

# OAK TREE HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2016

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TRY THIS

## TENANT ENGAGEMENT ROUND UP

OTHA staff members have been enjoying lots of contact with tenants in 2016. We got great feedback on our services and lots of ideas for changes to make our services even better. Here's a round up of what we have been up to.....

### Wednesday Walkabouts

We carried out our estate inspections with the help of lots of our tenants this year. Wednesday walkabouts were carried out with tenants in 11 estates during the Summer. This provided an opportunity to discuss neighbourhood issues on site with a range of people. The walkabouts were arranged in advance and tenants chose whether or not they wanted to join for some or all of the walkabout. We carry out the garden competition at the same time.

A small satisfaction survey was carried out. The results were as follows for "satisfaction with...":

- Grass cutting 90%
- Shrubs 82%
- Litter 73%
- Dog fouling 55%
- Overall appearance of estate 94%
- Behaviour of children 75%
- Condition of fencing, paths etc 67%

Lots of general comments about their area were made by tenants and these led to repairs or other action to fix the problem where we could. We intend to continue walkabouts as part of our routine estate management work.

### Garden Competition

The winners of the garden competition were invited to an event hosted by Hazel Aitken, Housing Manager. There were 20 prize winners and 13 people attended the informal meeting. During the prize giving, the opportunity was taken to review the ARC report. Similar feedback from previous discussions on the format and content was given.

### Bow Farm Fun Day

Staff attended the Bow Farm Fun Day which was held in October this year.

cont...

## Christmas and New Year Holidays

Please note that Oak Tree Housing Association will close at **4pm on Friday 23rd December 2016** and re-open on **Thursday 5th January 2017 at 9am**.

*Please refer to Page 5 for Emergency Repair Numbers and Guidance*

## TAKE A LOOK INSIDE



DON'T BE CAUGHT WITHOUT COVER



WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN US

The Association is regulated with:  
The Scottish Housing Regulator No. HCB137  
Financial Conduct Authority No. 2232(S)  
VAT Registration No. 156 9197 67  
Charity number SC045300

# TENANT ENGAGEMENT ROUND UP

## New Tenants Engagement

We carried out a survey of all new tenants in the last 18 months and held a meeting which 5 new tenants attended to discuss the results and their own experience of being a new tenant of OTHA in more detail. Both the survey and the discussions gave mainly positive results.

We got some really positive comments about dealing with staff members and contractors!

"The service given by OTHA was great. Staff were approachable, flexible and effective". "Contractors had all been great to deal with".

### Examples of this were:

- When couldn't write down contractor's number from voice mail message, phoned the office and they arranged my appointment
- When staff member doing the new tenant visit couldn't answer my question, they found out the answer and phoned me back
- Contractor plumbed in my washing machine when he was in my house for something else
- Going to get my daughter to move to OTHA as they are so good

### What we took from the new tenants' consultation...

- Cleanliness has improved in line with our improved void standard.
- The repairs service was well received.
- Smoke damage is an issue in some homes which takes a lot of coats of paint to deal with properly. Decoration allowances are offered in some properties.
- Viewing while property is occupied or under repair is reasonable.
- The service is received very well, very positive comparison to other landlords for example, from the helpfulness of staff and contractors.
- There is still some concern about the pressure to accept the property and move in quickly. Unfortunately, this is an area which the association is unlikely to compromise on for practical, security and performance reasons.
- Some tenants were unhappy with the standard of the property when moving in, but for a range of different reasons.
- Problems with non-residents parking – would like parking permits
- We discussed possible bin services

## Close Services Engagement

The engagement was led by Hazel Aitken Housing Manager and involved three separate on-site meetings in three developments and two follow up meetings to discuss common issues. The sites were Prospecthill View, Finnart Street/Robertson Street & 48-50 Inverkip Street which all have 40 or more units each.

### The developments were chosen because:

- there had been concerns raised by tenants;
- the developments were large new build properties with challenges being caused by aspects of design and density;
- to pilot possible additional close services which might be rolled out to other properties.

The site meetings took place to make contact with as many residents as possible. A total of 13 tenants attended the follow up meetings. A summary of the points made is given below:

### Common to All Developments

- All agreed that their flats were very warm.
- Car parking of non-residents a problem in all developments. Parking permits idea warmly received.
- Close walls easily marked. Concern about the finish not being robust enough.
- Interest in Window Cleaning for the close window.
- Clinical waste a problem in 3 developments. To seek advice from either cleansing or NHS regarding this.
- Very good feedback on OTHA's service in general, one tenant said he had been with other landlords, and OTHA was the best by a mile.
- Dog fouling has improved, but still a problem
- Close cleaning generally thought not to be necessary.

