

# SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2019



## NEW HOMES ON THEIR WAY!

*Oak Tree Housing Association is planning on developing more than 200 new homes across four locations in Greenock in the coming years.*

This will represent an investment of £33 million, £18 million of which will be funded by the Scottish Government. The homes, all for social rent, will include a mix of back and front door detached, semi-detached and terraced houses as well as cottage flats. A number of homes will also be adapted for special needs.



The first of these developments on the former site of Ravenscraig Primary School is well underway and will bring much needed new homes to the

area. Contractors, CCG (Scotland) Ltd, are building 36 units for the Association - a mix of three, four and five apartment properties. The homes are being built to the Silver Standard of Sustainability of the Scottish Building Standards 2015 which means they will have excellent levels of insulation, ensuring a reduction in running costs compared to standard housing.

The project is due for completion early 2020, however, it's likely that some properties will be ready for let in the Autumn. Keep an eye on our website and social media for more updates.

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## NEW REACTIVE MAINTENANCE CONTRACTOR

We wrote to all our tenants recently to advise that we had changed our Maintenance Provider to **MPS Housing Ltd** and we are delighted to announce that they have now commenced work with us.

We will be working with them over the coming months to look at further improvements to our service such as appointments for some repairs.

### GOING ON HOLIDAY OVER THE SUMMER PERIOD?

- Make sure you have someone who can regularly check your home for problems and consider giving a key to a neighbour for emergency use.
- Let us and your neighbours know your contact details.
- Ask us for advice on how to turn off your water supply.
- Let us know your mobile number so we can contact you and send you helpful text messages.

## GAS SERVICE

The Maintenance Section also looks after the gas service program. This service is essential to ensuring all our properties with a gas heating appliance are checked on an annual basis to ensure it is operating safely. Smoke and Carbon monoxide detectors are also checked during this service.



Please ensure that you contact the service contractor, James Frew (Gas Sure) to allow access for this important safety check when they contact you, or arrange an alternative appointment if it is not suitable when they do contact you.

This check must be done within every 12 month period and the Association will take steps to force an entry if access is not given. The cost associated with this will also be recharged to you.

## BLOCKED DRAINS



### IN THE BATHROOM

It's easy, just follow our Three P's rule and only flush pee, poo and toilet paper. Everything else should go in the bin, not down your toilet. Make it easy to save your drains. Keep a bin in the bathroom for you to quickly, safely and hygienically dispose of all the 'never flush' personal items.

Your bathroom checklist of **'never flush'** items:

- all wipes (baby, personal cleansing, toilet and household cleaning) - even if the pack says 'flushable';
- sanitary items (sanitary towels, tampons, liners, applicators and backing strips);
- cotton wool, cotton buds, disposable nappies and nappy liners;
- condoms, incontinence pads, colostomy bags, used bandages and contact lenses.

Special disposable bags are available at most pharmacies and supermarkets.

You should also safely dispose of:

- razor blades in a solid container before putting them in the bin,
- syringes and needles in a sharps box or take them to your nearest Needle Bank, and
- unused or unwanted medicines - return these to a pharmacy for safe disposal instead of putting them down your toilet or in your bin.

Even when you are out and about, make sure you use the bins provided in public toilets for any personal items.

### IN THE KITCHEN

Fat, oil and grease in liquid form may not appear to be harmful as they don't get stuck in the plughole, but as they cool they congeal, harden and stick to the inside of drains and sewers. This builds up over time, which can cause blocked pipes and flooding. Pouring hot water down your plughole will not help to dissolve any fat, oil or grease.

All fats are equal. Whether it is saturated fat (like lard), mono-unsaturated fat (like olive oil) or vegetable oil - they all congeal and harden.

Your kitchen checklist:

- Fat, oil and grease - leave to cool and then scrape into a sealable container and put it in the bin.
- Give plates, pots, utensils and containers a quick scrape or wipe with some kitchen towel before washing and use a sink strainer in the plughole to catch any bits of leftover food going down the sink\*.
- Believe it or not soup, stocks, sauces and milk products all contain fat, which can also congeal and harden in your drains - leave these to cool/harden, scrape into a container and put them in the bin\*.
- Peelings - put any waste food and peelings into your household rubbish\*.

\* Please check with your local Council waste contractor for info on how to dispose of used fat, oil and grease.

## CHANGES TO YOUR SCOTTISH SECURE TENANCY RIGHTS INTRODUCED BY THE HOUSING (SCOTLAND) ACT 2014

In October 2018 we wrote to every tenant to let them know about the changes to rights made by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014.

It is very important that we know who is living in your household and that you make sure you advise us in writing of any changes to your household.

A number of the changes to your Tenancy Agreement rights rely on Oak Tree Housing Association having the correct household details.

If there has been a change in your household since you signed your tenancy agreement, you need to let us know in writing. You can do this in the following ways:-

- By writing to us at **Oak Tree Housing Association, 41 High Street, Greenock, PA15 1NR**
- By emailing us at **info@oaktreeha.org.uk**
- By calling into our office and speaking to a member of staff who will ask you to sign a written note.
- By contacting us via the My Oak Tree Portal and completing a change of household form.

If you are unsure of whether or not you have told us about anyone who has moved into your home you can contact us on **01475 807000** or check your household details on the My Oak Tree Portal.

If you are not already registered on the My Oak Tree Portal then you can do so from our website **www.oaktreeha.org.uk** and clicking on "tenant login". You will need to have an email address and a note of your tenant number.

### Succession, Subletting, Assignment or Joint Tenancies

The Housing (Scotland) 2014 affects a number of rights that are contained within your current tenancy agreement and these take effect from 1 November 2019.

- Succession
- Subletting
- Assignment
- Joint Tenancy

The letter sent to you has more detail and if you have signed your tenancy agreement since 1 May 2019 the details are in the agreement.

The general rule is that the person to whom you want to either sub-let to, assign the tenancy to or add as a joint tenant must have been living in the property as their only or principal home for at least 12 months and the Association must have been notified in writing at least 12 months ago.

This rule applies to anyone who is qualified to succeed to your tenancy.

