

# Newsletter

Summer 2024



## Voluntary Board Members

**The Association is keen to continue to recruit members for our Management Committee.**

**If you are interested, please contact Nick Jardine on 01475 807000 for an informal chat/recruitment pack.**

## Conversation Cafe Invite

We would like to invite you along to our Conversation Café (previously known as our Consultation Café), for afternoon tea, on Wednesday 31st July 2024 from 2pm – 4pm. The event will be held in our office at 40 West Stewart Street, Greenock.

The Conversation Café will feature this year's planned maintenance programme, as well as information on next year's indicative programme, subject to tender costs.

There will also be a "Tesco Voucher" prize draw for those attending.

This is likely to be a popular event therefore if you could please let us know in advance if you will be attending,

by giving us a call on 01475 807000 or email us at [info@oaktreeha.org.uk](mailto:info@oaktreeha.org.uk). If you need assistance with transport, please let us know and we will try our best to help.

If you would like to know more about our Planned Maintenance Programme but are unable to attend the session in-person, please let us know and you could join us remotely via Zoom.



## Shareholding Members – A Date for your Diary

The Associations Annual General Meeting will take place at 7.00pm on Tuesday 13th August 2024 at the TONTINE HOTEL, Union Street, Greenock. All Shareholding Members will be invited to attend the AGM.

*Stay in Touch*



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



FACEBOOK  
QR Code



TWITTER  
QR Code



01475 807000



[info@oaktreeha.org.uk](mailto:info@oaktreeha.org.uk)



Oak Tree  
Housing Association



@OakTreeHA



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



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



3. To work with partners to enhance our effectiveness.
4. To develop a skilled, professional and committed staff team.
5. To embed an innovative and forward-thinking culture.
6. To safeguard our future viability and sustainability.



**Our Values** (*Shared ethos that is part of OTHA's culture and that guides policy, action, and behaviour on the part of all the Management Committee and staff members*).

Our approach to delivering the 6 objectives above, is driven by our values. These are:

## Leadership

Accepting accountability and balancing vision with execution, leading by example and encouraging and developing the staff team to be the best they can be.



## Customer Focus

When developing and providing our services, our tenants' and other customers' needs come first.



## Team working

By working together we develop our flexibility and resilience to ensure we provide a best value service to our tenants and customers.



## Communication

Our communication is effective, accurate, up-to-date and easy to understand.



## Respect

We treat our tenants, other customers and each other with respect and dignity at all times.



## Integrity

Openness, honesty, transparency and trust are at the core of all that we do.

We have identified 9 inter-connecting, strategic priorities for the next 3 years. We set these out below:

1. Quality of our homes
2. Tenancy sustainability
3. Wider Action
4. Wellbeing
5. Organisational culture
6. Governance
7. Value for Money
8. Communication
9. Preparing for Growth

**For more information on our Business Plan, please contact the office on 01475 807000.**

# Customer Care Charter Consultation

A huge thank you to everyone who took part in our Customer Care Consultation in April 2024 to give us your feedback and excellent engagement rate!

The Customer Care Charter defines how OTHA deliver its customer service and the standards that applies to each element of that service. The Customer Care standards are clearly set out, with performance reports being presented quarterly to the Management Committee on how the targets applied to these standards are being met. The standards, targets and performance rates are published in our quarterly newsletters. The Customer Care Charter is reviewed on a 3 yearly cycle.

The review focused on the following: -

- Establishing satisfaction levels.
- Identify any potential gaps.
- Ensuring that our methods of communication remain relevant.
- Identify any technological enhancements to service standards which could be included.

We reached out to you in many different ways which included, email, text, mail, Oak Tree website, social media, Consultation Café, in person where possible and by phone. We were delighted with the number of responses received and the time you took to make comments, which we have listened to and are considering for the future.

The consultation period remained open for two weeks and attracted a 24% response rate. The comprehensive consultation covered eight principal areas: -

Preferred Method of Contact / Telephone Contact / Customer Care Charter / Our Communications to you / Services / Customer Care / Oak Tree Staff / Consultation Café

