

OUTCOMES

2022

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This report tells you how Oak Tree HA has done in meeting some of the outcomes and standards laid out in the Scottish Social Housing Charter and reported to the Scottish Housing Regulator in our Annual Return on the Charter (ARC). All the facts given are for the year ending 31 March 2022. The Covid 19 pandemic continued to affect all aspects of our service. However, all RSLs across Scotland were similarly affected so comparisons with the Scottish Averages are still relevant.

We continue to report in our standard format, however we intend to take a fresh look at this report format next year and we hope to involve tenants in the future design. We will be asking for feedback and suggestions when this report is issued to tenants.

Overview of 2021-22

- At the end of the year, we owned 1866 rented homes, but out of these, there were only 1773 available to let, as 61 were closed and scheduled for disposal or demolition.
- We also owned 3 shared homes and a stake in 93 shared ownership homes. Another 29 homes were leased to another housing provider for temporary or supported accommodation.
- We owned 3 offices & 3 shops. We purchased our new offices in West Stewart Street in 2018 and they have now been refurbished to provide new office facilities and we are very pleased to have moved in and are now open to the public.
- We employed 36.46 staff members and had 10 voluntary members on our management committee. For every 100 days due to be worked, 8.4 days were lost due to staff sickness.
- We have been progressing well with our project to empty and demolish some properties in Pennyfern and are on track to meet the 3 years from February 2020 target for completion.
- We took handover of 69 newbuild properties at Ness Road and Nevis Road in the upper Bow Farm area during the year and all the houses are now occupied and the residents are settling into their new homes. It is a lovely development and a welcome addition to our housing stock.
- This continued to be a difficult year with many staff working from home most of the time. We were unable to carry out our full range of services to our customers during parts of the year but we did our best to maintain the core services and are moving towards returning to full service.



Looking After Your Home



We spent £342,079 on planned maintenance where work included:

- The LD2 smoke detection system for all stock
- Dormer repair programme
- Tenement repairs – mini refurbishment

We spent £201,052 on cyclical maintenance where work included:

- Gutter cleaning contract
- Roof anchor inspections
- Landscaping
- Legionella works
- Electrical inspections



KEY FACTS

- We carried out 6,753 repairs in the year. Although this is an increase in the previous year, it should be noted that a full repairs service did not resume until restrictions were eased to allow non-emergency repairs to be carried out. Therefore, we expect a return to normal repair numbers for the following reporting year.
- For emergency repairs our target is 4 hours. On average, it took 3.4 hours to complete emergency repairs. The Scottish Average was 4.2 hours.
- For non-emergency repairs, our target is between 2-7 working days. We achieved an average of 8.1 days. The Scottish average was slight lower at 8.9 days.
- For non-emergency repairs, 3,838 (78.3%) were completed “right first time” out of a possible 4,902 repairs. This is a significant reduction from the previous year’s figure of 92.6% due to the number of jobs not being completed on time due to lockdown restrictions. Recalls are also included in repairs not being completed right first time. The Scottish average was 88.3%. Not all repairs are expected to be completed right first time.
- At the year-end, 33.91% of our properties met the Scottish Housing Quality Standard. This is down from previous year. We failed to put in place a contract to inspect and provide electrical certification for a large proportion of our properties. 1151 properties had been overlooked. We can advise that of 30th September 2022 the number of outstanding properties had been reduced to 307. Work is ongoing to ensure 100% of the standard will be achieved.
- We had 3 properties where the gas safety inspection was not undertaken within the anniversary date due to lockdown restrictions and forced access procedure being suspended during this period.
- We carry out adaptations to tenants’ homes to help them live independently. During the year, we carried out 38 adaptations and spent £64,385. We completed them in 74.29 days on average. The Scottish average was 54.3 days. We had 22 people waiting for adaptations at the end of the year.
- Tenant satisfaction with the repairs service was 81.8%. The Scottish average was 85.4%.



Room for Improvement

The Association, like others, has struggled to provide a full repairs service due to shortages in labour and materials supply. Contractors have struggled to make contracts viable and our reactive repairs contractor, McGill, unfortunately went into liquidation. Our void contractor also requested to exit their contract early due to financial reasons. Both circumstances have negatively impacted the service provided causing delays to repairs being carried out and our void re-let times increasing. Procurement is ongoing for both the reactive and void contracts and it is hoped that normal service delivery can resume once these contractors have been appointed in the coming year.

Looking After Your Neighbourhood

What we do:

We recognise that the quality of the area around your home is important. Even small problems can spoil your enjoyment of your home. We handle your complaints to try and resolve any problems. We will keep a complaint case open until it is sorted and check with you to see how happy you are with the outcome.