## Suggestions to consider :

- Staff to increase inspections in these closes, twice per quarter minimum.
- We should develop a checklist for the close inspections in these schemes reflecting some of the specific problems in each close & to check when additional services are needed i.e. power wash bins, algae removal, cigarette ends, clear gratings, check close windows.
- Sweeping of bin area, external areas and power wash communal bins occasionally.
- Introduce a new seating area at Inverkip Street. This would have to be subject to further consultation and a risk assessment.
- Paint fences or review the finish – currently they are mostly left to weather, but do get covered in algae.
- Kitchens - review decision to defer Inverkip St kitchens or set timescale for earlier review.
- Parking Permits – good idea, should pilot this new approach.
- Window Cleaning for close windows on an occasional/as required basis.
- Litter Picks – should be done (quarterly or more often) in car park areas – this should be done as part of the landscaping service, but Finnart Street has no landscaping service.
- Check height of pend at Inverkip Street at rear elevation. Possibly height on sign is wrong causing regular damage.
- Look at carpet at entrance of Finnart Street/Robertson Street and consider replacing with another type of flooring at entrance.

## Summary

The responses were more positive than expected. There is clearly no demand for a close cleaning service, but occasional & flexible services which could be picked up by close inspections are needed. For example, occasional cleaning of inaccessible close windows, sweeping bin areas, cleaning out large bins, litter picking. It has been agreed to have a tailored inspection form for each development so that site specific issues are picked up more easily.

Comments on the marking of close walls were common. In these closes, they generally have a painted finish rather than tiled and this does not seem to cope well with the day to day traffic.

We have agreed to implement resident parking permits as a voluntary measure.

## Future Engagement Activities

We have recruited some tenant volunteers to work with us on a few issues over the next few weeks. We are happy to have more so if you are interested please tell us.

### Social media

A survey of customers has been undertaken. The focus of the engagement is to measure interest in expanding our social media presence into Facebook, for example. Work on this continues.

### Repairs

Attempts are being made to pull together group to work with staff to discuss service standards feeding into the repairs contract procurement

### Customer Care

Engagement was scheduled for this quarter, but the work has been delegated to a new staff working party of senior staff members. The engagement will now take place in quarter 4 of 2016-17.

### Rent increase and Value for Money

The annual consultation on the rent increase will start in December 2016 and it is hoped that the engagement can be widened to include some work on value for money including benchmarking.

# MOVING ON INVERCLYDE

**Moving On Inverclyde have launched a new service called **CRAFT** (Community Reinforcement And Family Training) which is designed to equip family and friends with a range of effective strategies for helping their loved one change their substance use as well as helping themselves to feel better and regain control of their own emotional health.**

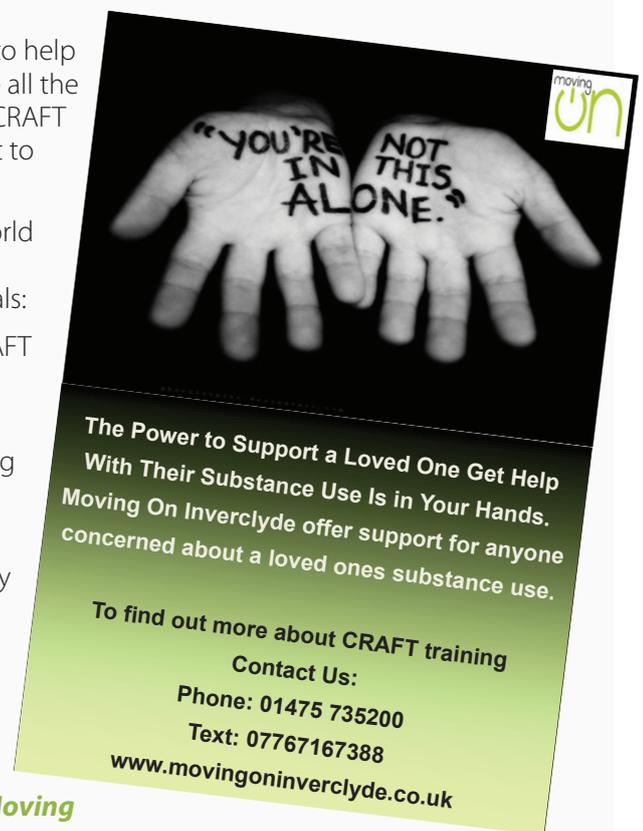
At Moving On we understand that we cannot be there all the time to help people - but the fact is many family members and friends ARE there all the time and are ideally placed to bring immediate support. Using the CRAFT programme Moving On will support, train and partner those closest to the issue.