### SHORT SCOTTISH SECURE TENANCY AGREEMENTS

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 allows housing associations to offer a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy at the beginning of a tenancy if there has been a proven history of Anti-Social Behaviour (e.g. a previous eviction for anti-social behaviour or an Antisocial Behaviour Order has been granted). This tenancy would be for 12 months but could be extended for a further 6 months.

The Association could also convert an existing Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement to a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy agreement if there had been a pattern of repeated anti-social behaviour. This would also be for 12 months with a possible extension for 6 months.

In both cases, if there were no more breaches of tenancy then the agreement would convert to a full tenancy at the end of the period. If there was a breach of tenancy then the Association could take legal action to end the tenancy sooner.

It is unlikely that Oak Tree Housing Association will need to use these powers very often but we would like to know what you think about these changes.

Please contact Hazel Aitken, Housing Manager on **01475 807000** if you want to discuss any of the points in this article.

## "MY OAK TREE" WEB PORTAL

Just over a year ago we launched our Web Portal and we are delighted with how it has been working so far. At the end of June we had 445 tenants registered. Once we get to 500 users we will pick a name from those users who will win a £25 voucher.

You can register via our website [www.oaktreeha.org.uk](http://www.oaktreeha.org.uk) and by clicking on the blue 'Tenant Login' button.

You will need to have an email address and a note of your 6 digit tenant number. If you don't have this to hand, please contact us and we will help. We can also register you direct (provided we have details of your email address).

### 24 Hour On-line Service

The portal is available online 24/7, 365 days a year and the following main services are available:

- View your rent account statement
- Make a rent payment
- View recent repairs
- Report a repair
- View the details we hold for you

Additional items that you can benefit from are:

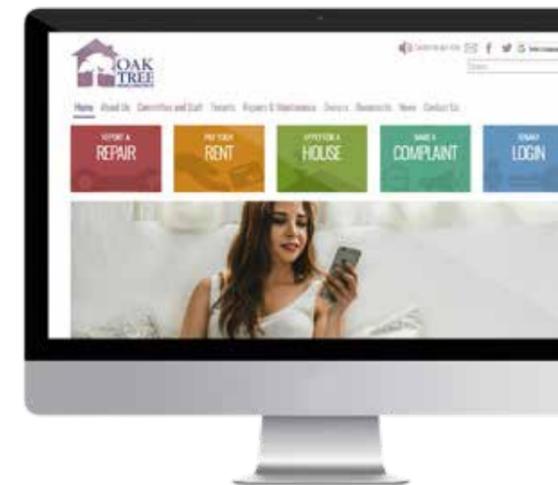
- Make changes to your contact details and household
- Join our paper free service to receive documents by email
- Apply to keep a pet
- Apply to make an alteration to your home
- Get advice and information on your tenancy
- Register a comment, complaint or compliment
- Register a neighbourhood complaint
- Participate in online surveys and consultations

We want to develop the Portal further and add on more forms, information and features as we go along. Any suggestions or feedback would be very welcome.

Please refer to **Page 17** for details of our App which is now available for download. If you have an Apple or Android phone then it will make it even easier to access the features.

A number of our staff have hand held tablets that they carry with them on their visits and they can be used when staff are with you to:-

- Demonstrate the Portal
- Sign you up for the Portal
- Check your rent account and repairs history
- Report a repair on your behalf
- Add notes to your file
- Upload photos or scan documents



## ENHANCED CLOSE SERVICES



Here are some photos of our common properties looking smart and fresh. This is the standard we would want to see in all our properties and all credit to the tenants who have helped achieve this.

As a result of feedback from residents and staff, the Association has been carrying out certain items of work to improve the appearance of common areas and tackle small but important issues for residents.

The type of work we have been doing includes one off close cleaning, bin store cleaning, close window cleaning and cleaning of canopies.

This isn't carried out in every close and it doesn't mean that residents aren't still responsible for maintaining the common areas and taking their turn of stair cleaning, bin store cleaning etc.

The majority of our closes are kept in excellent condition and we will deal with residents who are not taking their turn. We are keen to support those residents who are keeping their property in great condition by carrying out some of the small jobs that are difficult (like the close windows and canopies)

We would love to know whether you have seen an improvement in your area and if there are other services that you think we should investigate.

## ESTATE WALKABOUTS



*We inspect all our closes and estates at least once a quarter, but in the summer months we do a more detailed estate walkabout and try to speak to as many tenants as we can.*

We let tenants know who will be in their area and when and the Housing Services team enjoy the chance to meet people and have a chat about their area.

We take details of any repairs needing done or any neighbourhood issues that could be improved or need action.

We collate this information and use it to improve and tailor our services better to meet the needs of our customers.

We are always keen for feedback and if you didn't get the chance to speak to staff when they were on their walkabout then please either phone, email or message us via the Web Portal with your comments.

## MUTUAL EXCHANGES



*Most of our tenants who want to move house look in the first instance to the Inverclyde Common Housing Register (ICHR) and once registered you can bid on available properties.*

We often speak to people who love their house and the area that they live in but their house is either too big or too small.

Another avenue to try is a Mutual Exchange. You may find someone with a house or flat that suits both of your needs and you basically "swap" houses.

If you are a tenant of any of the ICHR landlords and are looking for a mutual exchange you will need to register on the new service House Exchange. House Exchange is an easy to use website and matches your property to other likeminded individuals who are also looking to mutual exchange.

The Inverclyde Common Housing Register has subscribed to House Exchange on your behalf therefore you won't have to pay a penny to use the service. Registration to House Exchange is quick and easy, all you need to do is fill in the online registration form and select the ICHR logo once you have clicked submit on the first page of registration.

If you need assistance registering with House Exchange please contact a member of the Inverclyde Common Housing Register team on 01475 807011 or by using the contact facility on the ICHR website.

## SUNFLOWER SUMMER

*This year we were able to source some free seeds from Dobbies Garden Centre and we also bought some packets.*

The seeds were sent out on request or hand delivered by staff to keen gardeners.

The sunflowers will not reach their full potential until well into August or September but we are keen to see the progress being made and there will be a prize for the tallest sunflower.

