



OAK TREE
HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14

CONTENTS

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT	1
REACTIVE REPAIRS AND LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE	2
DEVELOPMENT & TECHNICAL SERVICES REPORT	3-4
HOUSING SERVICES	5-7
GENERAL	8
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS	9-10
MEMBERSHIP, STAFF NEWS & COMMITTEE DETAILS	11
WIDER ACTION	12
STAFF DETAILS	13
CONTACT DETAILS ANNUAL REPORT SPONSORS	14



I am once again delighted to provide the foreword to this annual report. As with every year, the Association has been incredibly busy and despite the significant challenges in the environment in which we operate, I am able to report on what has been another successful year for the Association.

It has been an interesting year coming to terms with the relationship of 2 highly distinctive housing associations with long and proud traditions of independent working. We have however dipped our toes in the water and created a mechanism to allow greater joint working with Cloch. Our underlying principles of this work are how to benefit tenants or ensure a more cost effective or broader service to tenants. I would hope that these benefits will begin to show over the next few years.

We obtained approval from the Scottish Government and Inverclyde Council to progress two new development projects totalling 60 units.

Mears Ltd continues to deliver our reactive maintenance service within specified performance targets and we carried out 7,938 repairs in the year. (Average of 4.61 repairs per property)

Our open space maintenance contract was re-tendered during the year with ISS Facility Services submitting the best value tender and will therefore continue to deliver the open space maintenance service.

Our spend on planned and cyclical/maintenance works during the year was £987,879 and the Association remains on target to achieve full compliance of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015, with 99.5% of stock currently meeting requirements.

At the end of March this year we owned 1722 properties and had an interest in 108 shared ownership properties. We also managed some private sector properties under our lead tenancy and private letting scheme.

The total of current and former tenant arrears stood at £225,204 or 3.41% of collectable rent.

Along with Cloch & Larkfield HAs we have run the Inverclyde Common Housing Register currently managed from our offices. The service aims to make allocations a simpler process for all applicants and provide a range of services under one roof.

This year we have worked closely with EAGER (Empowering Active Greenock East Residents) to develop our tenant scrutiny and look forward to involving tenants in closer monitoring and development of our services.

We have also continued to support the Federation of Inverclyde Tenants & Residents Association.

2013/14 was another successful trading year for the Association with the Association making a surplus of £2.34m this year.

Total Turnover was just over £7.4m with Operating costs of £5m.

The Association had only two permanent staff

members leave this year, with one being a retiree and I am delighted to advise you that the Association has been successfully re-assessed as an Investors in People organisation during October 2013, when we achieved the Silver Status, which is a tremendous achievement for the Association.

With regards to the coming year, as always we face a challenging financial time. We will be working closely with Cloch regarding the development of the Group structure which will continue to be an important priority in the coming year and beyond, ensuring also that we continue to work to deliver services, as good as they can be and as I advised last year, is at the heart of why the Oak Tree Housing Association Group exists.

We are in the middle of recruiting a focus group to review services from amongst our tenants who responded to the Tenant Satisfaction Survey and will work with Cloch to establish a strong tenant partnership to review our services.

The Association continues to discuss the possibility of progressing further development projects with Inverclyde Council and the Scottish Government and if sites can be found that meet the requirements of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan then it is entirely possible that the Association will undertake additional development at some point in the near future.

I would like to thank my fellow committee members who have supported me so well over the year and as ever I must also thank our staff team for their continuing commitment and enthusiasm and may I thank you for taking the time to read this report.

Jackie McKelvie
Chairperson

The Association spent £1.211M on its maintenance contracts during the year.

Mears Ltd and ISS Facility Services continue to deliver the reactive repairs and landscaped maintenance services for the Association. In addition Gas Sure are responsible for annual gas services and the maintenance of tenants central heating systems.

Ensuring repairs are completed on time is a constant challenge for our maintenance contractors. Performance during 2013/14 was again very good. The table below details the outturns for the year and we wish to express our thanks to the contractors for delivering a consistently high level of service for our tenants and to our tenants for their co-operation in ensuring the contractors gained access to carry out their work.

