



**Oak Tree Housing Association**

**Care Experienced Children and Young People – Our Commitment**

Date Approved: January 2026

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## **1. Introduction**

### **Care Experienced Children and Young People – Our Commitment**

While Housing Associations are not defined as statutory corporate parents, Oak Tree Housing Association recognises the vital role we play as a key partner in supporting care experienced children and young people. We are committed to applying the principles of corporate parenting in our work by promoting stability, understanding individual circumstances, removing barriers to access, and working collaboratively with partner agencies to support positive outcomes.

Our approach is grounded in compassion, fairness and trauma-informed practice. We recognise that secure, appropriate housing is fundamental to wellbeing, independence and life chances, particularly for care experienced people, and we will seek to ensure our policies and services are responsive, proportionate and supportive. This commitment aligns with the principles of *The Promise* and with our wider focus on tenancy sustainment, prevention and person-centred service delivery.

### **How We Will Put This into Practice**

Oak Tree will demonstrate this commitment through the following actions:

#### **1. Housing Access and Transitions**

- Work proactively with local authority partners to support care leavers and care experienced households into sustainable housing.
- Take account of care experience as a factor when considering allocations, transfers and housing support needs, within our allocations policy and legal framework.

#### **2. Tenancy Sustainment and Early Intervention**

- Provide early, supportive intervention where care experienced tenants experience financial difficulty, rent arrears or risk of tenancy breakdown.
- Use discretion and flexibility where appropriate, recognising the impact of trauma, disrupted transitions and lack of informal support networks.

#### **3. Trauma-Informed and Compassionate Practice**

- Promote trauma-informed approaches across Housing, Property and Customer Services.
- Ensure staff are supported to engage sensitively and constructively with care experienced tenants and families.

#### **4. Partnership Working**

- Work closely with local authority Children's Services, Throughcare/Aftercare teams and third-sector partners to coordinate support and prevent crisis situations.
- Share information appropriately and proportionately to support positive outcomes.

#### **5. Equality, Dignity and Respect**

- Treat care experience as a protected characteristic in practice, recognising the additional barriers and inequalities faced by care experienced people.
- Ensure services are accessible, respectful and free from stigma.

#### **6. Governance and Accountability**

- Reflect this commitment within relevant policies and procedures, including allocations, arrears management and tenancy sustainment.
- Report, where appropriate, on actions taken and outcomes achieved through committee reporting and performance monitoring.

As a community-based social landlord, OTHA plays a vital role in improving outcomes for care-experienced children and young people, those who are or have been looked after by a local authority, whether in residential care, foster care, kinship care, or through aftercare support.

This includes ensuring that young people have access to safe, secure housing, meaningful relationships, and opportunities to thrive as valued members of their community.

Our approach aligns with national priorities including The Promise, Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), ensuring that every care-experienced young person has a voice, a home, and hope for the future.

#### **7. Our Commitments**

##### **A. Awareness and Understanding**

- Ensure all staff and committee members understand the impact of care experience and trauma through training.
- Maintain visibility of responsibilities across the organisation.

## **B. Early Intervention and Housing Access**

- Work with Inverclyde Council, HSCP, and Children's Services to identify young people approaching transition from care.
- Offer priority access to housing where possible and provide pre-tenancy support.

## **C. Sustaining Tenancies**

- Deliver enhanced tenancy sustainment support recognising the challenges faced by care-experienced tenants.
- Adopt trauma-informed practices and monitor tenancy outcomes.

## **D. Participation and Voice**

- Involve care-experienced young people in shaping services through tenant panels and focus groups.
- Create safe spaces for feedback and act on insights to improve services.

## **E. Opportunity and Empowerment**

- Promote employment, training, and volunteering opportunities within OTHA and through partners.
- Encourage participation in community and governance activities.

## **F. Partnership and Collaboration**

- Collaborate with Inverclyde Council, Police Scotland, NHS, and local third-sector agencies.
- Participate in Corporate Parenting Networks and share good practice.

## **8. Governance, Monitoring and Reporting**

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility, and operational delivery will be led by the Director of Housing and Communities. Progress will be monitored annually and reported to the Management Committee. Key performance indicators will include:

- Number of care-experienced tenants supported.
- Tenancy sustainment and eviction prevention rates.
- Staff training completion rates.
- Partnership initiatives and shared outcomes.

## **9. Engagement, Consultation and Co-Production**

OTHA is committed to co-producing services with care-experienced people by engaging directly with organisations such as Who Cares? Scotland and The Promise Scotland.

## **10. Data Protection and Confidentiality**

All information relating to care-experienced young people will be managed under the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. Data sharing with partner agencies will only occur where lawful, proportionate, and necessary to safeguard wellbeing or fulfil statutory duties.

## **11. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion**

Care-experienced young people often face overlapping disadvantages. OTHA will ensure Corporate Parenting is integrated within our Equality and Diversity Policy. We will challenge stigma, foster inclusion, and ensure fair access and support for all care-experienced individuals.

## **12. Contact Information**

For further information or to discuss any aspect of this statement, please contact:

The Chief Executive  
Oak Tree Housing Association