Some of our staff also took up the challenge. They will not be eligible to receive a prize but the accolade of having the tallest flower is worth more to the competitive spirited staff than anything else.

The staff flowers have been planted in the garden at the new office and there have been mixed results so far.

Here are some of the photos of the "work in progress":

We hope to show off the flowers in their full glory in the next newsletter



## 2019 GARDEN COMPETITION UNDERWAY



Shortlisting for this year's Garden Competition has begun. Staff have been noting gardens on their Estate Walkabouts in June that look promising and some of the Housing Services team will then judge the shortlisted gardens and make a decision on the winners later in the summer.

So far there have been some lovely gardens shortlisted. The good weather earlier in the year and the recent rain has helped the gardens look their best.

We also have some keen vegetable growers which is great to see. There is nothing to beat the flavour of a home grown tattie or some crisp lettuce straight from the garden.

Here are a few of the gardens picked out during the walkabouts.

If you want to nominate either your own garden or your neighbour's please get in touch.



## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (FOI)

### HOW TO ASK US FOR INFORMATION

The Freedom of Information (Scotland) law will give you the right to request information about any aspect of the housing services we deliver as a landlord, and will apply to us from 11 November 2019. To request information, all you need to do is ask us. Your FOI request does not need to refer to FOI or explain why you want to access the information you have asked us for.

When making your request, please keep the following in mind:

- Your request must be in writing or other permanent format so that we can refer to it in future. We are happy to accept requests by letter, e-mail or in audio format. If you prefer to visit the office to make a request, we will have blank FOI request forms available at reception from 11/11/2019, which staff can help you complete during your visit. If you are unable to visit the office or put your request in writing or other permanent format, we will accept requests by telephone – we will make a note of your request and read it back to you on the telephone to make sure we have understood it correctly.
- Include your full name and address within the request so that we can respond to you with the information that you have asked us for. If you make your request by e-mail, please provide your email address (you do not need to provide your post address).
- Tell us what information you would like to access. It would be helpful for us if you could describe what you are looking for as clearly and briefly as possible so that we do not misunderstand your request and do not need to contact you for further clarification. This will allow us to respond to you quicker with more meaningful and relevant information. We would be happy to help you clarify what information you are looking for. This includes explaining what types of information we hold that might be relevant to what you want access to.
- If you would like the information provided to you in a particular format e.g. electronic or paper format, please let us know in your request. If we think the format you have requested is reasonable, we will provide it in that format. If not, we will contact you to try and find an alternative way of providing the information to you.

There may be occasions when we will not release all or some of the information you have requested if we consider that an exemption applies, but if so, we will let you know the reason.

Please note that if you request a copy of your own personal data we hold about you, we will deal with this under the Data Protection Act rather than Freedom of Information.

## INVERCLYDE COMMON HOUSING REGISTER (ICHR)

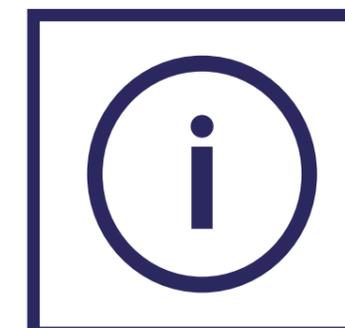


### KEEPING YOUR DETAILS UP TO DATE

Once you have registered on the ICHR housing register it is your responsibility to tell us if your circumstances change. For example if you have a new child or move home. Changes in your circumstances can affect your priority on the housing register or the type of housing you can be considered for. If you bid for a property and have not updated your details you may miss out on the chance to be considered for the property and your bid could be classed as a first refusal.

If you have a small change like a new telephone number or e-mail you can call the ICHR team who will amend this for you. We also have a short online change of circumstances form, which will let you change these details easily yourself.

A link to these forms can be found on the "How To Apply" section of our website, [www.inverclydechr.org.uk](http://www.inverclydechr.org.uk)



You can send your request to anyone at Oak Tree Housing Association, c/o the OTHA Office or via email to: [info@oaktreeha.org.uk](mailto:info@oaktreeha.org.uk)

For further information about Freedom of Information, please see the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner at [www.itspublicknowledge.info](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info)

# PLANNED MAINTENANCE

The Association is pleased to advise the following programme of works this coming year:

## KITCHEN REPLACEMENT

ADDRESS	PROPERTY
67 Dempster Street	Flats 0/2, 1/1, 1/3, 2/1, 2/2, 2/3 & 1/2
11 Brachelston Street	Flat 0/1, 0/2, 2/1 & 2/2
13 Brachelston Street	Flat 0/1
78 Dempster Street	Flat 0/1, 0/2, 0/3, 1/2, 2/1
64 Dempster Street	Flat 0/2

## BATHROOM REPLACEMENT

ADDRESS	PROPERTY
31 Nelson Street	Flats 0/2, 1/2, 2/1, 3/1, 3/2, B/1 & B/2
33 Nelson Street	Flats 0/1, 0/2, 1/1, 1/2, 1/3, 2/1, 2/2, 2/3, 3/1, 3/2 & B/2
35 Nelson Street	Flats 0/1, 0/2, 1/2, 2/2, 3/2, B/1 & B/2
37 Nelson Street	Flats 0/2, 1/1, 1/2, 1/3, 2/1, 2/2, 3/1, 3/2 & B/1
11 Brachelston Street	Flats 0/1, 0/2, 2/1, 2/2,
13 Brachelston Street	Flat 0/1
78 Dempster Street	Flats 0/1, 0/2, 0/3, 1/2 and 2/1
Bow Road	16, 18, 20
2 Walker Street	Flats A, B, C & D
4 Walker Street	Flats A, B, & C
6 Walker Street	Flats A, B & D
Paton Street	15, 17, 19, 21, 23 & 25
Rowan Street	2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 18, 20, 22, 24 & 28
Graham Street	1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13 & 15

# PLANNED MAINTENANCE

## HEATING REPLACEMENT

ADDRESS	PROPERTY
124 West Blackhall Street	Flats 1/1, 1/2, 1/3, 2/1, 2/2, 2/3, 3/1 & 3/2
37 Kelly Street	Flats 0/2, 1/1, 1/2 & 2/2,
39 Kelly Street	Flats 0/1, 0/2 & 2/1,
32 South Street	Flats 0/1, 0/2, 1/1, 1/2 & 2/1
2 Murdieston Street	Flats 0/1, 1/1, 1/2, 1/3 & 2/2
64 Dempster Street	Flat 0/2
1 Greenbank Mews	Flats 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B
2 Greenbank Mews	Flats 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B
3 Greenbank Mews	Flats 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B
Grieve Road	164, 172, 176, 178, 184, 186, 192, 196, 202, 220, 224, 234, 238, 240, 242, 244, 246, 250, 260, 272, 290, 298 & 302

## WHO WILL BE CARRYING OUT THE WORKS?

The appointed contractor is MPS Housing Ltd. also known as just MPS and their contact number is **01236 766777**.

