



# Annual Assurance Statement by the Committee of Management of Oak Tree Housing Association Ltd – October 2023

In considering our compliance with regulatory and legal requirements for our 2023 Annual Assurance Statement, we have considered a comprehensive bank of supporting evidence.

## **Gaining the basis of Assurance**

The evidence bank combines reports, policies, advice and information which the Management Committee monitors and oversees 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. Additionally, 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 have obtained external support to provide us with additional assurance that our approach is effective and robust.

We are confident that, taking account of the current economic and social environments, we continue to meet our responsibilities to our tenants, service users, regulators and funders. Where we have adopted new methods of communications with tenants and/or service delivery, we have communicated these new arrangements clearly to our tenants. We are confident that we have successfully resumed normal service levels, subject to external supply constraints.

We are satisfied at the time of writing that we meet all of our duties in relation to tenant and resident safety. In particular, we have gained the necessary evidence-based assurance of our compliance in respect of duties relating to gas, electrical, fire, water and lift safety and our obligations relating to asbestos, damp and mould. An external audit has confirmed this along with quarterly performance reports which we received.

In reviewing our compliance with the Regulatory Framework, we are assured that we have established appropriate systems for the collection of equalities data. We are 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.

We are assured that Oak Tree Housing Association (OTHA) is compliant with the Regulatory Standards and Regulatory Framework requirements with (only) the following exceptions: -

- 2 Gas Safety checks } as at 31.03.2023
- 141 Electrical Installation Condition Report's (EICR's) } as at 31.03.2023

An action plan has been implemented and at the time of writing we are now fully compliant. An external audit has been carried out which confirms this (Substantial Assurance).

### **New Build Development Site**

At the time of writing an initial report has been received detailing significant failures at the Strone Farm development site. An external investigation has been instructed and its findings are awaited in order to move forward. The Scottish Government's, More Homes division has been notified and this matter has been advised to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

### **Statement of Assurance**

The Committee of Management confirms that we have reviewed and assessed a comprehensive bank of evidence to support this Statement that Oak Tree Housing Association (OTHA) is compliant with the Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management and the requirements of Chapter Three of the Regulatory Framework.

### **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.

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

As Chairperson, I was authorised by the Committee of Management at its meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2023, to sign this Assurance Statement for submission to the SHR.