

INVERCLYDE HOUSING ASSOCIATION'S WIDER ACTION UPDATE APRIL 2021 – MARCH 2022

Funding

Funding applications were submitted to the value of £397,597. Total funding secured (via funding applications approved during 2021/22) for all Housing Association partners: **£297,597**

This complements funding of £110,000 secured for the Pathways to Construction project (approved in February 2020 for delivery in 2021/22); £22,000 for the Tenancy Support project (approved in November 2020 for delivery during 2021/22) and £54,410 for the Energy Activators project (approved in September 2020 for delivery during 2021/22)

Joint Projects

Starter Packs Inverclyde

Oak Tree Housing Association, Cloch Housing Association and Larkfield Housing Association

During 2020/21 all RSLs made a financial contribution towards the revenue costs of Starter Pack Inverclyde. Due to underspend within another project (Tenancy Support) and increased referrals to Starterpacks, contributions were increased to: Oak Tree - £6,000; Cloch - £6,000; Larkfield - £3,000

Starter Packs have distributed 480 packs to homes. Within these homes were 295 single adults and 185 families including 325 children. Referrals have benefited the following RSL tenants:

RSL	Total Direct referrals	Total In-direct referrals	Total Referrals
Oak Tree Housing Association	32	44	76
Cloch Housing Association	33	35	68
Larkfield Housing Association	13	2	15
	78	81	159

Referral numbers (both direct and indirect) have doubled during 2020/22.

Advice for All – Financial Fitness

Oak Tree Housing Association, Cloch Housing Association and Larkfield Housing Association

The three Associations collectively provide £35,000 of funding to Financial Fitness to directly fund a dedicated advice service. Financial Fitness provided regular ring-fenced appointments over the financial year for Housing Association customers to access.

Through this funding, Financial Fitness have:

- Provided 940 telephone appointments to Housing Association customers
- Engaged with 544 Housing Association customers on a one-to-one basis – 350 of which were new customers. In relation to customer's, 234 are from Oak Tree Housing Association, 144 from Cloch Housing Association and 72 from Larkfield Housing Association). In total, 1,244 advice interventions were provided: an average of 2.76 advice interventions/customer.
- Secured £510,427 worth of unclaimed benefits for these customers, an average annual financial increase of £1,134 per customer (note, as of 31/3/22 there are approximately £250,000 of claims still being processed)

A full report has been prepared by Financial Fitness and submitted directly to each Housing Association.

Inverclyde Housing Support Service

Cloch Housing Association, Oak Tree Housing Association and Larkfield Housing Association

This continues to be delivered in partnership with Simon Community Scotland and is part funded by the SFHA's Homelessness Prevention Fund. Tracey Blair, the Tenancy Support Worker is based within Cloch Housing Association's office and undertakes visits across the three Housing Associations.

During this financial year, there have been 133 referrals into the service, 37 of which have been closed with an active workload of 96 cases.

As part of the funding, there is a requirement to attend monthly meetings organised by SFHA with other funding beneficiaries and from November 21 these have been attended by CLS.

Over the last 12 months, we have spent quite a bit of time liaising with SCS staff to agree a monitoring system that will enable the project to record the impact that it has on its beneficiaries, this was finalised and launched in October 2021. Between October and March 2022; 41 service users completed the questionnaire

To comply with funding requirements, CLS prepare six monthly reports, alongside quarterly financial reviews. These tie in with the quarterly updates that are submitted by SCS.

Attached is the SCS End of Project report and the funding report prepared for 2021/22.



Simon
Community-Inverclyde



SFHA-2021-2 End of
Year Report.pdf

Energy Activators

Cloch Housing Association, Oak Tree Housing Association and Larkfield Housing Association

The Energy Activators project has been delivered in partnership with The Wise Group and is entirely funded through an Energy Redress Application. The project aims to deliver fuel poverty advice and to reduce household energy consumption through better energy usage management and adoption of simple, straightforward energy efficiency measures.

The project should employ two Energy Advisors to provide support to Housing Association customers. Since the Project started, there has been one consistent Advisor with the second Advisor not staying in post long. This staffing allocation is supported through The Wise Groups HEAT team to ensure continued delivery.

The Wise Group meet regularly with Cloch Housing Association and co-ordinate a quarterly Steering Group meeting with all partners, where a formal update is provided.

