

OUTCOMES

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2023



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 2023.

We continue to report in our standard format following consultation with our tenants in 2022 whereby the feedback was that tenants were happy with the current design.

Overview of 2022-23

- At the end of the year, we owned 1936 rented homes, but out of these, there were only 1838 available to let, 89 were closed and scheduled for disposal or demolition.
- We also owned 3 shared homes and a stake in 88 shared ownership homes. Another 26 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 38.4 staff members and had 11 voluntary members on our management committee. For every 100 days due to be worked, 7.10 days were lost due to staff sickness.
- In January 2023 we completed our demolition project in Maple Road and all tenants who resided in those blocks were successfully rehoused by us.
- We took handover of 71 newbuild properties at Bunston Grove 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.
- Our transition to the new office is complete and opened to the public full-time mid way through the year. We have let a section of the building to the Financial Fitness Team and they provide welfare benefit services from within our building.
- In addition we are going to use the increased space to offer opportunities for tenants and other service areas to come in and meet staff on issues of interest in October 2023.





KEY FACTS

We spent **£503,153** on planned maintenance where work included:

- The LD2 smoke detection system for all stock
- Dormer repair programme
- Window replacement
- 1 roof replacement
- Boiler replacement
- Ad hoc component replacements



We spent **£746,239** on cyclical maintenance where work included:

- Gutter cleaning contract
- Roof anchor inspections
- Landscaping (back courts and open space areas)
- Legionella works
- Electrical inspections
- Communal fan servicing
- Close Decoration
- Close Carpet
- Annual Gas Servicing



We carried out 6,560 repairs in the year. Our repairs numbers have now returned to normal levels following the pandemic. We also raised a further 703 non repairs i.e. rotate bins and close cleaning.

For emergency repairs our target is 4 hours. On average, it took 2.9 hours to complete emergency repairs. Our performance in this area increased from last year where it was 3.4 hours. The Scottish Average is 4.17 hours.

For non-emergency repairs, our target is between 2-7 working days. We achieved an average of 7.9 days. Again, we have performed better in comparison to last year which was 8.1 days. The Scottish Average is 8.68 days.

For non-emergency repairs, 3,870 (83.1%) were completed "right first time" out of a possible 4,731 repairs. Our performance has increased slightly in this area, although, we are still not back to pre-pandemic levels due to the length of time taking to complete some non emergency repairs jobs. The Scottish Average is 87.8%

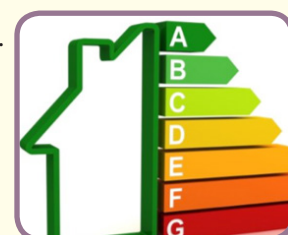
We continue to work towards achieving the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing.

- As of 31st March 2023, 1,812 of the Association's properties fell within the scope of EESSH.
- 1,719 of these properties currently meet the standard.
- 93 properties do not meet the standard.

Work and investment will continue to take place over the next few years to ensure the remaining 93 properties meet the standard.

1,838 of the Association's properties fell within the scope of SHQS.

- 1,543 of these properties met the standard
- 55 properties are exempt from the standard
- 24 properties are in abeyance (tenant access issues)
- 216 properties do not meet the standard



It had come to our attention that we failed to put in place an appropriate contract to inspect and provide electrical certification for a large number of our properties. This has been immediately addressed and we are now fully compliant.

We had 2 properties where the gas safety inspection was not undertaken within the anniversary date (earlier on in the financial year) due to the 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 40 adaptations and spent £70,006. We completed them in 177 days on average. This is a significant increase from the previous year and is due to the pandemic. We had 56 people waiting for adaptations at the end of the year.

Tenant satisfaction with the repairs service was 81.8%. The Scottish Average was 88.02%.



Room for Improvement

As reported last year, the repercussions of contractors wishing to terminate their contracts as well as our main reactive repairs contractor going into liquidation, continued to adversely impact this year's reactive repairs and void performance results. After exploring various options the Association chose to create their own contractor framework for various trades and this will commence early October 2023. The Association will be monitoring timescales and quality of work undertaken very closely and will be working with contractors to ensure that moving forward our timescales in all areas are improved and achieved.

