

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2019



WEST STEWART STREET NEWS

Exciting times! Outline plans have already been approved for the new office. The contract is back from tender and staff are excited about the next stage. We aim to be in situ around Summer 2020.

Our Value For Money Tenants Group met in the building in October to have a look at the shell. They are looking forward to helping to design the space. With support from Tony Kelly from TPAS (the tenant participation advisory service) they are looking at lots of issues for OTHA so that we can get it right for our tenants:

- what the new office public space should feel like. Should it be business like or more welcoming with drop in areas & facilities tenants can use in their own time?
- what self service options should there be?
- how do we meet the needs of different tenants - accessibility, people with children, communication needs?
- how we design the frontline services in the reception and back office areas?

We want all our tenants ideas to feed into the design. Let us know what you want to see. What do you like when you go to other reception areas? What should we avoid?

The group would love some new members or just to have more feedback to make sure we get it right. They are visiting landlords in Glasgow to see what is possible.

If you want to get involved or just pass on some views then contact Kate Dahlstrom on kdahlstrom@oaktreeha.org.uk or 07904969141 or post on Facebook/Twitter. Or just speak to any member of staff and they will pass on your views.

TAKE A LOOK INSIDE...

CUSTOMER CARE
PAGE 4

PLANNED & CYCLICAL
MAINTENANCE WORKS
PAGE 7

WEDNESDAY WALKABOUTS
PAGE 8

GAS SAFETY & SERVICE
PAGE 11

EMERGENCY REPAIR &
USEFUL NUMBERS
PAGE 12

STAFFING UPDATE
PAGE 15

Festive Period

OFFICE OPENING HOURS

Please note the OTHA office will close at 2:00pm on Tuesday 24th December 2019 and will re-open on Monday 6th January 2020 at 9:00am. In the event of an emergency please refer to the emergency numbers provided on **page 12**.



2019 AGM



The Association's AGM was held in the Tontine Hotel on Tuesday 13th August 2019 and was attended by 35 Members plus Guests.

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

Colin Campbell, the Association's Chairperson gave a detailed account of the year's activities and outlined the Association's busy programme for 2019/20.

RE:MARKABLE GOLD AWARD

Investors in People supports and challenges organisations to navigate and interpret the opportunities of doing business in the 21st century in innovative and creative ways; opportunities such as technology, succession planning, flexible working; and challenges such as ineffectual decision making, absenteeism, employee disengagement.

There are 4 levels of award:

STANDARD **SILVER** **GOLD** **PLATINUM** (top 1% of organisations)

Within each of these there are 4 levels of "Maturity" (Developed, Established, Advanced and High Performing). Each level is more progressive and challenging than the next.

OTHA seek to apply the Investors in People 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 Investors in People journey a number of years ago, achieving Silver accreditation in 2013 and during August 2016, the Association achieved Gold IIP Status. Following our full assessment review during September 2019 the Association are pleased to advise that we have retained our Gold level award status.

OAK TREE HOUSING ASSOCIATION'S ADAPTATION SERVICE

The Association would like to remind its tenants of the adaptation service it provides to support the housing needs of people with disabilities.

We work closely with the Inverclyde Centre for Independent Living (ICIL) who have trained Occupational Therapists (OT's) who can assess the particular needs of individuals to determine what adaptations are best suited to allow them to continue living in their home in the degree of comfort they would normally expect from modern day living.

If you have a disability and believe you might benefit from the Association's adaptation service or you know of a family member or a friend who might also benefit from an adaptation then please contact the ICIL on 01475 714350 to arrange for an OT to visit and assess requirements. If the OT considers an adaptation will be of benefit then he or she will make the necessary referral to the Association. The Association will then review the request and if appropriate, ensure the work is added to its adaptations programme and have the work carried out as soon as practicably possible. Subject to available funding, adaptations will be categorised in accordance with the OT's recommendations.

The following is a list of typical adaptations that can be undertaken to aid and assist individuals with their particular disabilities. This list is not exhaustive and other adaptations may be considered. It should however be noted that there are cases where it will not be appropriate for the Association to carry out or consent to an adaptation.