Delivery outcomes achieved to date

- 854 households have been engaged with in relation to home energy – the majority of engagement has been by telephone
- 163 Wellbeing surveys have been completed to determine impact of project on Housing Association customers
- 26 Advice Events have been held / attended
- £53,751 – actual annual energy bill savings from advice provided
- £218,200 – assumed annual energy bill savings from advice
- £37,863 actual gains from income maximisation / debt write off

The Wise Group are also managing the Social Housing Fuel Support Fund – as of the end of March 2022, 490 households had been supported and there was a budget of circa £9,000 left.

Youth Activism and Housing

CLS have been supporting Youth Connections to develop a pilot programme around young people, housing provision and tenancies. Kay has been in touch with all Housing Associations to discuss this and to establish links. It is hoped that the pilot, being delivered with one Secondary School, will provide an evidence base that will be used to support further funding applications.

Investing in Communities Fund (2023 – 2026)

Some initial work was undertaken towards the end of 2021/2022 to develop project ideas in preparation of the new Investing in Communities Fund (Scottish Government funding) that should open up for applications in May 2022.

Oak Tree Housing Association – Individual Projects

Pathways to Construction

This project is led by Robert Dowds, who is employed by Oak Tree Housing Association (until March 2023). The project aims to provide training in environmental and construction works to individuals currently facing multiple barriers to employment. Through this programme, trainees employed through Inverclyde Community Development Trust (The Trust) are waged for a period of 6 months and receive specific and accredited training relating to construction skills, and experience of working within a construction site. Through undertaking this programme of activity, the project ensures that all participants are given enhanced and focussed opportunities to progress along the employability pipeline and enter employment, further training or education.

After a delayed start, the project has been really successful and has received good feedback from Housing Association customers and good job outcomes for the trainees. Of the 20 that participated on the project 17 moved into jobs and 2 trainees have moved onto further training within the construction sector.

CLS managed the grant funding for the delivery of this project and liaised directly with The Trust regarding trainee spend. All monitoring reports were prepared and agreed with Robert prior to submission and finance claims agreed with OTHA

An extension application was submitted in August 2021. OTHA received confirmation on 8th February 2022 that they have been awarded £103,654 for project delivery 2022/23.

The End of Project report for initial funding was submitted at the end of April and a copy is attached.



Oak%20Tree%20HA-I
CF-End%20of%20Proj

Covid-19 Response

Communities Recovery Fund

During June 2021, CLS prepared the final report and financial information for CRF monies allocated to OTHA during 2020/21 that required to be spent by 31st May 2021

Communities Recovery Fund (2)

During July 21, Community Anchor organisations within Inverclyde that had previously received Supporting Communities Fund and the first round of Communities Recovery Funding, were invited to submit an EOI for a further phase of Communities Recovery Fund (CRF2). CLS attended an initial meeting regarding this and submitted an EOI. There were three EOIs submitted across Inverclyde.

Following approval of this OTHA's application was submitted for £125,807 (on the 5th August 2021) and the Offer of Grant was issued on 5th October 2021.

CLS prepared and issued all partner organisations with paperwork relating to the award and liaised with the partners for the duration ensuring that there were no concerns regarding project delivery and spend.

A financial report on funding spent was submitted in January, enabling the remainder of the grant to be drawn down. CLS liaised with all project partners ensuring completion of both interim report (January) and final report (March).

The End of Project report was prepared and submitted to SCVO in April 2022.

During 2021/22, OTHAs application supported:

- CVS Inverclyde – the continuation of the Partnership Coordinator’s post supported both the Resilience and the Wellbeing Network; these support 70 and 15 (3rd sector) organisations respectively. The closure of the Inverclyde Community Hub had a significant impact on the income of CVSI. Funding towards overheads (utility bills) and extra cleaning for the Hub, predominantly used by long-term tenants providing essential community-based services, ensured that they were able to operate safely from the building.
- Branchton Community Centre Association - Funding was used to bring a staff member off furlough to build community relationships and make connections with local services within a number of communities where OTHA have stock and have limited engagement with tenants.
- Financial Fitness –continued with the employment of 1FT Welfare Rights Advisor. Sustaining this post enabled 300 new clients to access welfare benefits advice.
- Rig Arts –delivered a series of therapeutic art sessions for people with mental health issues, young people and socially isolated older people, engaging with 100 individuals.
- Inverclyde Association for Mental Health –delivered therapeutic horticulture sessions, bringing isolated members to promote and encourage social interaction across the community, engaging with 120 individuals.
- Youth Connections – have established, long-term relationship with young people, predominantly within the Greenock South West areas–they worked alongside housing staff and wider advice providers to engage with and improve the lives of young people through youth activism projects- engaging with 25 young people

Office Development

CLS prepared a short needs assessment to support a feasibility study being undertaken by MAST Architects into possible uses for OTHA’s old offices at High Street, Greenock.