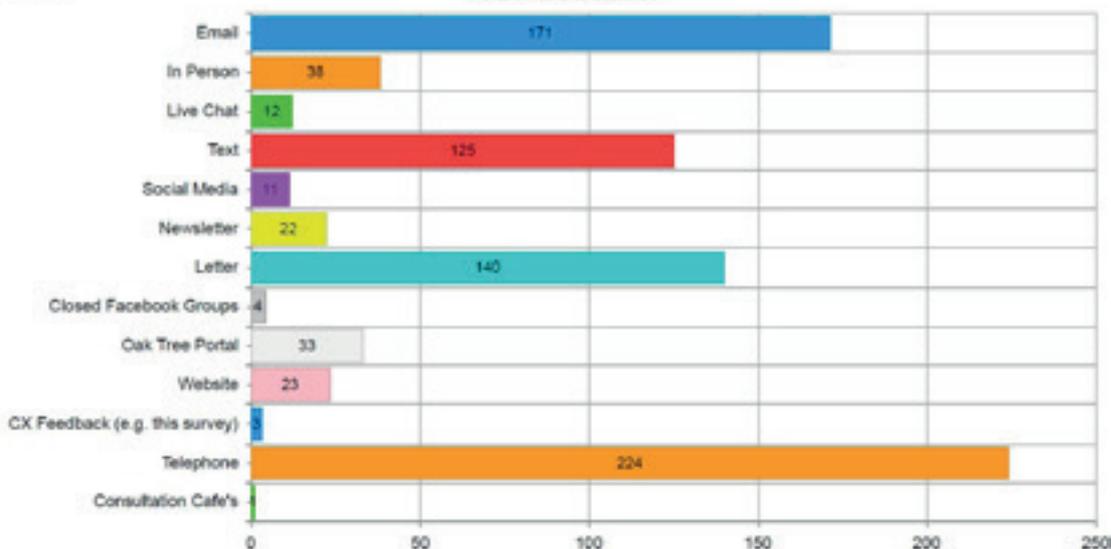
## Here are some of the headline results.

1

We offer a variety of ways for you to contact us. It is important to us that we offer methods which satisfy **your** needs. Please let us know your preferred method of contact.

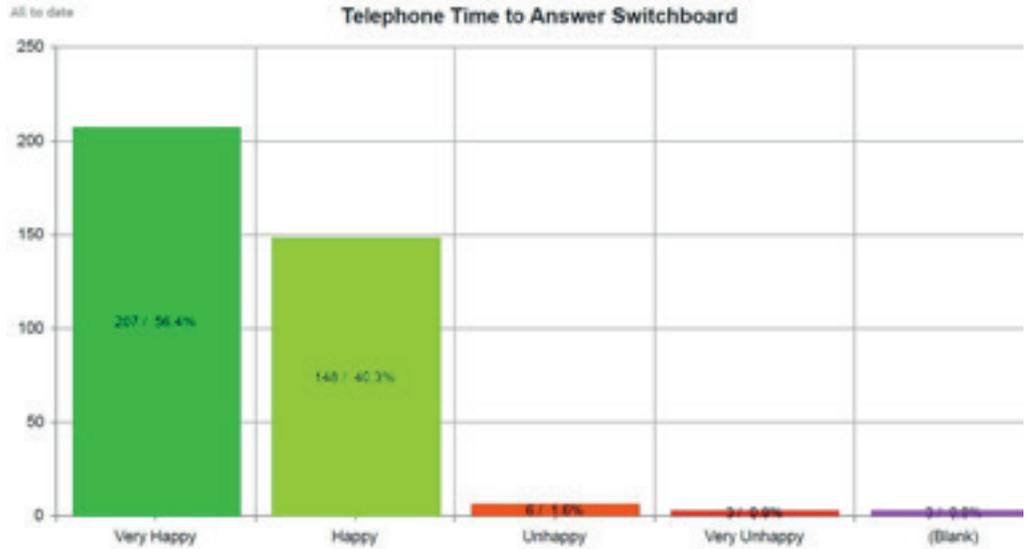
All to date

### Preferred Contact

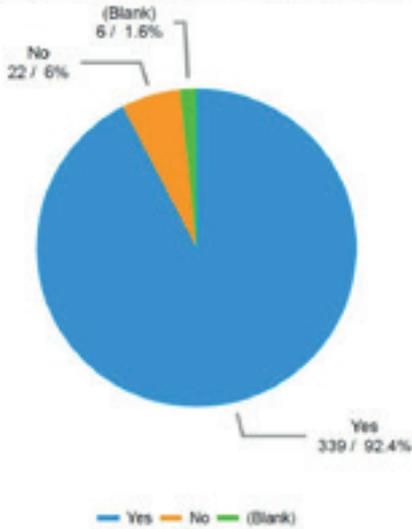


2

If you contact us by telephone (during office hours), how satisfied are you with the length of time taken to answer your calls (our target is to answer within 20 seconds).