## WHAT CAN I EXPECT FROM OTHA/MPS?

All of the Association's staff and contractors will adhere to the following behavioural principles at all times when representing the Association:

- Be polite, friendly, courteous and welcoming
- Treat all customers with respect and dignity;
- Always show identification;
- Always ensure confidentiality and privacy;
- Adhere to the Association's Equal Opportunity & Diversity Policy;
- Be sensitive, patient and understanding when dealing with customers; and
- Never use foul or abusive language

# PLANNED MAINTENANCE

## WHAT WILL THE ASSOCIATION EXPECT FROM YOU?

We expect our customers to:

- React / reply to all (mail & telephone) correspondence;
- Understand and sign-off the contractor's Health & Safety and Disclaimer documentation;
- Be polite, courteous, non-abusive and non-threatening and non-argumentative at all times;
- Treat both staff and contractors with respect;
- Comply with all reasonable requests made by our staff;
- Refrain from smoking while staff members or contractors are in your home;
- Appreciate that from time to time, we may not be able to help, as some matters may be out-with our control;
- Understand that in the event of unacceptable behaviour towards our staff or contractors, service levels will be reduced;
- Provide reasonable access (arrangements) when requested;
- Ask questions for clarification at any time.

## WHEN WILL THE WORKS START?

Please bear in mind that as with all home improvement programmes, someone always has to be first and someone has to be last.

MPS will provide written notification of the confirmed start date, at least one week prior to the works commencing. A schedule of anticipated start dates is usually available. However, this is subject to change (often weekly) because the contractor has to react to tenants' changing availability/circumstance. We are keen to give you as much notice of your 'start-date' as possible and are happy to advise you of an 'indicative' date (which can be subject to change).

Access is crucial to allow MPS to complete their works in your home. If for any reason you are unable to provide access on the date(s) requested, please let MPS know as soon as possible. If you do not provide access as previously arranged, then MPS will have no option but to relocate their labour force and proceed to the next property on their programme and re-schedule you when the programme allows. This could be even less convenient to you. This inevitably leads to unwanted disruption, delays and possible cancellation from the programme and conflict.

MPS does not have operatives 'on-hand' to attend to your needs if you alter agreed access arrangements.

Prior to the actual works being programmed, MPS will arrange a 'march-in' survey. This survey will involve representatives from the Association and MPS. During this visit: -

- the sequence of works will be explained to you;
- what you can expect from MPS will be explained to you;
- what MPS will expect from you will be explained to you;
- colour choices will be made available to you;
- acknowledgment signatures will be requested from you
- you will be able to ask any questions you may have.



# PLANNED MAINTENANCE

## HOW LONG WILL THE WORKS TAKE TO COMPLETE?

Replacement works can take as little as 3 working days. This depends on the amount of extra works required to rectify any unforeseen/unknown defects, which will inevitably extend the previously advised completion period/dates (these may not be consecutive days). MPS will keep you informed of exact access requirements that they will require. MPS will happily discuss this in more detail during the march-in survey.

## WHAT WILL THE DISRUPTION BE?

Significant; Regrettably, it is impossible and unreasonable to expect to carry out this type of works without inconveniencing you.

During the course of the works, MPS will use a sticky heavy-duty cling-film type wrap called roll'n'stroll to cover your floor coverings where foot traffic takes place. MPS will also use commercial decorators dust sheets to place over your belongings where they can. Before MPS place their dust sheets we would recommend your use of the inexpensive and readily available DIY decorators' polythene dust sheets as a primary protection measure.

Where plasterwork is damaged as a direct consequence of the element replacement, MPS will make this good. Historical plaster damage and decorative plaster cracking repairs are out-with the scope of works in this contract.

## WHAT WILL I NEED TO DO TO PREPARE FOR THE WORKS?

Your assistance is essential to the smooth running of the project and the effort you put in to clearing the areas identified by MPS at the march-in survey can help considerably. You will be responsible for clearing your personal effects; furniture; ornaments; electrical appliances; wall hangings; etc.

For heavier and bulky items (wardrobes; sofas; etc.), MPS can, by prior agreement and written authorisations (through a disclaimer), be moved on your behalf, providing you have a clear understanding this is done at your own risk. Unless through negligence, no responsibility for defective/damaged personal effects will be borne by MPS, nor by OTHA at all.

You have an important role to play in helping us to improve your home. You can help by ensuring that:

- If you have a medical problem, you let MPS know as soon as possible. This will be treated in the strictest confidence;
- You highlight any issues you may have as soon as possible;
- Children and pets are kept safely away from tradesmen and their tools for the duration of the works in your home.
- You honestly identify existing defects.
- You clear / protect the main access route from the front door.

# PLANNED MAINTENANCE



## WILL MY FLOOR COVERINGS BE DISTURBED?

Yes. Whilst the Association is responsible for the main floor i.e. chipboard, tongue-and-grooved flooring etc. in your home, you are responsible for any floor coverings within your home which you have either laid or inherited. It will also be your responsibility to lift these floor coverings. You will be advised of exact requirements at the march-in survey. Where a non-slip-bonded-vinyl (wet-floor type) floor covering has been laid by OTHA through amenity house type or medical adaptation, OTHA will have this replaced, like-for-like.