CRAFT is a program presently being used successfully across the world to affect the loved ones behaviour by changing the way family and others interact with him/her. It is designed to accomplish three goals:

1. When a loved one is abusing substances and refusing help, CRAFT trains families in ways to help move their loved one towards seeking treatment.
2. On its own CRAFT helps reduce the loved one's alcohol and drug use whether or not the loved one has engaged in treatment as yet.
3. CRAFT improves the lives of the concerned family and friends by helping them grow the skills and the confidence to deal with the substance user and their behaviours.

**As with all activities at Moving On CRAFT is free and confidential. Childcare costs can be supported where required and public travel costs are reimbursed**

**For further information or a confidential chat contact Alex at Moving On Inverclyde on 01475 735200, text on 07767167389 or email [contact@movingoninverclyde.co.uk](mailto:contact@movingoninverclyde.co.uk)**



## HELP WITH PAYING YOUR COUNCIL TAX

If you are on a low income, you might be entitled to some help to pay your Council Tax. Information is available from the Customer Service Centre at Clyde Square, Greenock, PA15 1LY. You can telephone on Freephone 0800 013 1375 or email [benefitenquiries@inverclyde.gov.uk](mailto:benefitenquiries@inverclyde.gov.uk)

If you currently receive Housing Benefit, your application will have automatically meant you had applied for what is known as "Council Tax Reduction". This would mean that part of your Council Tax bill is covered by benefits.

If your circumstances change and you are no longer receiving Housing Benefit then you should still make an application to see if you are entitled to help.

If you are moving onto Universal Credit, you may still qualify for some assistance, but you need to make a separate application.

If you need some help with this – please let us know and we can point you in the right direction.

# KEEP SAFE OVER CHRISTMAS

**Nobody wants to have to deal with an emergency during the cold winter months. There are however some simple steps, given below, which can help protect your home from the winter weather.**

- Leave background heating on if cold weather is expected. This stops your pipes freezing up in a cold snap.
- Make sure that you know where your water stop valve is and how to turn off your water. If you are unsure where the water stop valve is then please contact the association - do not leave it until you have an emergency.
- If you do have a burst pipe the first thing to do is to turn off the water at the mains and then turn on all the taps to sink and baths to drain the system. Switch off electricity if water comes into contact with electrical appliances, connections or wires. Warn neighbours who may suffer damage as a result of the burst in your home.
- Consider leaving contact details or keys with a trusted neighbour/relative if you are going away in case you've left a tap on or something happens. Damage can be much worse if no one can get in to deal with a problem.
- Avoid fire by not cooking when 'under the influence' and try not to smoke when you are too sleepy!
- Be careful with candles – they look nice, but should be kept under supervision at all times.
- Check the batteries in your smoke detector and stock up on torch batteries in case of a power cut – a torch is safer than candles especially if kids are around.
- Don't overload electrical sockets and check that Christmas tree lights conform to British Safety Standards.
- Severe loss of water
- Blockage of your only toilet
- Complete loss of electrical power or lighting
- Loss of gas (this may be the responsibility of Transco)
- Loss of heating in cold weather where there is no other form of heating available
- Security of the property following a break-in or forced entry
- Blocked drains where the problem is serious
- Electrical fault which may endanger a building or resident

## Help When You Need It

The emergency call out service is available during the festive period when the office is closed. Please only call in the case of a genuine emergency. Emergency repairs are deemed as being repairs, which could cause danger to health, resident's safety, or serious damage and destruction to property. Contractors carrying out an emergency call out will normally have instructions to make safe only. This enables full and proper repairs to be undertaken during normal working hours. Some of the types of work they attend include the following:

- Severe roof leaks
- Burst pipes

**If you call out an emergency contractor for a less serious repair you may be recharged for all the costs involved.**

The response time to attend an emergency call out is 4 hours, but during a major storm / flooding, where many calls have been made, it may take a bit longer for operatives to arrive.