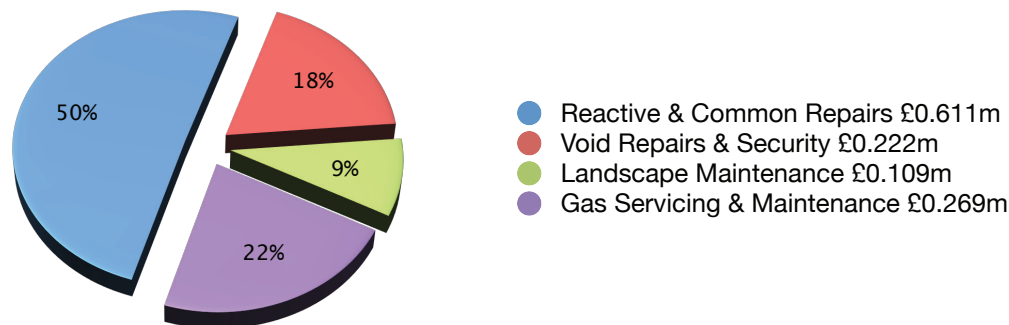
REACTIVE REPAIRS TARGETS FOR 2013/14		
Performance	Timescale/Target	Actual
Emergency Repairs	4 Hours	2.24 hours
Non-emergency repairs	2-10 Working Days	5.32 working days
Tenants Satisfaction	90%	87.59%

The average length of time to complete non-emergency repairs was 5.32 working days. The total number of emergency repairs carried out last year was 1985. The average length of time taken to complete these repairs was 2.24 hours.

The total number of repairs carried out in the year was 7938 (average of 4.61 repairs/property). 87.59% of tenants surveyed indicated that they were satisfied with the repairs service.

The Association acknowledges that tenant satisfaction has dropped and work plans and procedures are being looked at to ensure this can be improved upon in the future.

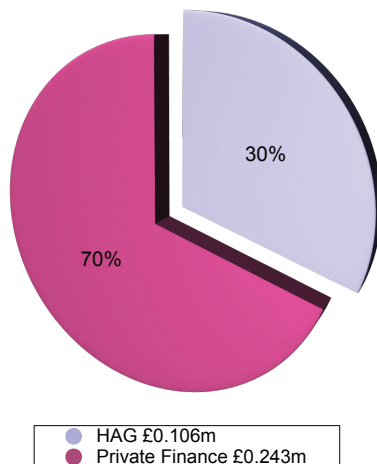
Maintenance Contracts (£1.211m)



DEVELOPMENT REPORT

The Association did not complete any projects in the year. However pre tender work did take place on two projects that are scheduled to start in the summer of 2014. The two projects to be taken forward include a 15 unit second phase new build development at Earnhill Road in Greenock and a 45 unit new build development at Garvald Street in Greenock. GMD Development Services was appointed in July 2013 to progress the projects for the Association. Funding for the projects was approved in March 2014. A capital investment of £7,305,465 is required to complete the projects. The Association's contribution is £3,190,215. The Scottish Government is providing a grant allocation of £4,115,250. In addition, Inverclyde Council contributed the land at nil value. The Association's turnover on the development programme during the year was £349,040

Funding Allocation (£0.349m)



ACHIEVEMENTS

EARNHILL ROAD PHASE 2 NEWBUILD PROJECT

Progress on pre tender phase of Earnhill Road Phase 2 development

This project is due for completion in March 2015. It



is identified in Inverclyde Council's Local Housing Strategy as a recognised means of addressing issues of particular housing need and regeneration within Inverclyde. The following houses will be available for social rent following handover on completion:

15 energy efficient social rented units – all 4apt 5person houses comprising a mix of two storey semi-detached and terraced houses

GARVALD STREET NEW BUILD PROJECT

Progress on pre tender phase of Garvald Street development



This project is due for completion in August 2015. It is also identified in Inverclyde Council's Local Housing Strategy as a recognised means of addressing issues of particular housing need and regeneration within

Inverclyde. The following houses will be available for social rent following handover on completion:

45 energy efficient social rented units comprising:

House types	No of Units
2apt 2person cottage flats	12 units
3apt 3person terraced & semi-detached houses	13 units
4apt 5person terraced & semi-detached houses	18 units
5apt 6person semi-detached houses	2 units

FUTURE PLANS

The Association continues to work closely with Inverclyde Council, the Scottish Government and other RSL's in the Inverclyde area to identify development opportunities that will help to deliver on the strategic housing objectives for Inverclyde and to ensure the sustainability of the local community

PLANNED AND CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE WORK

The Association spent £987,879 on its planned and cyclical maintenance programme. This allowed work to commence on the upgrade of 38 kitchens, the replacement of 23 heating systems and the painting of 73 cottages and 26 closes. In addition the common fans in 15 closes were serviced. 30 roofs were replaced in Fancyfarm, 1 close was rewired and all roof anchors were serviced.

HOUSING QUALITY STANDARD PROGRESS

Work is still ongoing regarding progress on achieving the Scottish Housing Quality Standard. To date, the Association is pleased to note that it now has 99.5% of complying stock. Work will continue to take place on the remaining 0.5% over the coming year in accordance with programmed maintenance to ensure all stock achieves the standard before 2015.



HOUSING SERVICES OVERVIEW

The Housing Services Team is responsible for providing the housing management service to tenants. Each area has a patch-based team headed by a housing officer with 2 housing assistants and a housing administration assistant. Each team is the main point of contact for tenants in their patch. The work of the section is overseen by the housing manager and a senior housing officer.

WELFARE REFORM

Dealing with tenants affected by welfare reform has been the main focus of the year. We have been speaking with tenants individually to ensure that changes to the benefit system are understood and that all sources of support are available to them.

We continue to work closely with other agencies to secure support services for our tenants. The Financial Fitness Team delivers services from our office and in their own premises after Wider Action funding was secured for dedicated services to local associations. Our tenancy support service is continuing to operate to give intensive targeted support to tenants.

We continue to prepare for the introduction of Universal Credit which will involve changes to the systems for payment and administration of benefit although implementation has been delayed.

INVERCLYDE COMMON HOUSING REGISTER

The ICHR has continued to operate its common housing register and choice based lettings service during the year from OTHA's office. During the year, Larkfield Housing Association and Link Housing Association joined and started letting their Inverclyde

properties through the common housing register. Premises were made available so that the homeless presentation service provided by Inverclyde Council's Homelessness Team could also operate from OTHA's office.

At the end of March 2014, there were 2624 applicants on the joint list seeking rehousing. The number of new applications in the year was 1138.

STOCK DATA

The stock decreased during the year due to sales under the Right to Buy Scheme. There were some changes to the size of properties as properties were re-categorised and in some cases, re-configured to decrease the number of bedrooms.

The association also owned 1 office & 3 shops.

The association owned 108 shared ownership properties at March 2014. Seven rented properties had been sold to the sitting tenants under the Statutory RTB scheme in the year.

RENT INFORMATION

The rent collected for 2013/14 was £6,571,584 out of a possible rent due of £6,591,296 which was 99.9% of the rent due. Gross rent arrears for current and former tenants stood at 3.41% of the rent due. **The average rent set by OTHA for general properties was £69.87 per week and by the rent registration service was £62.39 per week.**

The rent loss from voids was £19,527 or 0.30% of the rent debit.

LETTINGS

There were 167 properties re-let during the year out of which 123 were general needs properties and

STOCK DATA

Breakdown of Self Contained Dwelling Units (Rented Stock) By Size

	Bedsit	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed +	Total
Rented properties (self-contained)	7	434	947	307	23	1718
Rented properties (not self-contained)	0	0	4	0	0	4
Total rented properties	7	434	951	307	23	1722

	Applicants	New Tenants
White (total)	1711	165
Scottish	1678	159
Other British	27	2
Irish	5	1
Gypsy/Traveller	0	0
Polish	0	2
Any other white background	1	1
Mixed or multiple ethnic background	6	0
Asian, Asian Scottish, Asian British (total)	11	1
Indian	4	0
Pakistani	0	1
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
Any other Asian background	7	0
Black, Black Scottish, Black British (total)	0	1
Caribbean	0	0
African	0	1
Any other black background	0	0
Other ethnic background	0	0
Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British	0	0
Any other group	0	0
Unknown	896	0
Total	2624	167

44 were supported lets. One let was in non-self contained accommodation with the remaining lets in accommodation which was self contained. The average time to re-let properties was 14.79 days.