As a result of replacing elements that are many years old; various subtle design and size changes have been made and consequently, the 'foot-print' or that point where the new floor or wall unit make contact with the floor can be different from the old out-going one. These design and size changes are beyond MPS's and the Association's control. The changes can adversely affect your floor coverings by showing as gaps in your floor covering which we reiterate, is beyond our control.

The following principles in respect of floor coverings apply:

- If you have carpets in any rooms MPS will arrange for these to be rolled back/lifted and thereafter re-laid as required.
- If you have laminate/wooden/ceramic/linoleum floor coverings, it is your responsibility to lift these in advance of the works commencing. Should you fail to lift the flooring in advance, MPS (through a disclaimer) will either lift and dispose of the floor covering or, lift and place to one side for future re-fitting (by others). Should you decide to utilise either of these 2 options, please be aware that MPS will not take responsibility for any damage caused to the floor covering nor will they re-fit. It will be your responsibility to arrange for re-fitting.
- If you refuse to lift, or have not lifted, your floor coverings; your home address may be removed from the programme.

## WILL I RECEIVE A DISTURBANCE ALLOWANCE?

Yes. You will receive a disturbance allowance (DA) voucher for use in B&Q. The value amounts to £25 per-room-disturbed. The DA voucher will only be issued on completion of the works and the Association has received a signed march-out sheet from the contractor and processed through the Association's Finance Department.

Please note that should you have rent arrears or an outstanding rechargeable repairs account, then the disturbance allowance will be off set against that outstanding balance.

# PLANNED MAINTENANCE

## WHO DO I CONTACT IF I EXPERIENCE PROBLEMS ONCE THE WORKS ARE COMPLETE?

For the first year, MPS will be responsible for attending to all defects in respect of the works. The process for reporting defects is as follows: -

- For the first year, any defects should be reported, during office hours, direct to OTHA on **01475 807001**. We will then report the issue to MPS.
- Out-with office hours, and only in the event of an emergency, defects should be reported direct to MPS. Upon expiry of the first year, all defects should be reported to OTHA on **01475 807001**.

## WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE ABOUT MY RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES?

These are detailed in your 'Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement' and the Association's 'Tenants' Handbook'. Copies of both these documents are available on request from the Association's office.

## WHAT IF I WANT TO MAKE A COMPLAINT?

The Association is committed to providing high-quality customer services. We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve our services. If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us. Further information on the Association's complaints service can be obtained from the Association's 'Complaints Handling Procedure', a copy of which is available on request from our office.

## WHAT IF I DON'T WANT THESE WORKS TO BE DONE IN MY HOME?

The Association is undertaking these works to improve your home and maintain standards and we would urge you to allow the works to proceed as planned. However, we understand that circumstances sometimes dictate that carrying out the works is not always possible. In this instance, we are not going to force the works upon you (unless an imminent or potential health and safety risk presents itself). We do though, require to have an audit trail of your decision for our files and to this end we request you advise us formally in writing.



# PLANNED & CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE WORKS

The Association will carry out works to ensure our properties remain in the best possible condition and meet and exceed the standards set by the Scottish Government.

We operate a comprehensive investment programme where major elements (kitchens, bathrooms etc) are replaced at the end of their life cycle. Our current programme for replacement is based on full stock condition survey. However, OTHA will also carry out annual inspections to confirm that the works identified in the programme are in fact needed at that time.

The Association works to a rule of thumb on postponing works where our inspections show that less than 30% of the properties or common areas which we have inspected are in need of attention. For example, in a close comprising 8 properties, if 6 out of 8 kitchens (75%) are in good condition then we will postpone these works.

After considering these annual inspections we have identified the programme of works for 2019/20. The works we will carry out are shown below.

Exact start dates for all contracts have yet to be agreed, however, residents will be contacted in due course.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of the programme then please contact the **Association's Senior Maintenance Officer, Christie Bain, on 01475 807000** or at [info@oaktreeha.org.uk](mailto:info@oaktreeha.org.uk)

## PLANNED & CYCLICAL PROGRAMME OF WORKS 2019/20

CONTRACT	ADDRESS	CONTRACTOR	
Windows & External Door Replacements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>67 Dempster Street (windows)</li> <li>2-6 Walker (ext doors)</li> <li>2-28 Rowan (ext doors)</li> <li>1-19 Graham Streets (ext doors)</li> <li>31-37 Nelson Street (door entry)</li> <li>61-67 Nicolson Street (odds) (door entry)</li> <li>11 Brachelston Street (door entry)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>78 Dempster Street (door entry)</li> <li>55-63 Kelly Street (odds only) (door entry)</li> <li>1 &amp; 3 Union Street (door entry)</li> <li>112 West Blackhall Street (door entry)</li> <li>13 &amp; 15 Murray Street (door entry)</li> <li>48 &amp; 50 Tasker Street (door entry)</li> </ul>	Everwarm
Painter-works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flat 112 25 Gateside Gardens</li> <li>8-11 Prospecthill View</li> <li>2, 4, 6 &amp; 8 Murray Street</li> <li>1-12 Tasker Street</li> <li>14-100 Tasker Street (evens exclude 48, 50 &amp; 56)</li> <li>8-22 Walker Street (evens plus 3, 7 &amp; 9)</li> <li>6-24 Brae View (evens plus 1 &amp; 5)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1-7 Nicol Drive plus no. 9</li> <li>13-23 Nicol Drive (odds)</li> <li>6-14 Nicol Street (evens)</li> <li>2-14 Paton Street</li> <li>16-40 Paton Street (evens)</li> <li>5-15 Rowan (odds, plus no. 1)</li> <li>1-11 Murray Street (odds, plus 17 &amp; 19)</li> </ul>	Bell Decorating Group
Common Fan Servicing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>56-68 Kelly Street (evens)</li> <li>9 South Street</li> <li>46, 52 Inverkip Street</li> <li>1-7, 13 &amp; 15 Newton Street (odds, plus 1A)</li> <li>61-67, 71 &amp; 73 Nicolson Street (odds)</li> <li>81 &amp; 83 Holmscroft Street</li> <li>6, 8, 12 &amp; 14 Murdieston Street</li> <li>76 Belville Street</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>69 &amp; 71 Dempster Street</li> <li>128 &amp; 130 Drumfrochar Road</li> <li>2 Wemyss Bay Street</li> <li>3-9 Hope Street</li> <li>68 Lynedoch Street</li> <li>29 &amp; 31 Trafalgar Street</li> <li>1-3 Greenbank Mews</li> <li>2 Houston Street</li> </ul>	To be advised
Gutter Cleaning – Non-Common	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1-2, 25 Gateside Gardens</li> <li>8-11 Prospecthill View</li> <li>2-8 Murray Street (evens)</li> <li>1-11 Tasker Street (odds)</li> <li>3, 7-10 Walker Street</li> <li>12-22 Walker Street</li> <li>1, 5 &amp; 6 Brae View</li> <li>8-24 Brae View (evens)</li> <li>1-7 &amp; 9 Nicol Drive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13-23 Nicol Drive (odds)</li> <li>2-14 Paton Street</li> <li>16-40 Paton Street (evens)</li> <li>1, 5-15 Rowan Street (odds)</li> <li>6-14 Nicol Street (evens)</li> <li>1-11 Murray Street (odds)</li> <li>17 &amp; 19 Murray Street</li> <li>2-46 Tasker Street (evens except no.18)</li> <li>52-100 Tasker Street (evens except no. 56)</li> </ul>	Bell Decorating Group
Gutter Cleaning – Common Multi storey	All Multi Storey Properties	R F Watters	
Close Carpets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>106, 108 &amp; 110 Wellington Street</li> </ul>	Carpetrite	