If you make an emergency call out, please do stay in until the tradesman calls. To help save time in an emergency it is helpful if you know how to turn off your water, gas and electricity in your home. Ask a maintenance officer if you do not know how to do this.

## KEEP THESE NUMBERS HANDY

Gas Leaks Scottish Gas Network:  
**0800 111 999**

Gas Heating / Fires James Frew  
(Gas Services) **01294 468 113**

All other Trades - Mears Group  
**0141 433 6631**

**Please note, if your property has recently been subject to planned maintenance works the contractor will notify you direct of the emergency contact number.**



**Other numbers you may wish to note are as follows:**

Police **101** for non-emergency or **999** if it's an emergency

Womens Aid **01475 888505**

Scottish Power: **0800 092 9290** (landline) OR **105**

Victim Support: **01475 787300**

Scottish Water Board: **0800 0778 778**

Samaritans: **116123**

Emergency Social Work Services **0300 343 1505**

# STAFFING NEWS

**We are delighted to welcome some new staff members.**



Louise Ward, Housing Officer joined during June 2016 to work as the job share partner with Jacqueline Dunning in our Housing Services Department.



Sukhdeep Hopper (Suk) Technical/Maintenance Manager joined during October 2016 to oversee the management of the Association's Development and Technical Services Department.



And due to a retirement from our Administration Department, Karis McAlinden, Clerical Assistant/Typist/Receptionist joined during November 2016.

***We extend a warm welcome to Louise, Suk and Karis.***



## AGM

**The Association's AGM was held in the Tontine Hotel on Tuesday 21st June 2016 and was attended by 47 Members plus Guests.**

Members attending heard the Association's Auditor applaud another strong financial performance and commend the work of Committee and Staff.

Jackie McKelvie, the Association's Chairperson gave a detailed account of the year's activities and outlined the Association's busy programme for 2016/17.

## Don't be caught without cover

We have responsibility for most of the repairs required inside and outside your home. Your Tenants Handbook and your Tenancy Agreement gives you more details about what is our responsibility and what is yours.

It is up to you to look after your own belongings and there can be times when damage can happen and it is not your fault but unless you have insurance cover then you will be out of pocket to replace these items.

An example would be a leaking or burst pipe in the flat upstairs from you that caused flooding in your bedroom and ruined your bed, bedding and carpet. The Association would repair the leak and your ceiling but we would not be able to replace any of your belongings damaged as a result.

The Association promotes Thistle Tenant Risks Contents Insurance

### How much will the insurance cost?

The aim of Thistle Tenant Risks is to provide tenants with an affordable option for home contents insurance. Premiums vary depending upon your sum insured, age and postcode. You could obtain £9,000 of cover for as little as £3.47 a month if paid monthly by Direct Debit.

For further information pick up an information pack from our office or call 0845 601 7007. You can also email [tenantscontents@thistleinsurance.co.uk](mailto:tenantscontents@thistleinsurance.co.uk) quoting "Oak Tree Housing Association". You can also visit [www.thistletenants-scotland.co.uk](http://www.thistletenants-scotland.co.uk)



## Reasons to choose the Thistle Tenant Risks contents insurance scheme

- **Flexible, regular pay-as-you-go payment options. You can pay by cash, direct debit, postal order, credit or debit payment.**
- **No fuss, quick and easy to apply. Either complete a simple application form or contact us by telephone 0845 601 7007 (or it may be cheaper to call 01628 586 187 from a mobile).**
- **Insurance for realistic sums is available.**
- **No excess. You do not pay for the first part of the claim.**
- **Covers theft, water damage, fire and other household risks.**
- **Covers damage to internal decorations.**
- **Covers accidental damage to sanitary fixtures such as toilets and washbasins.**
- **Covers damage to external glazing for which you are responsible.**
- **Covers lost or stolen keys and freezer contents.**
- **You don't need to have special door or window locks.**
- **Optional extensions such as personal possessions (cover away from the home), wheelchairs/mobility scooters, hearing aids and building covers for garages, huts and sheds is also available for an additional premium**

*This insurance does not cover your property against everything that can happen. Terms, conditions, limits and exclusions apply. A copy of the policy wording is available upon request. To make sure that you are always covered you must keep up to date with your payments. If you don't pay your insurance premium your insurance may be cancelled.*

# DEMENTIA AWARENESS – ALZHEIMER SCOTLAND

As you may know the Association achieved the Gold Healthy Working Lives Award a few years ago and continues to strive to maintain this award.