TYPICAL ADAPTATIONS WORK

- Over bath showers
- Level access showers
- Wet floor areas
- Handrails (internal and external)
- Access ramps
- Lever taps

RENT INCREASE

It's that time of year again when we start planning ahead. Setting the budget for 2020-21 involves deciding what resources we need to meet your expectations and deliver the service that you want. As always we will be consulting widely about what the possible rent increase will be and we are looking for suggestions about service improvements we could offer to you at different levels of increase.

Our Value for Money Tenants Group will have some good ideas. If you have any ideas or just pass on some views then contact Kate Dahlstrom on kdahlstrom@oaktreeha.org.uk or **07904969141** or post on Facebook/Twitter. Or just speak to any member of staff and they will pass on your views.

You will hear more on this in January when the main consultation will roll out.

CUSTOMER CARE

Target Area	Task Targets	Target Times (annual %)	Method of measuring performance	Performance Apr 19 – Jun 19
Answer incoming telephone calls	Within 20 seconds	100%	Export of data from telephone system	97.14%
Return telephone call	By end of next working day	100%	Checking complaints register and Customer Care survey for non-compliance	100%
Email response	5 working days	100%	As above	100%
Social Media response	5 working days	100%	Facebook inbox & comments	100%
Check new housing application, point and process	10 working days	100%	ICHR Housing Connections Software	100% (Average 2.2 days)
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%
Appointments kept/attended on time	Within 5 mins of agreed time	100%	Survey carried out twice per month (rotating days)	100%
Acknowledge or fully respond to a written enquiry*	5 working days	95%	Incoming mail register	86.0%
Behavioural code of Committee, Staff and Contractors/Agents	Adherence to Code	100%	Based on complaints received via Complaints Handling Procedure	100%
Behavioural code of Customers	Adherence to Code	100%	Managers reporting incidents	1 incident in office.

CUSTOMER CARE PRIZE DRAW WINNERS

Month	Name
June 2019	Name withheld
July 2019	J. Nugent
August 2019	R. Ellenwood
September 2019	Name withheld



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

ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT OCT 19

From 2019 all social landlords must submit to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) an Annual Assurance Statement providing assurance that their organisation complies with the relevant requirements of chapter 3 of the Regulatory Framework. This includes regulatory requirements that apply to all social landlords and the Standards of Governance and Financial Management that apply to Registered Social Landlords (RSLs).

The Statement should be made and submitted by the RSL's governing body. Each landlord should confirm in its Statement its compliance with all of the relevant requirements at section 3 of the Framework. Where a landlord does not fully comply, it should set out in the Statement how and when it will make the necessary improvements to ensure compliance. These assurance statements require to be submitted annually by the 31 October each year from 2019.

Below is the OTHA Annual Assurance Statement, for your information:

Annual Assurance Statement by the Governing Body of Oak Tree Housing Association Ltd – October 2019

- Gaining Assurance**
 - The evidence bank presented to the Governing Body combines reports, policies, advice and information which the Governing Body monitors and oversees on an ongoing basis throughout the year to provide continuous assurance that Oak Tree Housing Association (OTHA) and its Subsidiary Cloch Housing Association (CHA) is compliant. 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 and specialist advisers
 - Tenant Scrutiny reports and the outcomes from specific consultation
 - Data analysis about our tenants and customers
 - Benchmarking reports, advice and information from senior staff
 - Regular reports from CHA
 - Ongoing monitoring by the Joint Audit Committee
 - In reviewing the evidence and assessing compliance, we have taken account of good practice advice.
- Improvement Focus**
 - Both Associations completed the *toolkit* issued by the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations. This was populated with supporting evidence that we have been gathering over a number of years (most recently 2018-2019) and in assessing the evidence, we have adopted an improvement focus which has resulted in the creation of an Action Plan which we have begun to implement and will continue to progress during the course of the year. We have reviewed the identified actions in the improvement action plan and are satisfied that all are intended to deliver effective improvement and that none are material to our current compliance with the Framework.
- Basis of Assurance**
 - The Governing Body of Oak Tree Housing Association Ltd is satisfied that, to the best of our knowledge OTHA and our Subsidiary CHA are compliant with the requirements of Chapter Three of the Regulatory Framework and the Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management. We have gained this assurance from a review of a comprehensive bank of evidence and from our ongoing oversight and scrutiny of OTHA's affairs throughout the year (2018-19) and from CHA's quarterly oversight reports, own evidence bank and Assurance Statement provided to us, following approval from the CHA Board on 8th October 2019.
- Ongoing Monitoring**
 - We recognise 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 Governing Body at its meeting held on 28th October 2019 to sign and submit this Assurance Statement to the SHR.
 - Once submitted a copy of this Assurance Statement will be posted on our and CHA's website.