# OAK TREE APP

## NEW FREE OAK TREE APP AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD

### Interested in managing your tenancy on the go?

With "My Oak Tree portal" you are able to do just that. In addition to our portal we have been working with our website provider to develop our own FREE Oak Tree app which is now available for download.

- Available on both Apple and Google Play app stores.
- Dedicated App with useful features for both tenants and potential tenants
- Single location for access to Oak Tree online resources such as
  - My Oak Tree Tenant Portal (Administer Tenancy, Pay Rent, Log Repairs, Access Documentation and more)
  - Find a Home (Direct link to the ICHR Website / Portal)
  - Direct Access to Facebook, twitter, Email and Phone via easy one-touch buttons
  - About the Association Page, opening times, brief history, contact details, map to the offices
  - Links to Wider Action groups including Energy Activators & Financial Fitness
  - Future potential to include Quarterly newsletter and Tenants Handbook etc.

We hope that you enjoy using our app. It's in the early stages so if you have feedback, good or bad, we'd love for you to contact us. Suggestions for future developments are also welcome. You can download the app by searching "Oak Tree" on either the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.



### OAK TREE MEMBERSHIP

Lifetime membership of the Association costs £1 and anyone can apply at any time. As a member, you would be invited to attend the Association's AGM where you would be entitled to vote for the Management Committee or stand for election to the Management Committee yourself.

If you would like to find out more about membership of Oak Tree Housing Association, or you would like an application form, please contact us on **807000**.

### ARE YOU AN OAK TREE SHAREHOLDER?

Then please come along to our

**A.G.M**  
**TONTINE HOTEL**  
**TUESDAY 13TH AUGUST 2019**  
**7.00 PM**

For further information or if you wish to become a Shareholder, please ask at reception.

# COMPLAINTS

We welcome your feedback and your comments, compliments and complaints are used to make sure our service meets the needs of our tenants, factored owners and other customers. Here is some information on complaints and what the outcome was. See the full annual report on complaints on our website or contact a member of staff for more details.

## COMPLAINTS REPORTED BY QUARTER

There are 2 types of complaint:

**Stage one** – frontline resolution. These are simpler complaints which can be easily resolved.

**Stage two** – investigation. Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint: those that have not been resolved at stage 1 and those that are complex and require detailed investigation.

The number of complaints overall submitted was higher than last year - 196 compared to 110.

- Stage 1 complaints increased from 75 to 163.
- Stage 2 remained fairly stable (28 up to 33 this year).

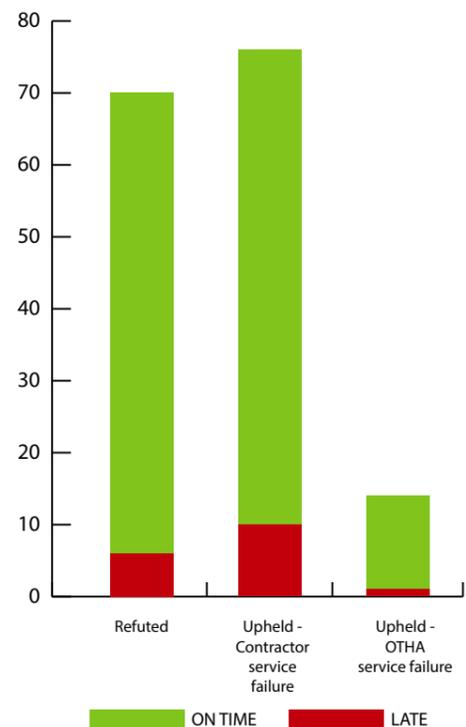
The main problem was the poor performance of the repairs contractor. This led to the contract being terminated.

## COMPLIMENTS

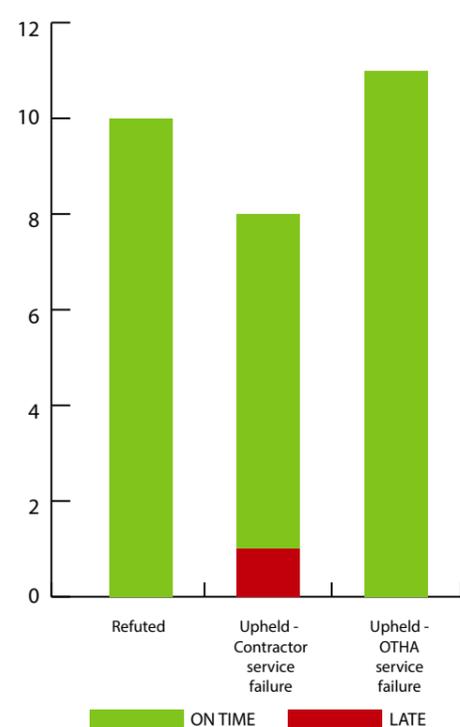
We also record positive feedback. Most compliments relate to the helpfulness of staff members, the quality of work done or the general quality of service. During the year, the team have been particularly encouraged to report compliments to give a more rounded picture of tenant feedback. Overall, 108 compliments were recorded.

## COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE & RESOLUTION – 2018-19

### Outcome Stage 1 Complaints & Late/On Time



### Outcome Stage 2 Complaints & Late/On Time



# COMPLAINTS

In total, 18 complaints were resolved late mainly at stage 1. These mainly involved issues involving investigation with a contractor, which took time to resolve. The volume of complaints is likely to have affected performance.

## MAIN THEMES ARISING IN COMPLAINTS DURING THE YEAR

- Poor performance from our main repairs contractor which peaked in the 2nd quarter. Problems continued as the contract wound down to its end.
- Increasing levels of complaints regarding Anti-Social Behaviour handling. Several of these relate to poor sound insulation in some properties.
- A serious violent incident occurred leading to a complaint about why the tenant was allowed to be in the property and why they hadn't been evicted.
- Landscaping contract price changes.
- Delays in issuing decoration allowances at points in the year following planned maintenance.
- The cancellation of the kitchen replacement in one area without sufficient notification.
- Increase in complaints relating to housing applications.
- Rent setting – the policy not being applied consistently in one case.
- Defects in one new build scheme remain an issue for a small number of complaints.
- Planned maintenance complaints have reflected activity and contractor performance. Lengthy investigation & completion times have been an issue.
- Issues with voids, new tenants and the out of hour's service have remained at low levels.

## This is what we are doing about tackling the issues raised or improving our service.

- Main repairs contractor service failures needed to be managed as the contract wound down to its end.
- OTHA repairs staff are to improve follow up for long jobs marked as incomplete. There are recurring issues with replacement doors taking much longer than the normal timescale.
- Reiteration of need for special communication/access arrangements to meet individual needs to be adhered to by all contractors.
- Defects in one development site – progress completion and pro-active communication with residents.
- Rent setting policy – procedures improved and staff training to ensure consistency.
- Cancellation of kitchen replacement in properties in one area - improve communication with tenants affected and develop a plan for the future of the area.
- Handling of ASB cases arose in several cases. A specialised newsletter on anti-social behaviour and how this is handled has been distributed to inform tenants.
- Changes have been made to clarify void standards for the tenant when viewing.
- Some administrative delays were experienced and apologies were offered. Delays in issuing cheques/ decoration allowances have been ironed out.
- ICHR Website security was checked and confirmed as secure.
- Better communication for landscaping increase in charges was required.
- Staff are implementing a stricter policy for suspensions from the housing list for operational reasons as many applicants are bidding without seriously intending to accept an offer of housing.
- It was agreed to hold off letting a bedsit following a serious incident and some repeated incidents of anti-social tenants. Our Asset Management Strategy is being reviewed so we can look at low demand housing and what options there may be other than letting.

# ASPARAGUS & MUSHROOM PASTA



This pretty pasta dish makes full use of asparagus, with the thick ends used to make a delicious sauce.

## INGREDIENTS

- 500g asparagus spears, trimmed
- 500g dried tagliatelle
- 400g mushrooms, sliced if large
- 2 large garlic cloves, chopped
- 2 roasted red peppers in brine from a jar, drained and sliced

Serves 4

Ready in 25 minutes

1. Cut off the asparagus tips and set aside. Roughly chop the stalks and cook in a saucepan of boiling water over a high heat for 6 minutes or until tender. Remove with a slotted spoon and put in a food processor with 150 ml of the cooking liquid. Puree, season to taste and keep warm.
2. Top up the pan with boiling water and cook the pasta according to the pack instructions, adding the asparagus tips 3 minutes before the end of the cooking time.
3. Meanwhile, spray a large non-stick frying pan with low-calorie cooking spray and place over a high heat. Add the mushrooms and fry for 3 minutes then reduce the heat to low, add the garlic and fry for a further 1 minute.
4. Drain the pasta and asparagus tips and return to the pan. Stir in the peppers, mushrooms and asparagus sauce and serve in shallow bowls.

Spaghetti or linguine will also be great in this recipe if you can't get tagliatelle.

# SUMMER WORD SEARCH

U Q E Z J Y L A V E X S T F L  
 N O I T A C A V L G A C Y Q O  
 Q X D C C T G T T G A K V P L  
 Z T F U P F S U N F L O W E R  
 H O Q Q T A C A O X A D Q H X  
 H E A T C I I Q L T Q U C N Y  
 B V B D Q C N A E O H A V W F  
 F A N P D E C S M P E V L U S  
 G A S K B C I F R B O P A W K  
 S N V E A R P C E C G O I N O  
 F S I S B E L J T D F M L D G  
 U I O T W A K J A X M Q E B F  
 A I Y S A M L F W I V N A F G  
 I T A C E O H L N G D B Y V F  
 T F Z C G K B G O V W N P Y C

BEACH  
 BASEBALL  
 ICE CREAM  
 SWIMMING

PICNIC  
 VACATION  
 SUNFLOWER  
 WATERMELON

SANDCASTLE  
 HEAT  
 BOATING  
 POOL

# OUR COMMUNITY, OUR FUTURE

## THE VOTES ARE IN!

Eleven local projects including health, wellbeing and youth initiatives, have been successful with their applications to Oak Tree Housing Association's almost £37,000 Our Community Our Future fund, aimed at communities across Branchton, Bow Farm, Fancy Farm, Grieve Road and Pennyfern.

Successful applicants were determined via a participatory budgeting approach, where decisions about how grant money is distributed were made by the people who live or work in the area and will benefit from these projects. Local residents cast their votes online and by post, with a ballot box bonus vote at an Our Community Our Future Fun Day at Inverclyde Academy, where each project had a platform to pitch their ideas directly to the community.