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. The association continues to work with the dedicated services to help deal with anti-social behaviour in Inverclyde including the Police, the community wardens, and the ASIST team (Anti-social Behaviour Investigation Team).



KEY FACTS

Our Housing Services team carry out 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.

183 cases of anti-social behaviour were reported and 176 of these were resolved during the year, which was 96.2%. Some cases were carried into the next year and were resolved within timescales. The Scottish average was 94.2%.

The Association obtained 7 Decrees of Eviction in the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Of the 7 obtained, 2 were enforced, 2 were recalled and 3 were carried forward to the following year when all 3 were enforced (1 was abandoned prior to eviction and 2 enforcements were carried out). The 2 enforcements in 2022-23 were on breach of tenancy grounds. 7 tenancies ended as a result of abandonments.

Our tenancy sustainment improved this year from 89.6% to 95%. 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 94.48%.

What you said

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. 85.5% of tenants were satisfied or very satisfied with OTHA's overall service. This is lower than the 2018 result of 92.2%. The Scottish average is 86.7%.



Room for Improvement

The number of evictions remained low and the number of properties abandoned reduced from 12 in 2021/22 to 7 in 2022/23. The Association has bought services from Linkliving (hOme) and we now have a dedicated Tenancy Support Officer who works 14 hours per week to support tenants who may be struggling with their tenancy and potentially be at risk of their tenancy failing or abandoning their property. Our Tenancy Support Officer and the Housing Services Team can work with 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. We will be working hard in 2023/24 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:-

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

We were able to source funding to purchase energy efficiency appliances, offer fuel and food vouchers. We also worked with other local RSLs to apply for grants and funding that directly helped people in need at a very difficult time with their energy costs.



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 792 tenants (45%) were in receipt of this benefit at 31 March 2023.



KEY FACTS

- The total rent & service charges due to be collected in the year was £8,373,160.
- Rent arrears owed to OTHA by current and former arrears at the end of March 2023 were £255,821.04, an increase from £244,636 last year.
- The arrears were 2.98% of rent due for reporting year which is lower from 3.06%. The Scottish average was 6.86%, a rise from 6.3% which shows that arrears have increased across the board.
- There were no evictions due to a tenant not paying their rent.
- £35,791.66 of former tenant rent arrears was written off at the year-end, compared to £40,336 the previous year.
- £183,690 of rent due was lost through lettable properties being empty during the last year. This was up from £103,190 last year.
- Our turnover of properties in the year was 10.23%, a decrease from 11.45% last year. The Scottish Average was 7.4%.
- We relet our empty properties in an average of 87.75 days, up from 37.8 days last year. The Scottish Average was 55.61 days.
- The OTHA rent increase in March 2023 was 6.0%. 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.

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	£68.25	£84.32	£92.53	£103.37	£115.01
Cloch HA Ltd	£82.15	£88.61	£96.01	£107.07	£118.42
Larkfield HA Ltd	n/a	£63.76	£88.40	£102.09	£104.83
River Clyde Homes	£83.87	£84.12	£98.06	£104.83	£110.85
Scottish Average All RSLs	£75.95	£83.46	£86.28	£93.86	£103.72

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

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 81.8%.

The next tenant's satisfaction is due to take place April/May 2024.



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.

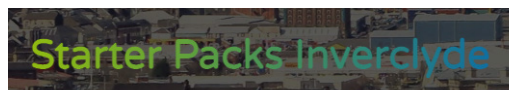
The rises in the cost of living, inflation and energy costs are causing difficulties for our tenants but our costs are also increasing. There are going to be huge challenges ahead if we want to continue to have low rents (comparative to other RSLs) but maintain a high level of service. This will be a 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.

Oak Tree Housing Association continue to work in partnership with:-

Financial Fitness



Starter Packs Inverclyde



Linkliving (hOme)



The Wise Group