KEY FACTS

- John O'Connors delivered the Association's landscape /open space maintenance services. The Association spent £161,580 on this service in the year.
- We resumed our regular close and estate inspections. This is an important part of our work as it allows us to pick up common repairs and estate management issues and ensures that our common areas are well maintained.
- 173 new anti-social cases were opened during the year and 171 were resolved during the year, which was 98.8%. Some cases were carried into the next year and were resolved within timescales then. The Scottish average was 94.7%.
- We carried out 3 evictions in the year, 2 on rent arrears grounds and 1 on the grounds of anti-social behaviour. 12 tenancies ended as a result of abandonments.
- Out of 125 new tenancies created in 2020/21, 112 tenants remained in their tenancy for a year (89.6%). This is an area that we have been working hard on to try and give support to keep people happy in their tenancies and we will continue to do this. The Scottish Average was 90.7%
- We carried out our regular full scale Tenants Satisfaction Survey between September and December 2021. The survey was carried out by telephone rather than the usual face to face method and we received responses from around 50% of our tenants. 82% of tenants were satisfied or very satisfied with OTHA's management of their neighbourhood. This is lower than the 2018 result of 93.8%. The Scottish average is 85.1%.



Room for Improvement

Although the number of evictions remained low, the number of properties abandoned in the year increased. Staff are now able to carry out house visits in person again and this will help us identify properties at risk of being abandoned and we can work with the tenants to try and avoid this outcome.

The pandemic also affected how we were able to deal with reports of anti-social behaviour and estate management issues. The reduction in tenants' satisfaction with the management of their neighbourhood reflects this. We will be working hard in 2022/23 to try and improve this important aspect of our work.

We support Wider Action projects to provide a wide range of services to our tenants to help them remain in their tenancies. We continued to support the following Wider Action projects:-

- o Welfare Advice through the Financial Fitness team
- o Tenancy Sustainment through the Simon Community
- o New Tenant Support through Starter Packs Inverclyde
- o Low cost credit services to tenants for household goods through Smarter Buys
- o Energy advice and support through the Energy Activators

We were able to use some Covid 19 crisis funding from the Scottish Government to help our tenants with vouchers for gas and electricity. This funding is now finished but we are working with other local RSLs to apply for grants and funding that will directly help people in need at a very difficult time.

Delivering Value

The past year continued to bring huge challenges for our tenants, our staff and our overall service delivery. The number of tenants claiming Universal Credit continued to increase steadily and 686 tenants (40%) were in receipt of this benefit at 31 March 2022.



KEY FACTS

- The total rent & service charges due to be collected in the year was £7,878,654.
- For every £100 of rent due, this year, we collected £99.55. This was slightly less than the previous year of £99.88. The Scottish average this year was £99.30. Rent arrears owed to OTHA by current and former arrears at the end of March 2022 were £244,636, an increase from £214,403 last year.
- The arrears were 3.06% of rent due for reporting year up from 2.71%. The Scottish average was 6.3%, a rise from 6.14% which shows that arrears have increased across the board.
- 2 tenants were evicted as a result of not paying their rent.
- £40,336 of former tenant rent arrears was written off at the year-end, compared to £24,114 the previous year.
- £103,190 of rent due was lost through lettable properties being empty during the last year. This was up from £95,031 last year. This was £0.13 for each pound of rent due. The Scottish average was £0.14.
- Our turnover of properties in the year was 11.45%, an increase from 7.46% last year. The Scottish Average was 7.8%.
- We relet our empty properties in an average of 37.8 days, down from 56.3 days last year. The Scottish Average was 51.6 days.
- The OTHA average rent increase in March 2021 was 3.0% and the average for Scotland was 3.0%. OTHA generally has lower rents than the other local housing associations. All the local RSLs are higher than the Scottish average with a small number of exceptions.
- In 2018, tenants' satisfaction with the rent as value for money was 80.2% and this reduced to 78% in 2021. The Scottish average this year was 82.5%.

Average weekly rents & service charges* for different sized properties

Landlord Name	1 Apt	2 Apt	3 Apt	4 Apt	5+ Apt
Oak Tree HA Ltd	65.91	81.38	89.53	99.29	111.50
Cloch HA Ltd	82.15	88.61	96.01	107.07	118.42
Larkfield HA Ltd	n/a	63.76	88.40	102.09	115.59
River Clyde Homes	80.06	88.87	94.14	100.96	109.20
Scottish Average All RSLs	75.95	81.32	84.18	91.48	100.74

*OTHA charges monthly rents, but the Scottish Housing Regulator bases their comparison on what the monthly rent would be if charged weekly.



Room for Improvement

We continue to provide an enhanced void standard and market our properties well. There are challenges in Inverclyde due to de-population and the newbuild properties being provided by OTHA and other local housing associations means that some of our stock becomes less popular. We are continually looking at different ways to attract and retain tenants by providing the best service we can.

The rises in the cost of living, inflation and energy costs are causing difficulties for our tenants but our costs are also increasing. There are going to be huge challenges ahead if we want to continue to have low rents (comparative to other RSLs) but maintain a high level of service. This will be a key priority for the Association in the coming year and all departments will have a role to play in managing the business at this difficult time.