The aim of the award scheme is to develop health promotion and safety themes in the workplace.

Each year the Association joins in a national campaign to highlight awareness of certain health campaigns. This year we have chosen Dementia Awareness.

Dementia is the progressive loss of the powers of the brain. There are many kinds of dementia but the most common is Alzheimer's disease. Other kinds of dementia include vascular dementia, Lewy body dementia, frontotemporal dementias (including Pick's disease) and alcohol-related dementias. It is also possible to have more than one type of dementia; for example Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia. What all these diseases have in common is that they damage and kill brain cells, so that the brain cannot work as well as it should.

In Scotland, over 90,000 people have dementia. It is most common in older people but can affect people in their 40s or 50s or even younger.

## What causes dementia?

We do not yet know exactly what causes dementia. Medical researchers all over the world are working to find causes and develop treatments.

Alzheimer's disease damages individual brain cells one by one, so that the brain can't work as well as it used to. A protein called amyloid builds up in deposits, called plaques, and tiny filaments in the brain cell form tangles. Much current research is trying to find out why these changes happen and what can be done to stop them.

Some rare kinds of Alzheimer's disease affecting people under 65 can be inherited. Faulty genes may cause the build up of the amyloid protein. Recent research seems to show that there may also be a genetic factor in other cases of Alzheimer's disease. However, this does not mean that someone whose parent had Alzheimer's will automatically develop the disease.

In the vascular dementias, there are problems with the blood supply to brain cells. For example, some people have tiny strokes (or infarcts) which damage small areas of the brain.

In frontotemporal dementias the parts of the brain responsible for decision-making, control of behaviour and emotion and language are affected. It is not fully known how this happens but there seems to be an abnormal growth of some types of proteins in the brain

cells. In around 30-50% of cases of frontotemporal dementia, the person may have a family history.

Dementia with Lewy bodies is caused by small, round clumps of protein that build up inside nerve cells in the brain. The protein clumps damage the way brain cells work and communicate with each other. The nerve cells affected by Lewy bodies control thinking and movement.

## What are the symptoms of dementia?

Every person with dementia is different. How their illness affects them depends on which areas of their brain are most damaged.

One of the most common symptoms of dementia is memory loss. Everyone forgets things sometimes and most people's memory gets worse as they get older. But when someone has dementia, they may forget the names of family members, not just of strangers. They may burn pans because they have forgotten them or forget whether they have eaten lunch. They may repeat the same question again and again and not know they are doing it.

People with dementia may lose their sense of time, losing awareness of which day it is or of the time of day. They may lose track of where they are, and get lost even in a familiar place. They may fail to recognise people they know well.

People with dementia may often be confused. Their ability to think, to reason and to calculate can all be affected. They may make odd decisions and find it hard to solve problems. Handling money may become difficult as they find it harder to work out their change or lose their sense of the value of money.

Dementia can also cause personality and behaviour changes. Someone who was active and energetic may become listless, someone pleasant and well-mannered may become rude and aggressive. These changes can be particularly distressing to relatives and friends as they lose the person they knew.

Gradually, over a period of years, most functions of the brain will be affected. Eventually, people with dementia will probably need help with even simple daily activities, such as dressing, eating or going to the toilet.

## What should I do if I'm worried?

It is very important not to jump to conclusions. Confusion or forgetfulness does not mean someone

has dementia; nor is dementia an inevitable part of growing older. Many other conditions, such as infections, depression or the side effects of medicines can cause similar problems. If you are worried, see your doctor.

If your doctor finds no reason for the symptoms, he or she may want to refer you or your relative to see a hospital specialist. The specialist can do further tests. Dementia can only be diagnosed by ruling out other possible causes of the symptoms. This is why a full medical assessment is important.

The earlier a person gets a diagnosis of dementia, the sooner he or she can start to come to terms, make plans for the future, and access services that can help.

**The good news** is that treatments are available which may help some people with the symptoms of some forms of dementia, particularly Alzheimer's disease, and research is progressing all the time.

## What can I do?

If you or someone you know has dementia, it may be hard to come to terms with the illness. Talk to someone about how you feel and what you can do. You can call the 24 hour Dementia Helpline free on 0808 808 3000 at any time or email [helpline@alzscot.org](mailto:helpline@alzscot.org)

- Share your feelings with other members of the family or friends.
- Tell the doctor about any changes
- Find out what services are available. Try to get as much help as you can
- Find out about benefits and claim them
- Talk to other people with dementia or families and carers who are facing similar problems
- Try to make life as full and enjoyable as possible. Both people with dementia and carers should try to get out and about and keep in touch with friends
- Don't just put up with new difficulties. Ask for information, help and advice to cope with problems.