Signed: *Colin Campbell*
Chairperson

Date: 28th October 2019

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

OUR THREE DUTIES

Freedom of Information (FOI) laws will give you the right to receive information about the housing services we deliver to you as your landlord and apply to us from 11 November 2019.

FOI has three duties with which we must comply:

1. **The duty to publish.**
2. **The duty to provide advice and assistance.**
3. **The duty to respond to FOI requests.**

THE DUTY TO PUBLISH

FOI requires us to produce a publication scheme, which will set out the information we routinely publish and how it is published. It will also inform you if there is a charge for accessing the published information.

Most information in the publication scheme will be available on our website or the Scottish Housing Regulator's website. We will regularly review the publication scheme to ensure it – and the information contained within it – is up-to-date.

Before making an FOI request to us, please check the publication scheme to see if the information that you are looking for is already available to you.

The publication scheme is available on our website: www.oaktreeha.org.uk

THE DUTY TO PROVIDE ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

We have a duty to provide reasonable advice and assistance to persons who have made or are looking to make an FOI request to us.

We will try our best to ensure that you are able to access the information you are looking for, where possible.

As part of this, we will guide you on how to make a request to us, describe the process involved and stay in touch with you, so that you know how we are getting on with your request. We will also provide you with the information you are looking for in an alternative format, if appropriate to do so.

THE DUTY TO RESPOND TO FOI REQUESTS

In the last newsletter, we included an article on how to make an FOI request to us.

You may make an FOI request to any member of staff. Staff will forward your request to our Office Manager, who will log and acknowledge it and manage the process of responding to it.

While we will try our best to give you the information you are looking for (*if we have it*), we may sometimes need to withhold some information from you because an exemption applies e.g. if the information is confidential or commercially sensitive. We may also charge a fee for access to information, depending on how much time it takes to deal with your request.

PLANNED AND CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE WORKS

The Association's planned maintenance programme is well underway and good progress has been made to date. The contractors have been contacting tenants included in this year's planned maintenance programme to arrange installation dates, however, they are encountering some access issues. We do not wish tenants to miss out. So, if you have been contacted by the contractor, please confirm access availability to allow the programmed works to be undertaken.

Progress of Works up to October 31st:

Component	Total Completed up till 31st October 2019	Still to Complete
Door renewal	30	5
Window renewal	0	6
Central Heating	9	42
Kitchen	6	15
Bathroom	58	14

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM OUR CONTRACTORS

During the course of the works, the Association's Staff and Contractors should always adhere to the following behavioural principles 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 equalities policy;
- Be sensitive, patient and understanding when dealing with customers; and
- Never use foul or abusive language.

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM TENANTS

The success of the planned maintenance programme not only depends on the Association but also on the cooperation of the residents whose homes will be having works carried out. As such, the Association believe that it's reasonable to expect our customers to:

- Be polite, courteous, non-abusive and non-threatening 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; and
- Provide access when requested or make suitable alternative arrangements.

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

WEDNESDAY WALKABOUTS

This is now a regular feature of the Association's work and in June 2019 staff carried out their estate walkabouts and spoke to as many tenants as they could.

In previous years a survey form has been completed, however the format this year was more informal. A full scale Tenants Satisfaction Survey had been carried out a few months before and in 2018 we carried out a number of different surveys with residents so we were very aware that "survey fatigue" can set in. Feedback was verbal and any comments or complaints were passed on.

A flyer was sent in advance to the residents to let them know that the walkabout will be taking place and a reminder text was sent a few days before. If the event was cancelled or post poned then a text was sent. Staff spoke to a number of residents on their walkabouts and also took photos for the garden competition.

The purpose of the walkabouts is:

- Identification of estate issues
- Discussing service issues through discussion on recent contact with OTHA.
- Contact with people who don't usually engage with OTHA
- Garden competition shortlisting takes place at the same time so helps to improve garden maintenance and pride in the estate

On the whole the feedback was very positive.

