

OUTCOMES

40 West Stewart Street | Greenock | PA15 1SH
Tel: 01475 807 000 | Direct Repair Line: 01475 807001
Email: info@oaktreeha.org.uk | www.oaktreeha.org.uk



This report tells you how Oak Tree HA has done in meeting some of the outcomes and standards laid out in the Scottish Social Housing Charter and reported to the Scottish Housing Regulator in our Annual Return on the Charter (ARC). All the facts given are for the year ending 31 March 2024.

We continue to report in our standard format following consultation with our tenants in 2022 whereby the feedback was that tenants were happy with the current design.

Overview of 2023-24

- At the end of the year, we owned 1875 rented homes and a stake in 88 shared ownership homes. From the 1875 properties 27 were leased to other housing provider's for temporary or supported accommodation.
- In January 2023 we completed our demolition project in Maple Road and all tenants who resided in those blocks were successfully rehoused by us.
- We own 3 offices & 3 shops. We purchased our new offices in West Stewart Street in 2018 and they have now been refurbished to provide new office facilities. We have let a section of the building to the Financial Fitness Team, and they provide welfare benefit services from within our building.
- During 2023-24 we used the increased space to offer opportunities for tenants and other service areas to come in and meet staff on issues of interest. This included carrying out various consultations and conversation cafes.
- We employed 38.8 staff members and had 11 voluntary members on our management committee (capacity for 15 members). 6.72% of days were lost through staff sickness absence in the reporting year.





KEY FACTS

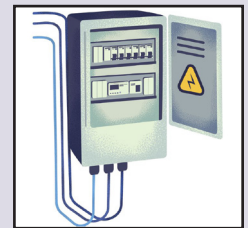
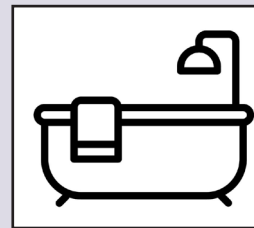
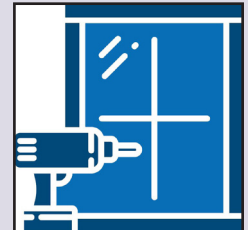
We spent £984,188 on planned maintenance where work included:

- Window replacement 2022/23 programme
- Bathroom replacement 2022/23 programme
- Kitchen, heating and door renewal contract 2023/24 programme
- Common electrics in various closes



We spent £661,790 on cyclical maintenance where work included:

- Landscaping for common back courts and open space maintenance
- Decoration for common properties 2023/24 programme
- Decoration for common properties 2022/23 programme
- Close carpets in various closes
- Gutter cleaning contract
- Roof anchor inspections
- Communal Fire Risk Assessments in various closes
- Electrical testing in tenants' homes
- Communal Fan Servicing
- Annual Gas Servicing



We carried out 7,489 repairs in the year. There has been an increase in 13% more repairs being reported when compared to the previous year. We also raised a further 961 non repairs i.e. rotate bins and close cleaning.

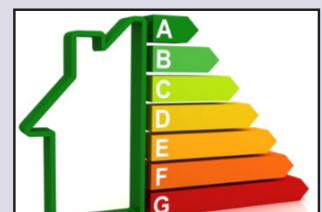
For emergency repairs our target is 4 hours. On average, it took 2.3 hours to complete emergency repairs. Our performance in this area improved from last year where it was 2.9 hours. The Scottish average was 3.96 hours.

For non-emergency repairs, our target is between 2-7 working days. We achieved an average of 7 days. Again, we have performed better in comparison to last year which was 7.9 days. The Scottish average was 8.95 days.

For non-emergency repairs, 4,639 (87%) were completed "right first time" out of a possible 5,331 repairs. Our performance has improved slightly in this area, although, we are still not back to pre-pandemic levels due to the length of time taking to complete some non-emergency repairs jobs. The Scottish average was 88.41%.

We continue to work towards achieving the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH).

- As of 31st March 2024, 1,841 of the Association's properties fell within the scope of EESH.
- 1,782 of these properties currently meet the standard.
- 59 properties do not meet the standard.



Work and investment will continue to take place over the next few years to ensure the remaining 59 properties meet the standard.

1,838 of the Association's properties fell within the scope of SHQS.

- 1,543 of these properties met the standard
- 52 properties are exempt from the standard
- 25 properties are in abeyance (tenant access issues)
- 21 properties do not meet the standard

The properties that currently do not meet the standard are due to restricted kitchen spaces not being able to accommodate additional storage units.

All properties with boilers were serviced for their annual gas safety inspections prior to the current certificate expiring.

We carry out adaptations to tenants' homes to help them live independently. During the year, we carried out 86 adaptations and spent £99,000. We completed them in 189 days on average. This was on a par with last year's performance. We had 49 people waiting for adaptations at the end of the year.

Tenant satisfaction with the repairs service was 81.8%.



Room for Improvement

Our Contractor Framework commenced last October, and we are finding improvements in several areas such as improved repairs timescales and less complaints being received in relation to the standard and quality of works carried out.

Our performance targets have improved since last year and work is ongoing with our contractors to ensure that this momentum continues in the right direction.

Looking after your neighbourhood

What we do

We recognise that the quality of the area around your home is important. Even small problems can spoil your enjoyment of your home. We handle your complaints to try and resolve any problems. We will keep a complaint case open until it is sorted and check with you to see how happy you are with the outcome. The association continues to work with the dedicated services to help deal with anti-social behaviour in Inverclyde including the Police which also involves weekly partnership meetings, the community wardens, and the ASIST team (Anti-social Behaviour Investigation Team).



KEY FACTS

Our Housing Services team carry out regular close and estate inspections. This is an important part of our work as it allows us to pick up common repairs and estate management issues and ensures that our common areas are well maintained.