Did we transfer your call to the relevant staff member or their voicemail



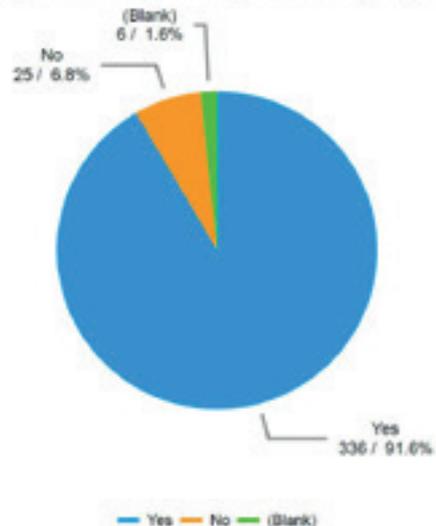
3

The Association's Customer Care Charter explains what you can expect from our services. A selection of these elements are listed below. Could you please tell us, **if you contacted us** in the last 12 months, did we meet your expectations of our customer service by transferring your call to the relevant staff member or their voicemail?

4

Did we treat you with respect and provide a high-quality service?

Did we treat you with respect and provide a high quality service?



5

We also asked what the most important aspect of customer care to you is. Some of the responses received were: –

- Being listened to and heard.
- Listening and acting.
- Listening to what the tenants' needs are.
- Courtesy and respect.
- Good communication and understanding.
- Prompt friendly service.
- Speedy resolutions to problems.
- Understanding what the customer needs.
- Staff being able to help, in my opinion Oak Tree do care about their tenants.
- Feedback.
- Courtesy, respect, and a timely solution to problems.
- Being listened to and providing the best service available.
- Listening being empathetic and understanding which I have always received.
- Repairs are dealt with quickly.

There was a common theme from your responses highlighting the importance of listening and feedback.

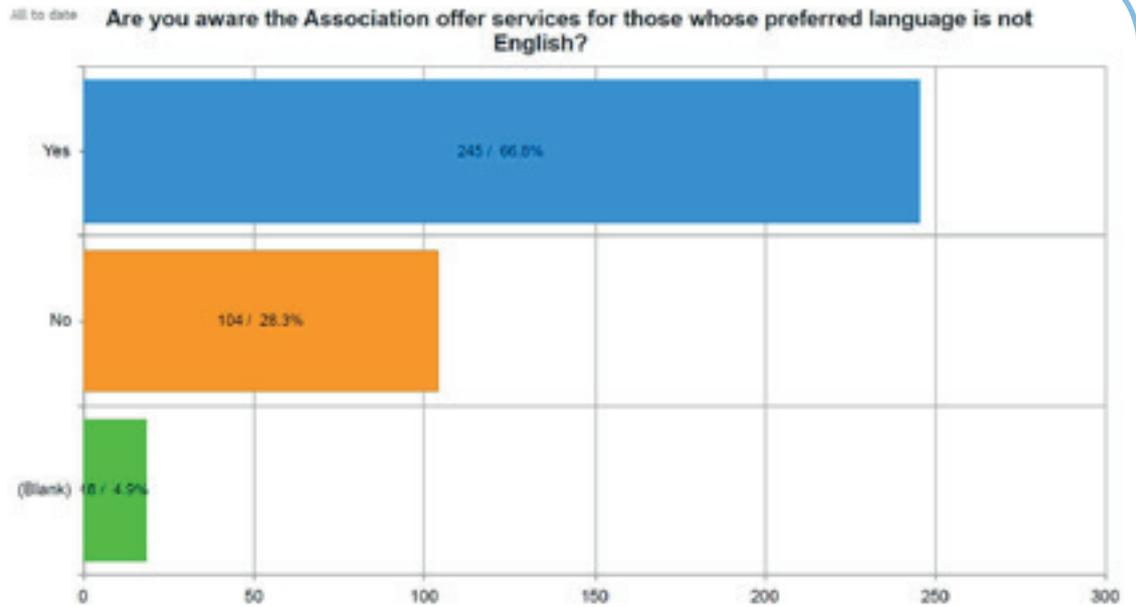
## Outcome

The reviewed Customer Care Charter, which was presented to our Management Committee for their consideration, has been updated and our service standards now include: –

- Use a range of non-digital and digital communications in accessible formats that meet individual needs.
- Make it easy for tenants and other customers to make complaints and provide feedback on services.
- Listen to your views and feedback to improve services and performance.
- Let you know what we have done in response to complaints and feedback.