183 referrals of homeless people under Section 5 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 were received by the ICHR partners and 32 referrals were rehoused by OTHA.

During the year, the association continued running a lead tenancy scheme to access private rented sector accommodation to be used to meet the needs of homeless people. The scheme had been running since April 2008 with the first property coming into management and being leased on to the homeless service. By March 2014, the association was managing 22 private sector properties to assist in providing temporary housing for homeless people.

Also during 2013/14, we developed a private lettings service through our subsidiary, Oak Tree Housing Initiatives Ltd. This service was set up to act as the letting agent for properties brought back into use through Empty Homes Initiative Funding. Inverclyde Council was successful in a bid for funding to offer grant funding to owners to assist in bringing them up to a lettable standard. OTHI became a registered landlord and achieved accredited status. By March 2014, OTHI provided a management service in relation to four lets.

OTHA has continued to promote the HomeSwapper service which provides tenants with a free on line matching service to find a mutual exchange. Tenants can access the service directly on line and by putting in a few details about their home and the type of property they are looking for, can be matched to people with whom they may wish to exchange locally and further afield. As a result of the service, 22 mutual exchanges took place in the year.

The table below shows the ethnic composition in relation to applications submitted and lets made in the year.

A total of 469 applicants on the housing list considered

Key Results (ARC Indicators)	% tenants very and fairly satisfied 2013	Average of other RSL survey results for comparison
Satisfaction with Oak Tree's overall service	91%	87%
Satisfaction with repairs service	87%	84%
Satisfaction with quality of home	91%	84%
Rating of rent as very good or fairly good value for money	80%	73%
Satisfaction with management of neighbourhood by Oak Tree	89%	-
Satisfaction with being kept informed about services and decision	94%	87%
Satisfaction with opportunities to participate in decision making	88%	-

themselves to have a disability. In relation to lets made in the year, 24 new tenants out of 167 lets considered themselves to have a disability. This reflects the priority given to medical need in the points allocations system, but also the type of housing that became available to let during the year.

The association initiated 63 court actions in the year and 8 properties were repossessed due to non-payment of rent & 2 for anti-social behaviour. In the year, 12 properties were abandoned by tenants.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The association continues to work with the dedicated services to help deal with anti-social behaviour in Inverclyde including the Police, the community wardens, and the ASIST team (anti-social behaviour

investigation team). Staff members work with partner agencies to improve community safety in Inverclyde & we attend the Multi-agency Tasking & Co-ordinating Group Meetings to identify inter agency solutions to local problems.

There were 134 cases of anti-social behaviour reported in the reporting year, 131 of these cases were resolved in the year with 130 of the cases resolved within locally agreed targets in the year.

ESTATE MANAGEMENT

The association has reduced the cycle for carrying out close inspections so that routine inspections now occur on a quarterly basis. More regular inspections to deal with problem closes continue as required.

CORPORATE SECTION

Scottish Social Housing Charter

The Scottish Social Housing Charter came into effect in April 2012. The Charter promotes continuous improvement in the quality and value of the services OTHA delivers to its customers. It puts tenants at the heart of what OTHA does by encouraging tenants to get involved in the shaping of services.

From April 2013, all Scottish Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) had to meet the outcomes and standards set by the Charter. The collection of data towards new reporting requirements led to changes in the way information was recorded and reported. The first Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) was based on information from the year to March 2014 and was submitted in May 2014. The Association has reviewed and expanded its Customer Engagement Strategy to ensure that it met the requirements of the Scottish Social Housing Charter. The new Strategy was consulted on and developed during the year.