## Projects that came out on top are:

Lady Alice Homework Club	£750
Inverclyde Heart Start	£1200
Branchton Young Drivers	£2000
Youth Club to Parliament	£1000
Little Trailblazers	£5000
Investment for Young Dancers	£2000
Community Transport	£5000
Branchton Ocean Youth Trust	£5000
Mindfulness Matters	£5000
Trauma Informed	£5000
Credit Union	£5000

"Congratulations to all our successful applicants, who have received grants to progress their inspiring initiatives," said Nick Jardine, Chief Executive Officer, Oak Tree Housing Association.

"It has been great to see the community respond so positively to this opportunity and get directly involved in the decision-making process, choosing what's most important to them and helping these fantastic ideas come alive in the weeks and months ahead."



The Oak Tree HA programme has been backed by a grant from the Scottish Government's Community Choices Fund. Oak Tree brought in local community development agency, CVS Inverclyde, to assist with its programme delivery.

Locals attending the Our Community Our Future Family Fun Day and casting a vote were entered into a free prize draw for a 49 inch smart TV, which was won by Kerri Baxter of Gateside Gardens.

# ENERGY ACTIVATORS CAN HELP!

The Warm Home Discount Scheme (£140) is a programme of support aimed at households who may struggle to pay their energy bills.

Electricity suppliers will deliver the scheme by crediting the amount once to the bill of those who qualify. This is nothing to do with the Cold Weather Payment or Winter Fuel Payment. Not all suppliers offer this scheme. The suppliers have different qualifying criteria but generally there are 2 groups.

## CORE GROUP

Pensioners who receive Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit, who should get it automatically

## BROADER GROUP

You may qualify if you, or anyone in household, are on a low income and receive certain means tested benefits. These criteria vary between suppliers and are limited, so apply sooner rather than later.

## NOW WHAT

1. Contact your ELECTRICITY supplier and ask if they offer the WARM HOME DISCOUNT SCHEME
2. Ask if you qualify
3. If you need help with your application, contact the ENERGY ACTIVATORS for a free home visit.



# CUSTOMER CARE STATS

Target Area	Task Targets	Target Times (annual %)	Method of measuring performance	Performance Jul 2018 – Sept 2018	Performance Oct 2018 – Dec 2018	Performance Jan 19 – Mar 19
Answer incoming telephone calls	Within 20 seconds	100%	Export of data from telephone system	Statistics not yet available as issue with supplier being able to provide the information. Being pursued	Statistics not yet available as issue with supplier being able to provide the information. Being pursued	Statistics not yet available as issue with supplier being able to provide the information. Being pursued
Return telephone call	By end of next working day	100%	Checking complaints register and Customer Care survey for non-compliance	100%	1 incident	100%
Email response	5 working days	100%	As above	100%	100%	100%
Social Media response	5 working days	100%	Facebook inbox & comments	100%	100%	100%
Check new housing application, point and process	10 working days	100%	ICHR Housing Connections Software	100% (Average 1.5 days)	99.76% (Average 2.78 days) 1 application out with target	99.77% (Average 1.5 days) 1 application out with target
Time to wait for an appointment to see specific member of staff	Same or next working day	95%	Survey carried out twice per month (rotating days)	100%	100%	100%
Appointments kept/ attended on time	Within 5 mins of agreed time	100%	Survey carried out twice per month (rotating days)	100%	100%	100%
Acknowledge or fully respond to a written enquiry	5 working days	95%	Incoming mail register	93.75%	94.1%	85.71%
Behavioural code of Committee, Staff and Contractors/ Agents	Adherence to Code	100%	Based on complaints received via Complaints Handling Procedure	2 complaints upheld & apologies given	2 complaints upheld & apologies given	1 complaint refuted
Behavioural code of Customers	Adherence to Code	100%	Managers reporting incidents	1 incident. Tenant spoken to and letter sent	1 incident. Tenant spoken to and letter sent	100%



## CUSTOMER CARE PRIZE DRAW WINNERS!

Month	Name
October 2018	L. McLaughlin
November 2018	E. Beaton
December 2018	Name withheld
January 2019	Name withheld
February 2019	C M Wilson
March 2019	W. Wallace
April 2019	Name Withheld
May 2019	K. Bolton

## JACKIE MCKELVIE, MBE

OTHA are extremely proud of our long serving and incredibly committed Management Committee Member, Jackie McKelvie, pictured here receiving her M.B.E, for her voluntary service to social housing in Inverclyde, at the recent Investiture at The Palace of Holyrood House.



## PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 2019/2020

Please note the office will be closed on the following dates:

<b>September Weekend</b>	Friday 6th September 2019, Monday 9th September 2019
<b>Christmas</b>	Wednesday 25th December 2019, Thursday 26th December 2019, Friday 27th December 2019
<b>New Year</b>	Wednesday 1st January 2020, Thursday 2nd January 2020, Friday 3rd January 2020

## CONTACT US

### THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO CONTACT US

Phone No: 01475 807000 (General Enquiries)  
01475 807001 (Repair Line)  
Email: [info@oaktreeha.org.uk](mailto:info@oaktreeha.org.uk)  
Website: [www.oaktreeha.org.uk](http://www.oaktreeha.org.uk)  
Text: 07866 555 538  
Twitter: @OakTreeHA

#### Website



[www.oaktreeha.org.uk](http://www.oaktreeha.org.uk)

Or call in to the office:  
41 High Street, Greenock, PA15 1NR

### OFFICE OPENING HOURS

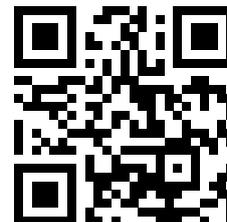
Monday 9:00am ~ 5:00pm  
Tuesday 9:00am ~ 6:00pm  
Wednesday 12noon ~ 5:00pm  
Thursday 9:00am ~ 5:00pm  
Friday 9:00am ~ 4:00pm

#### Facebook



OakTreeHA

#### Twitter



@OakTreeHA