## Support after diagnosis

Anyone in Scotland receiving a diagnosis of dementia is entitled to a minimum of one year's post-diagnostic support from a named and trained person, called a Dementia Link Worker (or similar job title). The Link Worker works with the person with dementia and his or her partner and family to help them understand the diagnosis, learn to cope with symptoms and live well with dementia, now and in the future.



## Where can I find out more?

Alzheimer Scotland exists to help people with dementia and their carers. They provide information, support and a network of services and carers' support groups around Scotland.

The confidential Dementia Helpline offers 24 hour information and emotional support. Call anytime to talk things over or for a free information pack.

The Dementia Helpline can give you information about the services in your area and signpost you to other sources of support. You can also find information on the website at [www.alzscot.org](http://www.alzscot.org)

Alzheimer Scotland  
22 Drumsheugh Gardens  
Edinburgh  
EH3 7RN  
Tel: 0131 243 1453  
Email: [info@alzscot.org](mailto:info@alzscot.org)

## Dementia Cafe

Come along each month for a cuppa & blether, 1.30-3pm at Your Voice, 12/14 Clyde Square, Greenock, PA15 1NB

**Monday 9th January 2017**

**Monday 13th February 2017**

**Monday 13th March 2017**

Community groups are there to be enjoyed by anyone with dementia or experiencing difficulties with their memory including their families and friends. All are welcome; people who can attend independently and/or for those unable to do so should come with a companion who can take responsibility for them and share the experiences of the group. We are unable to provide transport, therefore it is your responsibility to get to and from this community activity, safely.

Dementia Advisor – Tracy Gilmour  
Email: [tgilmour@alzscot.org](mailto:tgilmour@alzscot.org)  
Phone: 01475 261102

# BE A GOOD NEIGHBOUR AT CHRISTMAS

**It is the season of goodwill and everyone wants to enjoy the festive season. It is important to make sure, however, that your enjoyment of the holiday doesn't mean your neighbours don't enjoy theirs.**

## Refuse and Recycling

We all generate more refuse at this time of year. Some items can be recycled and others can't. Here is a guide that will hopefully help. If you want more detailed advice on the arrangements in your area and to check collection dates over Christmas and New Year, please telephone Inverclyde Council on 01475 717171 or contact them via the online enquiry form on [www.inverclyde.gov.uk](http://www.inverclyde.gov.uk)

### WHAT CHRISTMAS ITEMS CAN I RECYCLE?

YES PLEASE	NO THANK YOU
Christmas cards	Christmas crackers
Sweet and biscuit tins	Plastic film
Envelopes	Polystyrene
Glass bottles/ jars	Food waste
Selection boxes (cardboard section)	Foil
Cardboard sweet cartons	Foil gift bags
Plastic sweet/biscuit containers	Foil wrapping paper
Catalogues/ magazines	Unwanted Christmas decorations
Advent calendar (cardboard section)	
Cardboard boxes (flattened)	

## Parties and Visitors

If you are having friends over to your flat or house over the holiday period, please be a good neighbour. A bit of respect and consideration at this time of year goes a long way. You could

- **Speak to your neighbours in advance to let them know you are having friends over**
- **When your visitors are leaving ask them to remember that other neighbours may be sleeping if it is late at night**
- **Make sure that any rubbish from the party is cleared away promptly and in the correct bin**
- **Invite your neighbour to join you.**

If you are affected by noise and disturbance from your neighbours, there is an Anti-Social Behaviour Helpline that you can call on 0800 01 317 01 or call the Police on 101.



# ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY SUPPORT

There is a wide variety of agencies and charities that could provide support to tenants of OTHA who are part of the Armed Forces Community.

We are keen to assist in any way we can but firstly we need to know which of our tenants fit into the above categories. Please let us know if you believe you, or a member of your family, belong to the Armed Forces Community.

Who is part of the Armed Forces Community?

## The term Armed Forces Community means

- Serving personnel
- Reservists
- Service Leavers – those who have served more than four years in HM Armed Forces, whether as a regular or a reservist. Also known as a “Veteran”.
- Early Service Leavers – those who have served more than one day but fewer than four years. Also known as a Veteran.
- Families – a spouse, partner, child of HM Service Personnel
- Those bereaved as a result of Service

Inverclyde Council has joined together with East Renfrewshire and Renfrewshire Council to employ a Veterans Support Advisor and they have signed up to what is known as The Armed Forces Covenant. Oak Tree Housing Association supports the work taking place as part of this Covenant.