TENANTS SATISFACTION SURVEY

During the year, an independent survey of tenants reported findings on levels of tenant satisfaction for a range of areas of service. The results showed a high rating for OTHA's services across all areas of service. The fieldwork provided an opportunity to collect information on the household profiles of tenants to contribute to future planning and tailoring of services especially in the context of welfare reform.

The survey information was used to complete the ARC in relation to satisfaction indicators and these will provide a benchmark which will be compared with all other registered social housing landlords by the Scottish Housing Regulator.

The detailed survey results have been discussed with tenants to lead to the development of an action plan to target areas for action. The key area of tenant concern was around dog fouling and a detailed action plan was put in place to make improvements in this area.

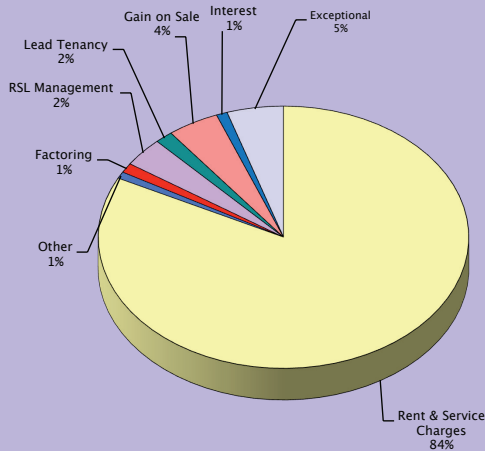
COMPLAINTS HANDLING

A new procedure for handling complaints was introduced in October 2012 to comply with the requirement to adopt the Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) developed by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. The new procedure makes it easier for tenants to make a complaint and encourages quicker, more effective resolution of complaints. The CHP has only two stages for OTHA to consider a complaint before external review by the SPSO is possible. An outline of complaints and the remedial action taken has been reported to tenants in the newsletters and on our website.



Oak Tree Housing Association made a surplus of £2.34m in the year to 31st March 2014 up from £1.43m in the previous year. The following graphs highlight the main sources of income and expenditure for the Association as well as charting the Association's change in surplus, reserves and investment in housing over the last few years.

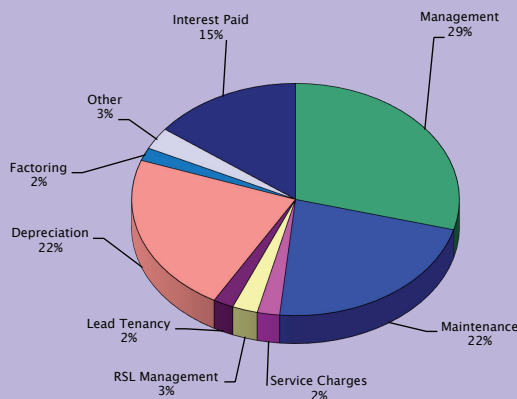
Income



Rent & Service Charges of £6.9m constitute the majority of the Associations income. This increased by 2.9% in comparison to 2014.

Income	
■	Rent & Service Charges
■	Other
■	Factoring
■	RSL Management
■	Lead Tenancy
■	Gain on Sale
■	Interest
■	Exceptional

Expenditure



Management costs, maintenance costs and interest paid on housing loans still make up the majority of the Association's expenditure. Management and Maintenance costs represent 53% of all expenditure and have increased to approximately £3.1m from £2.8m in the previous year. Interest payable on outstanding loan balances totalled £0.9m. Depreciation, a non-cash expense, was £1.3m in the year.