GARDEN COMPETITION

Shortlisted gardens were put forward by the staff carrying out the Walkabouts and winners were chosen by the Housing Manager with the overall winner being voted on by staff.

Due to the timing of the AGM and a previous suggestion from a Committee member, the winners were invited to attend the AGM and were presented with their prizes. There were lots of lovely gardens to choose from and it is a pleasurable way to engage with tenants and show off the gardens. Here are a selection of the gardens and well done to everyone.



SUNFLOWER SUMMER

This was an idea put forward by staff. Sunflower seeds were donated by Dobbies Garden Centre and some were purchased. We used Facebook and text messaging to offer sunflower seeds to tenants. We also promoted it at other events such as the Dogs trust event in March 2019.

Staff also handed out packets of seeds to tenants when they were out and about on visits.

Staff also took part and grew seeds in little pots in the office. They were transplanted into the garden at the new office. Unfortunately because we haven't yet moved in, it was difficult to tend the plants and most of them fell over!! The idea was two-fold, to encourage tenants to grow colourful flowers in their garden or backcourt but also as a way of us engaging with tenants in a fun way.

We posted regular updates on Facebook, took photos of the progress of the staff and tenants' flowers and awarded a tallest sunflower accolade for tenants and staff. It attracted a lot of Facebook likes and comments and this is something we want to repeat next year but make it bigger and better!

Here are some photos showing progress or otherwise.





REMINDERS REGARDING THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH LEGIONELLA & ASBESTOS

PRECAUTIONS AGAINST LEGIONELLA

The risk of contracting legionella in the domestic home is minimal. There are, however, some simple steps that you should take to avoid this happening.

- You should turn your shower on at least once a week or more.
- You should make sure that you dismantle, clean and descale your showerheads and shower hoses at least once every 3 months or earlier if scaling is evident.

PRECAUTIONS REGARDING ASBESTOS

Properties built after the mid-1980s are very unlikely to contain asbestos in the fabric of the building and properties built or refurbished after the 1990s are extremely unlikely to contain asbestos anywhere in the building. Asbestos cement, however, had been widely used as a cladding material and it can still be found in garages and sheds. Asbestos fibres are often present in the air and it is very unlikely that the levels of asbestos fibres in a domestic home will be harmful, particularly given that asbestos materials in good condition do not usually pose a danger if they are not disturbed or damaged.

- If any of our maintenance contractor's suspect there is asbestos in your home, they will contact the Association to seek further advice before they take any action. If you do have asbestos materials in your home, extra care will be taken to ensure the release of fibres does not present a danger to you. If asbestos is discovered you should refrain from carrying out DIY work where drilling or disturbance of the asbestos is required. Remember asbestos is not usually dangerous if it is not disturbed or damaged.
- Some small jobs can be undertaken if the right precautions are taken. Our information leaflet on asbestos gives advice on asbestos and this should be consulted before any work is undertaken. This leaflet can be obtained from the reception area of the Association's office at High Street.

REMOVING DOORS WHEN LAYING NEW FLOOR COVERINGS

The Association would like to remind our tenants that if you are replacing floor coverings within your home, then it would be your responsibility to arrange for your contractor to rehang and trim the doors should this be required.

We have noted an upturn in tenants reporting that following these works that they are unable to open and close their doors easily and are requesting that the Association trim the doors.

Unfortunately, this is not deemed a repair and, therefore, is not included within the Association's repair service.



GAS SAFETY & SERVICE

Aside from the day-to-day repairs to your home 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.

Gas Safety does go beyond just ensuring that we carry out an annual check. To ensure we have confidence that our contractors are carrying the correct checks and servicing we employ an independent assessor to carry out audits on the contractors work.

From time to time you may receive a letter from a company called **Argon Technical Services**. They will request an appointment to visit your home to carry out an audit of the most recent service and safety check that was carried out in your home. There is no obligation on any tenant to agree to this however we encourage all tenants to assist in cooperating with these requests as part of our commitment to ensuring these crucial works are being done correctly. Argon select properties completely at random for these visits but if you have any questions regarding these requests then please contact our **Repair Line on 01475 807001**.