If you qualify to be a member of the Armed Forces Community, we can put you in touch with the Veterans Support Advisor who will be happy to help you access all the support you need. Her details are:-

Jane Duncan  
Veterans Support Advisor  
East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde and Renfrewshire Council  
Tel: 07702 511790



## RECRUITING BOARD MEMBERS

Oak Tree Housing Association is looking to recruit new members to its Board. We are looking for people with a range of skills, knowledge and experience.

The Association is an equal opportunities organisation and welcomes interest and a contribution from all sectors of the community. There is always a lot going on at Oak Tree Housing Association, we never stand still.

Being a member of the Oak Tree Housing Association Board means you will be involved in a lot of important decisions. It is a varied and interesting role.

Would you like to be a part of Oak Tree Housing Association's future? If you have the skills, enthusiasm and commitment to help shape and direct our future, we would like to hear from you.

**Please contact the office for more information.**



# GARDEN COMPETITION

This year we decided to do things slightly differently and we combined our "Wednesday Walkabouts" in July and August with mini garden competitions. The staff took photos of the best kept gardens in each estate as they did their walkabout and we then chose 20 winners. We chose at least one garden from each area.

It was a pleasure to view all the neat and tidy gardens and it is obvious that a lot of our tenants have the gardening bug and are enjoying their outside space. It is particularly satisfying to see a lot of the gardens in the estates that were built in the last few years flourishing as people settle in and make the house their home. There were plenty of gardens to choose from.

Since we had so many winners this year, we thought it would be a good idea to bring all our keen gardeners together for some tea and cake and to be presented with a small prize.

Thirteen households came along to the event which was fantastic and I am sure there were some good tips being passed on. Keeping slugs off the plants seemed to be a common problem!!

Here are a selection of the gardens chosen and some photos of the prize giving.



# IIP GOLD AWARD

Investors in People sets the standard for people management and the Investors in People Framework, sets out the criteria to achieve the Investors in People Standard.

## There are 4 levels of accreditation:

- Accredited
- Silver
- Gold
- Platinum

OTHA seek to apply the IIP Framework as a key part of our people strategy aimed at continually improving the services we provide to our customers and the wider Inverclyde community.

OTHA started on our IIP journey a number of years ago, achieving Silver accreditation in 2013 and we are delighted to advise that during August 2016, the Association has achieved Gold IIP Status. Successful accreditation against the standard is the sign of a great employer, an out performing place to work and a clear commitment to sustained success.



# INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

# Gold

Until 2019

**BIDDING APP  
AVAILABLE!**

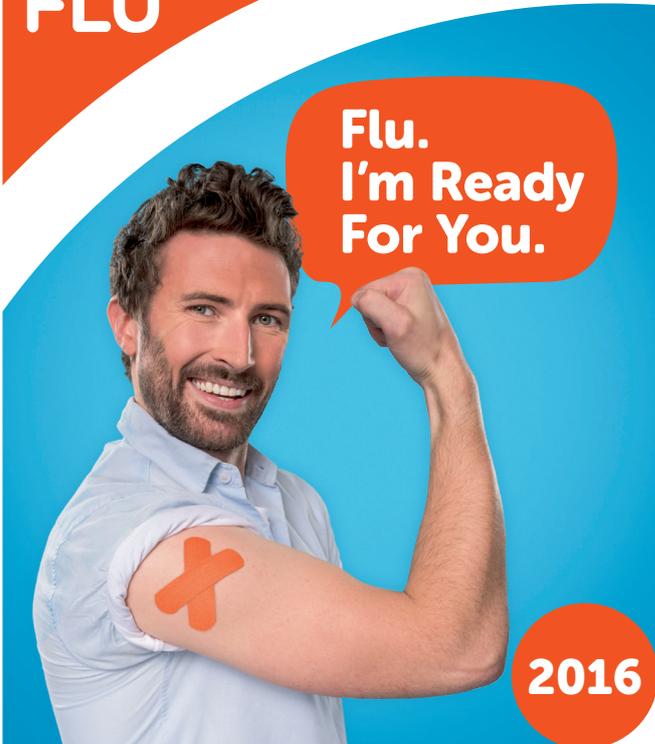


Search for **Homeconnection** on Google Play or the App Store and download for free. Scan the QR codes below for quick download.