Cloch Housing Association – Individual Projects

Covid-19 Response

Communities Recovery Fund

CLS prepared monitoring for Cloch Housing Association’s Communities Recovery Fund (CRF) application. Funding through CRF was towards the provision of affordable furniture and essential white goods for tenants and the wider community. In addition, funding secured enhanced partnership working with

Homestart Renfrewshire and Inverclyde to provide emotional wellbeing support and access to an emergency hardship fund for families with young children.

The completed monitoring form was submitted on 24th June 2021 and the financial spreadsheet prepared and submitted directly by Cloch Housing Association.

Communities Recovery Fund (2)

During July 21, Community Anchor organisations within Inverclyde that had previously received Supporting Communities Fund monies, were invited to submit an EOI for a further phase of Communities Recovery Fund (CRF2). We attended an initial meeting regarding this and submitted an EOI. There were three EOIs submitted across Inverclyde.

Following detailed discussions, Cloch Housing Association's application was submitted for £58,388.50 (on the 5th August 2021) and the Offer of Grant was issued on 5th October 2021.

Cloch Housing Association's application supported:

- Homestart Renfrewshire & Inverclyde (Inverclyde delivery only) – to increase staff capacity by increasing the hours of the Family Support Coordinators and Administrative staff, ensuring the availability of localised individual support to families most in need. To provide a small emergency fund for provision of clothing, furniture, fuel/phone top up vouchers for families in crisis. This included targeted work with up to 36 families.
- Belville Community Gardens Trust - to enhance existing sessional staff posts to create additional capacity within BCGT to support extremely vulnerable members of the local community to move on from a dependence on emergency food provision. This was delivered through one-to-one and group support to a group of 39 individuals
- Access Technology Scotland - supported the local community to develop and enhance digital skills. This was delivered through 1:1 support, group and peer support sessions. Delivery will be remote (telephone, on-line); within community hubs and within the Port Glasgow base of ATS. ATS will deliver learning sessions to 56 individuals,
- Cloch Housing Association - increasing the hours of an existing p/t staff member, to deliver direct support to individuals and families who have a furnished tenancy

CLS prepared and issued all partner organisations with paperwork relating to the award and liaised with the partners for the duration ensuring that there were no concerns regarding project delivery and spend.

A financial report on funding spent was submitted in January, enabling the remainder of the grant to be drawn down. CLS liaised with all project partners ensuring completion of both interim report (January) and final report (March). The End of Project report was prepared and submitted in April 2022.

Furniture Poverty Initiative

CLS prepared and submitted an Expression of Interest towards staff posts to The Robertson Trusts' new Partners in Change fund. The project sought to secure funding towards the delivery of Cloch Furnished tenancy programme – supporting customers to address and overcome barriers ensuring they sustain their

tenancies. This fund aimed to support 8-10 projects across Scotland. We received notification on 21st June that the application would not be progressing to a full submission.

Larkfield Housing Association – Individual Projects

Larkfield Food for Thought / GROW Larkfield

Working with Larkfield Youth Connections and Larkfield Children's Centre, an Awards for All application was developed and submitted in September 2021 to support the appointment of a Landscape Architect, together with residents' engagement, to create a series of design options for a new community garden area on land owned by Larkfield Housing Association. This bid for £10,000 was approved in November 2021.

Following the award, CLS developed a brief and met on site with Jon Simmons Landscape Architecture (JSLA) along with Youth Connections to discuss the proposal. JSLA prepared a detailed submission for both the design works and consultation work – this will include school engagement, site-based engagement, local organisations and agencies and engagement with Larkfield Housing Association.

A formal letter of appointment was issued to JSLA on 14th March 2022 and the project formally started in early May.