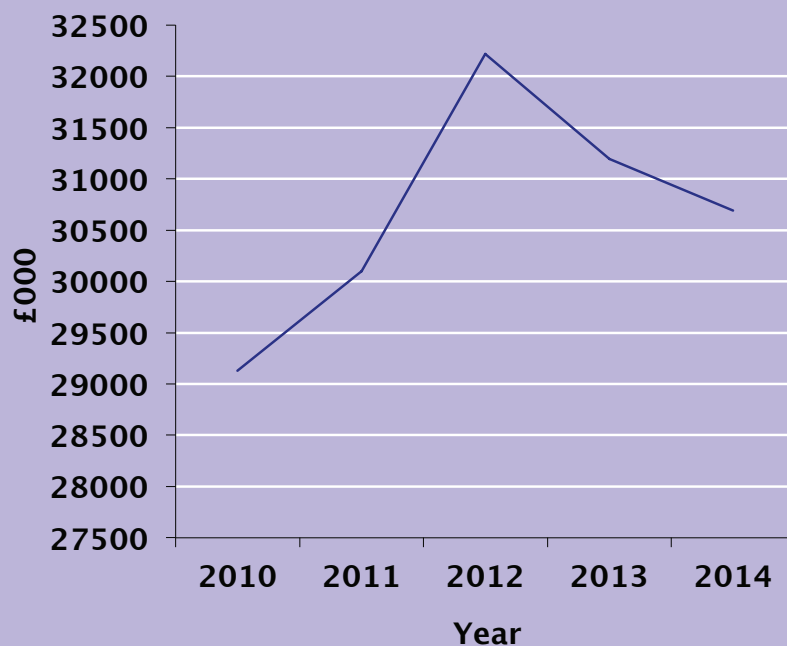
Income	
■	Management
■	Maintenance
■	Service Charges
■	RSL Management
■	Lead Tenancy
■	Depreciation
■	Factoring
■	Other
■	Interest Paid

The net book value of Housing Property saw a decrease to £30.6m from £31.1m during the year. This was due to the write off of components on replacement and an increase in the deprecation charge on property held.

As at 31st March 2014, Association reserves totalled £17m. Of this balance, £7.8m has been designated for future cyclical and major repairs.



Net Housing Properties



— Net Housing Properties

Net Housing Property value is equal to the total cost of all properties less grants received and depreciation charged

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

As at 31st March 2014 the Association had 457 members drawn from tenants and the general community.

During the year 2013/14 6 new memberships were granted and 24 memberships were cancelled either because of the death of a member, because the member moved away without sending a forwarding address or requested their membership be cancelled.

We continue to encourage tenants and other local residents to join our Association and membership forms can be obtained from our office.

STAFF NEWS



Two permanent staff members left the Association's employment this year, of which one staff member retired, Gwyneth Wilson who had 24 years service, initially with Victoria Housing Association and then Oak Tree Housing Association.

For many years now as you know, we monitor our absence levels. This year our absence rate due to sickness was 1.65%.

HEALTHY WORKING LIVES AWARD

The Association continues to be involved with the Healthy Working Lives award and continues to hold the Gold Award status. This national award scheme supports employers and employees to develop health promotion and safety themes in the workplace and there are 3 levels of award, Bronze, Silver and Gold.

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

The Association has been successfully re-assessed as an Investor in People organisation, during October 2013. In addition we achieved the Silver Status. Our IIP Assessor spent three days in our office interviewing staff and committee. The Association were commended on a strong performance, given the level of change within Oak Tree in the last 2 years and the Chief Executive of Investors in People Scotland congratulated the Association on its commitment to continuous improvement.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Jackie McKelvie	Chairperson
Colin Campbell	Vice Chair
Norma Gathercole	Secretary
Peter Galbraith	
June Glancy	
Sandra McMenamin	
Margaret McKay	
Maureen McKay	(resigned 24/2/14)
Michael McLoone	
Eleanor McMichael	
Sarah Murphy	(resigned 31/3/14)
Morag Paul	
Sandra Rorison	

INVERCLYDE TENANCY SUPPORT



Stephanie
Thom

This project was developed between Oak Tree Housing Association, Cloch Housing Association and Larkfield Housing Association, with the support worker initially based in Cloch's offices. The project has just completed its fourth year and many new tenants and tenants experiencing tenancy problems have been and continue to be supported through difficult times. The project runs until March 2015.

FINANCIAL FITNESS: ADVICE 4 ALL

This project is supported by the four locally based associations with further support from Inverclyde Council and the Big Lottery Fund.

Various elements of the project have been running since 2005 and has provided advice to many thousands of tenants. The project is scheduled to run until March 2015 and consideration will be given throughout the year to extend the project further.