INVERCLYDE COMMON HOUSING REGISTER ENHANCED SERVICE

From Monday 2nd September 2019 the ICHR changed slightly in order to offer an enhanced service to customers. Applicants can access this service at any of our partner landlords' offices at Cloch, Oak Tree and Larkfield Housing Associations. The dedicated staff team will be available at Cloch and Oak Tree Housing Associations and can be contacted on our direct dial number, **01475 807011** and e-mail address **info@inverclydechr.org.uk**

The service will operate at Oak Tree Housing Association on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesday morning and at Cloch Housing Association on Wednesday afternoon, Thursday and Friday. Any applicants requiring support to complete or update an application should contact the ICHR team and we can advise you of the available options.



REPORTING REPAIRS

From time to time the Association will consult and seek feedback from tenants regarding various issues for example your views on your property when we are considering our planned maintenance programme for the following year or the annual rent increase.

Your views are important to us. We welcome and value your feedback. However, increasingly we are finding that tenants are recording repairs required to their homes on the returned survey forms.

We would ask that should you have a repair to please report this to the Association's repair line which is 01475 807001 or in person by visiting our office.

You are also able to report repairs via our new Customer Portal and if you have not registered please contact the Association and we will help you register. The customer portal also allows you to check your rent balance and make other changes to your account such as who is staying in your home with you.

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:	Mitie Property Services Ltd: 0330 678 1247
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

GO SMOKE-FREE

Want to stop smoking? Visit: www.quityourway.scot for support.

STOP SMOKING

Stopping smoking is the single most important thing a smoker can do to improve their health and will immediately reduce risk of heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis and dementia. In addition a 20-a-day smoker paying £7.50 a packet will save over £2700 a year. Many thousands of Scots stop smoking for good every year, often without any support. Many suffer a number of "failed" attempts but stick with it and eventually succeed.

If you would like some help then NHS Stop Smoking Services can really boost your chance of success. Support is free and available online, by phone and at centres across the country. For more information visit: www.nhsinform.scot

Tobacco smoke is harmful, particularly to children. It spreads through the house and can linger in the air for hours, so that the only way to really protect your family is to make your home completely smoke-free.

For more information visit: www.ashscotland.org.uk/go-smoke-free/smoke-free-homes

FROST ALERT



KEEP YOUR HOUSE WARM

- This will help to avoid burst pipes and damage to your home and your neighbours.
- Remember that the pipes in a flat may supply water to your neighbours.
- In very cold weather, keep the heating on overnight at a low temperature.

PROTECT YOUR HOME

- Report any leaks at taps or valves to us as soon as possible. Dripping water increases the risk of freezing.
- Reduce draughts by fitting draught excluders to your doors and windows.
- Make sure you have adequate contents insurance.
- Look out for your neighbours, especially the frail, elderly and vulnerable.
- Ask us if you don't know where your water mains stop valve is.

IF YOUR PIPES BECOME FROZEN

- Turn off the water at the main water stop valve.
- Open all cold taps to drain the system.
- Do not open the hot taps.
- Turn off the central heating or immersion heater.
- Collect water in the bath for washing and wc flushing.
- Contact the Association's Emergency Repairs Service.

IF YOU HAVE A BURST PIPE

- Turn off the water at the mains water stop valve.
- Switch off the electricity at the mains.
- Switch off any water heater.
- Turn off the central heating system.
- Open all taps to drain your system.
- Collect water in your bath for washing and wc flushing.
- Warn neighbours who may suffer damage.
- Contact the Association's Emergency Repairs Service.

HOW TO DEFROST A FROZEN CENTRAL HEATING CONDENSATE PIPE

In the very cold weather, some condensate pipes freeze and the boiler can stop working. If you feel sufficiently confident to know that your boiler condensate pipe has frozen, and you can reach it, you can defrost the pipe by wrapping hot towels or hot water bottles around the pipe. Contact us if you are unsure how to do this.

GOING ON HOLIDAY OVER THE WINTER 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.