Choose the ICHR portal, log in with your Applicant ID and Password/PIN.

View and bid for all ICHR properties easily with just a few taps.

# FLU



**Flu.  
I'm Ready  
For You.**

**2016**

The best defence against flu is this year's vaccine.



## LEEK & POTATO SOUP

Serves: 4

Prep time: 15 mins

Cooking time: 35 mins

### Ingredients

- 4 leeks, chopped
- 4 large potatoes, cubed
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 800ml chicken or vegetable stock
- 300ml single cream
- Pinch of grated nutmeg
- To Serve: Croutons, chopped parsley

### Method

1. Sweat 4 chopped leeks and 4 large cubed potatoes in 1 tbsp vegetable oil for 10 mins, stirring occasionally until softened but not browned.
2. Add 800ml chicken or vegetable stock, cover and simmer for 15 mins. Season to taste and leave to cool slightly.
3. Liquidise soup until smooth. Return to pan, stir through 300ml single cream and pinch of grated nutmeg. Reheat gently. Garnish with chopped parsley and some croutons.



## PANETTONE BREAD & BUTTER PUDDING

Serves: 6

Prep time: 25 mins

Cooking time: 45 mins

### Ingredients

- 750g of panettone
- 600ml of double cream
- 7 eggs
- 1 egg yolk
- 200g of caster sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 tbsp of Demerara sugar

### Method

1. Preheat the oven to 150°C/gas mark 2.
2. Cut the panettone into 2cm thick slices and place in overlapping layers into a baking dish.
3. Bring the cream almost to the boil over a medium heat. In the meantime whisk the eggs, yolk and sugar together.
4. Pour the hot cream slowly into the eggs, whisking constantly to stop the eggs from scrambling.
5. Add the vanilla, sieve the custard into a jug, and pour into the baking dish, covering all of the panettone. Baste any parts of the panettone that are dry, and leave to soak for 10 minutes. Then sprinkle the Demerara sugar over the top for a crispy topping.
6. Cover with foil and bake for 40-45 minutes, or until the custard has set and the pudding is golden.
7. Serve warm. This keeps in the fridge for a few days. To reheat cover with foil.



# CUSTOMER CARE

Target Area	Task Targets	Within Target Times (annual %)	Comments Jan 2016 – Mar 2016	Comments Apr 2016 – Jun 2016
Check new housing application, point and process	10 working days	95%	All applications verified and activated within timescales. 100%	99.7%
Time to wait for an appointment to see specific member of staff (within OTHA area or at office/Excludes Applicant Surgeries)	Same or next working day	95%	Survey carried out twice per month (rotating days) 100%	Survey carried out twice per month (rotating days) 100%
Appointments kept/ attended on time	Within 15 minutes of agreed time	100%	Survey carried out twice per month (rotating days) 100%	Survey carried out twice per month (rotating days) 100%
Acknowledge or fully respond to a written enquiry	5 working days	95%	96.5%	95.4%
Behavioural code of Committee, Staff and Contractors/Agents	Adherence to Code	100%	100% based on complaints received via the complaints handling procedure.	100% based on complaints received via the complaints handling procedure
Behavioural code of Customers	Adherence to Code	100%	Tenant conducted their conversation in a confrontational way and was verbally abusive to a staff member. Letter sent from Senior Housing Officer advising it is not acceptable to speak to staff in that way. Any further incidences, OTHA will refuse to deal in person or via the phone and all future communication will then need be in writing.	2 x incidents Tenant verbally aggressive on phone. Letter sent from SHO to advise written correspondence only in future. Tenant displaying erratic behavior and frequently calling into office on non related housing matters. SHO written and advised tenant should not call into office unless with good reason.

## Customer Care Section

Apologies for wrong heading April 15 – June 15 in Spring 2016 Newsletter, should have been Oct 15 – Dec 15.

# CONTACT US

## There are many ways to contact us

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

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



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



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## CUSTOMER CARE WINNERS

Name	Month
K. Deighan	February
S. Robertson	March
Name Withheld	April
S. Dunlop	May
S. Moughal	June
C. Wevers	July
J. Gatens	August
Name Withheld	September
M. Smith	October



**WELL DONE TO ALL OUR  
WINNERS WHO WILL EACH  
RECEIVE A  
£10 TESCO  
VOUCHER**