BRANCHTON COMMUNITY CENTRE

The Association supported a bid for expansion of services and courses within the centre in 2013-14. Funding was approved in May and will be available until May 2015.

STARTER PACKS INVERCLYDE

This project was set up as a direct response to the problems faced by homeless people who are offered a tenancy but lack sufficient funds to purchase the many small household items needed to set up and maintain a home.

A Big Lottery Support and Connect application was successful covering ongoing project costs for this project. This funding supported the extension of the co-ordinator role to a full time post and provided for full time support. The project is now funded until March 2015 and all partners are keen to see the project develop further.



THE FUTURE

Inverclyde Housing Association Forum is undertaking a review of all the wider action activities of all members with a view to creating a more strategic approach to the delivery of these services throughout Inverclyde.

We will be talking to tenants, members and other stakeholders throughout 2014-15 as plans are developed.

GROUP DIRECTORATE

Nick Jardine	Group Director
Anne Culley	Group Depute Director

HOUSING SERVICES SECTION

Kate Dahlstrom	Group Housing Services and Performance Director
Hazel Aitken	Housing Manager
Louise Carlin	Senior Inverclyde Common Housing Register Officer (Maternity Leave)
Julie McEwan	Senior Inverclyde Common Housing Register Officer (Temporary)
Ann-Marie Mullan	Housing Officer (Job Share)
Morag Sharp	Housing Officer (Job Share)
Laurina Mooney	Housing Officer (Temporary)
Linda Smith	Housing Assistant
Maxine Ferguson	Housing Assistant
Jacqueline Dunnion	Housing Assistant
Claire Glendinning	Housing Assistant (Temporary)
Ronnie Bennett	Inverclyde Common Housing Register Housing Assistant (Part-Time)
Gillian McKay	Housing Administration Assistant (Temporary)
Scott Angus	Housing Administration Assistant (Temporary) – left 28/3/14

GROUP FINANCE SECTION

Nicholas Aderinto	Group Finance Director (Services)
Graeme Shields	Senior Finance Officer
Gwen Mills	Senior Finance Officer
Claudia Ennemoser	Finance Assistant (Services)
Anita Hunter	Finance Assistant
Cheryl Gault	Finance Assistant
Lynne Joyce	Finance Administration Assistant

DEVELOPMENT/TECHNICAL SERVICES SECTION

Brian Praties	Development/Technical Services Manager
Sean Marshall	Senior Development Officer
Mick McKendrick	Senior Housing Officer (Maintenance)
Peter MacDonald	Maintenance Officer
Donald Middleton	Clerk of Works / Maintenance Officer
Bill Anderson	Clerk of Works / Maintenance Officer
Gill MacDonald	Development Consultant (Services)
Karen McDermott	Repairs Assistant
Eleanor McCall	Repairs Assistant (Job Share)
Kathy Mechan	Repairs Assistant (Job Share)

ADMINISTRATION SECTION

Kirsty Davis	Office Manager
Mary McCreadie	Senior Clerical Assistant
Elizabeth Stewart	Clerical Assistant (Part-Time)
Elizabeth McKay	Clerical Assistant (Part-Time)
Jacqueline Workman	Clerical Assistant
Gwyneth Wilson	Administrator – retired 14/6/13
Sharon Mitchell	Clerical Assistant – left 24/12/13

HOUSEKEEPING

Eleanor Gallacher
Tracy Swan

Grateful thanks to the following companies who work with us and kindly contributed to the cost of producing this year's Annual Report:

- Adaptocare
- ATK Partnership
- Brechin Tindal Oatts
- Coltart Earley Architecture
- Cooper Cromar
- Kelly & Co
- James Frew (Gas Sure)
- MCN (Scotland) Ltd
- R F Watters
- Kerrigan Brothers
- A.B. Services



OAK TREE

HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

41 High Street | Greenock | PA15 1NR
Tel: 01475 807 000 | Fax: 01475 807 022
Direct Repair Line: 01475 807 001
Email: info@oaktreeha.org.uk
www.oaktreeha.org.uk



TRY THIS

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