



## **Annual Assurance Statement** by the Management Committee of Oak Tree Housing Association Ltd – October 2022

In considering our compliance with regulatory and legal requirements for our 2022 Annual Assurance Statement, we have taken into account the continuing although lessening impact of the Covid19 pandemic.

### **Gaining the basis of Assurance**

The evidence bank considered by the Management Committee combines reports, policies, advice and information. The Committee monitors and oversees this on an ongoing basis throughout the year to provide continuous assurance that Oak Tree Housing Association (OTHA) is compliant with the relevant regulatory requirements, set out in the regulatory framework. The evidence bank incorporates relevant documents and information that contribute to our assurance and which form the structure of OTHA's business and governance activities.

The evidence which supports this Statement includes:

- Reports about performance in key areas including finance, service delivery, asset management, development and risk.
- Internal and External Audit reports.
- Advice from external specialist advisers.
- Tenant Scrutiny reports and the outcomes from consultations.
- Data analysis about our tenants and customers' needs and views.
- Benchmarking reports, advice and information from senior staff and external bodies.

In reviewing the evidence and assessing compliance, we take account of good practice advice. In considering our assurance OTHA continues to adopt an improvement focus. This includes an Action Plan being implemented, progressed and reviewed on an on-going basis.

We are assured that we are working towards having appropriate systems in place for the collection of equalities data and are further assured that we are working towards using this data to take account of equality and human rights issues in our decisions, policy-making and day-to-day service delivery.

### **Covid19 Implications**

Covid19 continues to impact on our service delivery albeit to a lesser degree. There have been cases where gas servicing did not take place within the statutory 12-month period. This has been due to tenant access restrictions, including fears about potential transmission of COVID19 within their household.

We are kept appraised regularly on the position in respect of compliance with gas servicing requirements and as at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022 (the date of signing this statement), all our properties have a valid gas safety certificate.

### **Electrical Installation Condition Report's (EICR's)**

There had been an oversight, the outcome being a failure to have EICR's completed for all homes. There had been an appropriate response following identification of the material non-compliance. An independent investigation to review the circumstance and identify the cause of the failure was commissioned. The review did not identify any intentional wrongdoing but did identify several points of failure with shared responsibility between various staff members.

Action has been taken to remedy the situation and to ensure compliance is fully achieved and OTHA can be assured that a future recurrence can be avoided.

Regular reports on progress are being reviewed by the Management Committee and this action will continue until compliance is achieved.

### **Statement of Assurance**

Taking into account the above declaration regarding COVID19 implications, the Committee of Management is satisfied that, to the best of our knowledge OTHA is compliant with the requirements of Chapter Three of the Regulatory Framework and the Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management.

### **Ongoing Monitoring**

We understand that we are required to notify the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) of any changes in our compliance during the course of the year and are assured that we have effective arrangements in place to enable us to do so. We are currently undertaking consultations with tenants regarding rent increase options for 2023 and have taken account of the economic situation and the potential for some form of rent control in our deliberations.

### **Authority to sign and submit**

As Chairperson, I was authorised by the Committee of Management at its meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022, to sign this Assurance Statement for submission to the SHR.

Signed            Sandra McMenamin (Vice-Chair)

Date              31<sup>st</sup> October 2022