	PO	Fin	Admin
No. of WTE's <i>i</i>		1	3	5	1	2
Gross pay costs for these WTEs <i>i</i>	£	50,000	80,000	100,000	50,000	60,000
Cost of staff cars and travel expenses <i>i</i>	£	5,000	8,000	10,000	0	0
APPORTIONMENT OF STAFF TIME <i>i</i>						
Activities relating to 'standard development units' <i>i</i>	%	10	50	95	20	80
Other development activities <i>i</i>						
Work on stock transfers <i>i</i>	%					
Reimprovements/works only to own stock <i>i</i>	%		30	5		
Other development activities <i>i</i>	%	90	20			10
Activities unrelated to any of the above <i>i</i>	%				80	10
Unallocated: <i>i</i>	%	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL:	%	100	100	100	100	100

Note that there are up to 10 columns on this form, which can be accessed by using the scroll bar at the bottom. The end column shows the total WTEs and costs input.

APPENDIX 3

Are you Short of Time? – Quick Tips for Beginners

The deadline for data submission is **31 July** for all schemes where one or more units completed at **31 March**. If you are unable to do this, please contact us.

Data is submitted in 2 areas – **Scheme Data** and **Annual Data**.

Scheme Data

- Set up all Project/Development Officers as Users on the system and ask them to submit the data for their schemes. There is no limit on the number of users.
- Only enter relevant schemes. E.g. for the membership year 2010/11 enter data for schemes where unit completions occurred in the year ending 31 March 2011. You can ignore schemes which were fully completed at 31 March 2010 and schemes where the first completions occur after 1 April 2011.
- Only enter *Standard Schemes*. These are defined in Section 3 of this Guide.
- Submit schemes as soon as the data is reasonably accurate, typically Start on Site, or Practical Completion at latest. You can always amend data, even if it has already been validated.
- For an Excel template in which you can summarise all scheme data download from the Documentation Menu. We will then upload the data leaving you to check and submit the schemes on line.
- Pay attention to the data validation checks as you enter data. Anything which does not have a green line around it may indicate that the data is incorrect.
- Group ESP units or P&R units together into “one scheme” (but keep them separate) so long as the LA is the same.

Annual Data

- Set up Finance staff as Users on the system. Download the questions and guidance notes and pass to them asap. They do not have to wait for the scheme data to be completed before entering the staffing costs.
- We recommend that you start preparing this submission after 1 April and after your Finance Dept have completed the basic Annual Accounts.
- Submit the annual data when you have completed all your scheme data. This will give you a more accurate self-validation report. We cannot validate the Annual data until the scheme submissions are completed and also validated.

APPENDIX 4

Getting a Quick Benchmark

From the Home menu, select the *Quick Benchmark* option in the Schemes Data menu.

Set the characteristics of a scheme for which you would like to obtain a benchmark, i.e. location, product type, development type, etc.

Click the Ok button.

The benchmark report will be displayed. This can be copied/printed. See information for this in Appendix 1 and also download from the Documentation menu.

APPENDIX 5**Glossary of Terms & Explanatory Notes**

Term	Description
A&W	Acquisition & Works.
'Comparison with benchmark' indicators	SDS Catalyst has a number of indicators based on comparisons with fixed benchmarks. These indicators are used when it is only meaningful to compare data for sub-groups of developments (e.g. subsidy per unit is only meaningful for schemes with the same product type and in the same TCI area). The member's schemes across each sub-group are compared to the benchmark for that sub-group to give a 'comparison to benchmark' percentage. These percentages are then averaged across all sub-groups. This therefore gives a meaningful top level measure for the member's programme as a whole.
Delay in Delivery	The difference in days between the Estimated and Actual Speed of Delivery (see below). If schemes are completed earlier than estimated the score given is zero.
Direct Overheads	Costs such as general promotions, opening ceremonies, 'beauty parades', corporate functions etc. Also abortive scheme costs written off. They do not include staff time or staff related costs. Staff costs are reported separately. Direct costs such as fees charged to the scheme are similarly excluded.
EA	Employer's Agent. A person employed to manage the works contract, typically from tender to settlement of the final account and completion of the defects liability period.
ESP	Existing Satisfactory Property. A market property which requires repairs costing up to £1,500. See also P&R.
Fees	Costs incurred during the development, such as design, planning, surveys, employer's agent, building control, clerk of works, planning supervisor, etc.
HCA	Homes & Communities Agency. The government's agency for regulating RPs and administering development grant.
Homebuy	The HCA's term for schemes where the purchaser buys part of the property and (usually) pays rent on the unsold balance.

HQI	Housing Quality Indicators. A system used by the HCA for assessing the quality of a development. It is based on 10 separate aspects, such as size, layout, accessibility, etc. The 10 aspect scores can be combined into an Overall Score. The HCA also uses a Combined Score. This is based on the weighted average of 5 individual aspect scores including the Overall Score.
IMS	Investment Management System. The online system used by the HCA to manage the payment of development grant. This system is currently being reviewed and updated.
Indirect Overheads	Costs such as IT services, general finance services, office costs, etc. but only if they are actually capitalised and charged to schemes (typically as a percentage spread across schemes). The circumstances under which overheads can be charged to schemes are constrained by accounting requirements (including the 'SORP') and some organisations do not charge any such overheads.
Interest	The development financing cost incurred prior to the completion of the scheme. This cost is generally capitalised and added to total scheme costs (see also TSC). Note that some organisations do not charge interest to their schemes.
NAHP	National Affordable Housing Programme. The HCA's grant funding programme.
On-Costs	Fees Interest and administration costs incurred during the development of a scheme.
P&R	Purchase and Repair. A market property which requires repairs costing up to £10,000. See also ESP.
PC	Practical Completion. The date when the building works are completed and the scheme is ready for occupation.
QS	Quantity Surveyor
SHG	Social Housing Grant. Capital grant given to developers by the government and administered by the HCA.
SoS	Start on Site – usually referred to in connection with the commencement date of building works.

Standard Development Units	All New Build, Rehab, ESP and P&R developments. It excludes stock transfers and 'works only' to stock already owned, non-residential, and other development that does not involve the full range of development activities. This ensures that indicators per unit are broadly comparable across the sample.
Total Public Subsidy	Includes all sources of public subsidy and can therefore include Recycled Capital Grant, the value of free public land, enabling grants from the Local Authority, as well as SHG.
TSC	Total Scheme Cost. Generally made up of the acquisition, works and on-costs.
Whole Life Maintenance Costs	These costs indicate the ongoing repair costs and their comparison to the initial capital works cost.