OAK TREE STAFF TEAM AWAY DAY

Some photographs from the Away Day held in September at Kelburn Country Centre



VEGAN SHEPHERD'S PIE

Ingredients:

- 1.2kg floury potatoes, such as Maris Piper or King Edward
- 50ml vegetable oil
- 30g dried porcini mushrooms, soaked in hot water for 15 minutes, then drained (reserve the liquid)
- 2 large leeks, chopped
- 2 small onions, chopped
- 4 medium carrots (about 300g), cut into small cubes
- 1 vegetable stock cube (make sure it's vegan – we used Kallo)
- 3 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2 tbsp tomato purée
- 2 tsp smoked paprika
- 1 small butternut squash, peeled and cut into small cubes
- ½ small pack marjoram or oregano, leaves picked and roughly chopped

- ½ small pack thyme, leaves picked
- ½ small pack sage, leaves picked and roughly chopped
- 4 celery sticks, chopped
- 400g can chickpeas
- 300g frozen peas
- 300g frozen spinach
- 20ml olive oil
- Small pack flat-leaf parsley, chopped
- Tomato ketchup, to serve (optional)

Method

1. Put the unpeeled potatoes in a large saucepan, cover with water, bring to the boil and simmer for 40 minutes until the skins start to split. Drain and leave to cool a little.
2. Meanwhile, heat the vegetable oil in a large heavy-based sauté pan or flameproof casserole dish. Add the mushrooms, leeks, onions, carrots and the stock cube and cook gently for 5 minutes, stirring every so often. If it starts to stick, reduce the heat and stir more frequently, scraping the bits from the bottom. The veg should be soft but not mushy.
3. Add the garlic, tomato purée, paprika, squash and herbs. Stir and turn the heat up a bit, cook for 3 minutes, add the celery, then stir and cook for a few more minutes.
4. Tip in the chickpeas along with the water in the can and reserved mushroom stock. Add the peas and spinach and stir well. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, then season, turn off and set aside. There should still be plenty of liquid and the veg should be bright and a little firm.
5. Peel the potatoes and discard the skin. Mash 200g with a fork and stir into the veg. Break the rest of the potatoes into chunks, mix with the olive oil and parsley and season.
6. Divide the filling into the pie dishes and top with the potatoes. Heat oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5 and bake the pies for 40-45 minutes, until the top is golden and the filling is heated through. If making individual pies, check after 20 minutes. Best served with tomato ketchup – as all great shepherd's pies are.

STAFFING NEWS

Oak Tree extend a very warm welcome to:



Andy MacDonald
Maintenance Officer



Kes Cameron
Finance Manager



Catherine Scott
Housing Administration Assistant

Welcome back to:



Karis McAlinden
Repairs Assistant who recently returned from maternity leave.



Claire McCloone
Housing Assistant who also recently returned from maternity leave.

Good luck and farewell to:

Bill Anderson
Clerk of Works

Tracey Dargan
Senior ICHR Officer

CONTACT US

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO CONTACT US

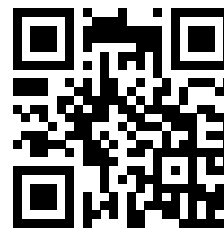
Phone No: 01475 807000 (General Enquiries)
01475 807001 (Repair Line)
Email: info@oaktreeha.org.uk
Website: www.oaktreeha.org.uk
Text: 07866 555 538
Twitter: @OakTreeHA

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

Website



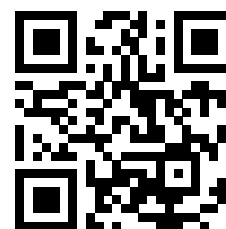
www.oaktreeha.org.uk

Facebook



[OakTreeHA](https://www.facebook.com/OakTreeHA)

Twitter



[@OakTreeHA](https://twitter.com/OakTreeHA)

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 2020/2021

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

Good Friday	Friday 10th April 2020
Easter Monday	Monday 13th April 2020
VE Day Anniversary	Friday 8th May 2020
Queen's Birthday Holiday	Friday 22nd May 2020
May Weekend	Monday 25th May 2020
Greenock Fair	Friday 3rd July 2020 Monday 6th July 2020
September Weekend	Friday 4th September 2020 Monday 7th September 2020
Christmas	Friday 25th December 2020 Monday 28th December 2020 Tuesday 29th December 2020
New Year	Friday 1st January 2021 Monday 4th January 2021 Tuesday 5th January 2021