233 cases of anti-social behaviour were reported and 230 of these were resolved during the year, which was 98.7%. Some cases were carried into the next year and were resolved within timescales. The Scottish average was 94.3%.

The Association obtained 8 Decrees of Eviction in the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. Of the 8 obtained, 6 were enforced and 2 were abandoned prior to eviction. The 8 enforcements in 2023–24 were for rent arrears and breach of tenancy.

7 tenancies ended as a result of abandonments.

Our tenancy sustainment slightly decreased this year from 95% to 93.6% the reduction was due to the Ukrainian Resettlement Project. A few families ended their tenancy quite quickly after their date of entry as they weren't settled in Inverclyde. However, this is an area that we have been working hard on to try and give support to keep people happy in their tenancies and we will continue to do this. The Scottish Average is 94.48%.

What you said

We carried out our regular full scale Tenants Satisfaction Survey between September and December 2021. The survey was carried out by telephone rather than the usual face to face method and we received responses from around 50% of our tenants. 85.5% of tenants were satisfied or very satisfied with OTHA's overall service. This is lower than the 2018 result of 92.2%. The Association is currently carrying out a joint Tenant Satisfaction Survey with Larkfield Housing Association and these results will be shared early next year. The Scottish average is 86.7%.



Room for Improvement

Although the number of evictions increased from 2 to 8 this year 6 of those were due to breaches of tenancy and the remaining 2 were for rent arrears. The number of properties abandoned remained the same at 7. It was agreed to extend the shared tenancy support services with Larkfield Housing Association for a further year. These services are provided by Linkliving. The dedicated Tenancy Support Officer provides 15 hours of support per week to support our tenants who may be struggling with their tenancy and potentially be at risk of their tenancy failing or abandoning their property.

In September 2024 we employed a Community Engagement Officer initially for a 1 year secondment. The principle aims of their appointment will be to deliver Oak Tree's community investment strategy, the customer engagement calendar, to be customer focused and to improve overall customer satisfaction with Oak Tree's services. They will also modernise and evolve the way we engage with our customers and to involve customers in co-created solutions.

The Community Engagement Officer will be working to create engagement groups, such as a Customer Focus Group, wider community partner engagement and will host some of our conversation cafes. In addition, they will have the opportunity to develop new ways of working and engaging with new audiences.

In addition, we support Wider Action projects to provide a wide range of services to our tenants to help them remain in their tenancies. We continue to support the following Wider Action projects:-

- Welfare Advice through the Financial Fitness team
- Tenancy Sustainment through Linkliving
- New Tenant Support through Starter Packs Inverclyde

We were able source funding to purchase energy efficiency appliances, offer fuel and food vouchers. We also worked with other local RSLs to apply for grants and funding that directly helped people in need at a very difficult time with their energy costs.

Delivering Value

The past year continued to bring huge challenges for our tenants, our staff and our overall service delivery. The number of tenants claiming Universal Credit continued to increase steadily and 870 tenants (47%) were in receipt of this benefit at 31 March 2024.



KEY FACTS

- The total rent & service charges due to be collected in the year was £9,233,641.
- Rent arrears owed to OTHA by current and former arrears at the end of March 2024 were, £277,164 an increase from £255,821 last year.
- The arrears were 2.87% of rent due for reporting year which is lower from 2.98%. The Scottish average was 6.74%, a decrease from 6.86%.
- There were 2 evictions due to tenants not paying their rent.
- £21,651 of former tenant rent arrears was written off at the year-end, compared to £35,792 the previous year.
- £169,412 of rent due was lost through lettable properties being empty during the last year. This was down from £183,690 last year.
- Our turnover of properties in the year was 8.91%, a decrease from 10.23% last year. The Scottish average was 7.18%.
- We relet our empty properties in an average of 69.47 days, which is down from 87.75 days last year. The Scottish average was 55.73 days.
- The OTHA average rent increase in March 2024 was 6.1%. OTHA generally has lower rents than the other local housing associations. All the local RSLs are higher than the Scottish average with a small number of exceptions.

Average weekly rents & service charges* for different sized properties

Landlord Name	1 Apt	2 Apt	3 Apt	4 Apt	5+ Apt
Oak Tree HA Ltd	£72.54	£89.16	£98.05	£109.50	£122.08
Cloch HA Ltd	£87.04	£93.12	£102.90	£113.99	£128.16
Larkfield HA Ltd	n/a	£72.29	£100.08	£115.56	£130.80
River Clyde Homes	£86.15	£95.57	£101.27	£109.55	£115.91
Scottish Average All RSLs	£82.24	£87.87	£90.29	£98.30	£108.29

*OTHA charges monthly rents, but the Scottish Housing Regulator bases their comparison on what the monthly rent would be if charged weekly.

In 2018, tenants' satisfaction with the rent as value for money was 80.2% and this reduced to 78% in 2021. The Scottish average this year was 81.6%.

The next tenant's satisfaction is currently underway and will be completed in December 2024.

Delivering Value



Room for Improvement

We continue to provide an enhanced void standard and market our properties well. There are challenges in Inverclyde due to de-population. We are continually looking at different ways to attract and retain tenants by providing the best service we can. With the employment of a Community Engagement Officer, we will be looking to create a customer focused group and look to include our customers in variety of community initiatives.

The rise in the cost of living, inflation and energy costs are still causing difficulties for our tenants. There are going to be huge challenges ahead if we want to continue to have low rents (comparative to other RSLs) and maintain a high level of service. This will be a key priority for the Association in the coming year and all departments will have a role to play in managing the future of the Association.

Oak Tree Housing Association continue to work in partnership with:



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01475 807000



info@oaktree.org.uk



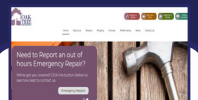
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