The consultation also highlighted areas where areas of work are required: -

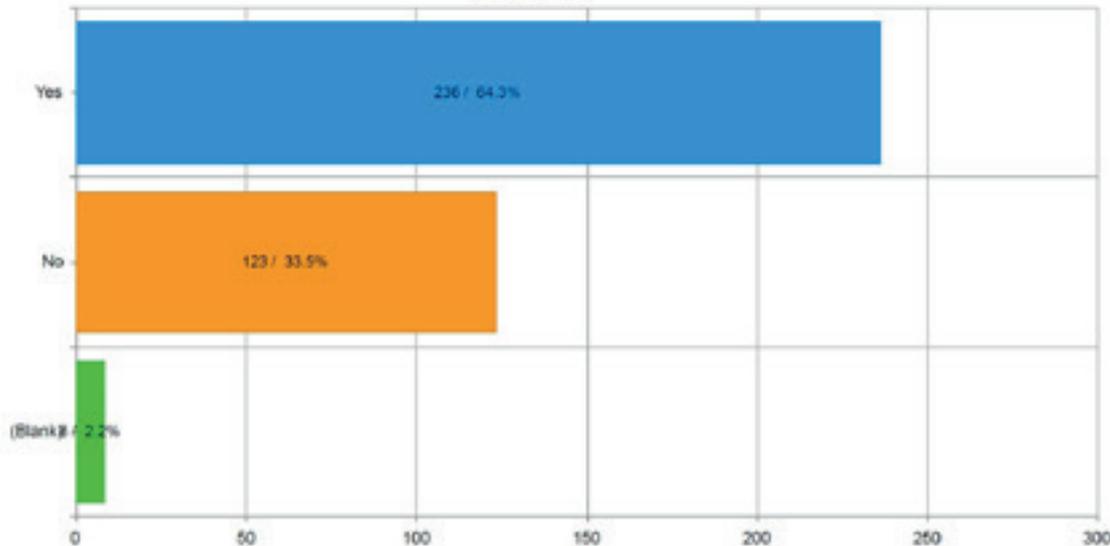
**6** Are you aware the Association offer services for those whose preferred language is not English?



Almost 30% of customers who took part in the consultation exercise are not aware that OTHA offer services for customers whose preferred language is not English.

All to date

Are you aware the Association offer services for those unable to attend office due to medical condition?



**7** Are you aware the Association offer services for those who cannot attend the office as a result of a medical condition?

34% of customers are not aware that we offer services for those unable to attend the office due to a medical condition.

## Outcome

A promotional campaign to raise awareness is currently being scheduled and will include information on our website, social pages, posters in reception and text messaging.

**Thanks again to those who took part, it's appreciated and helps us to help you.**

## Customer Care Statistics

Performance Within Quarter 4

### Target Area

Performance in Quarter 4

#### Answer incoming telephone calls

Target - to answer all incoming telephone calls within 20 seconds, monitored through the export of data from our telephone system.

95.9 %

#### Email response

Target - to reply to all emailed correspondence within 5 working days, monitored through checking complaints register and customer care surveys.

100 %

#### Time to wait for an appointment to see specific member of staff

Target - 95% same or next working day, monitored through survey carried out twice per month (rotating days).

No Survey carried out

#### Acknowledge or fully respond to a written enquiry

Target - 100% within 5 working days, monitored through our incoming mail register.

97.5 %

#### Behavioural code of Customers

Target - 100% adherence to code, monitored through Managers reporting any incidents.

2 incidents

### Target Area

Performance in Quarter 4

#### Return telephone call

Target - to return all telephone calls by the end of the next working day, monitored through checking complaints register and customer care surveys.

100 %

#### Social Media reponse

Target - to reply to all messages within 5 working days, monitored through checking Facebook inbox and comments.

100 %

#### Appointments kept/attended on time

Target - to see all visitors within 5 mins of agreed time, monitored through survey carried out twice per month (rotating days).

No Survey carried out

#### Behavioural code of Committee, Staff and Contractors/Agents

Target - 100% adherence to code, monitored through any complaints received via our complaints handling procedure.

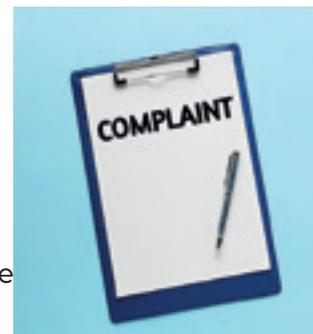
2 incidents

# Complaints and Compliments Round Up 2023-24

This article tells you about the type of issues that have been raised and dealt with under the Complaints Procedure for OTHA. This covers how we handle and report on complaints about service.

Complaints are used to improve our service. We welcome your feedback and your comments, compliments and complaints are used to make sure our service meets the needs of our tenants, factored owners and other customers.

The table below shows the outcomes of complaints received in the year by complaint type and service.



Outcome	SPSO stage 1	SPSO stage 2	Stage 1 escalated to Stage 2	Grand Total
Not applicable	1	0	0	1
Not upheld	26	2	7	35
Partially Upheld	10	1	5	16
Resolved	18			18
Upheld – Contractor service failure	25	0	1	26
Upheld – OTHA service failure	0	0	0	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>96</b>

## Main Themes Arising During the Year

The themes have varied during the year as seasonal or workload factors affected reporting. The key themes have been:

- Teething problems with our interim out of hours service being provided by a contractor where call handlers were unaware that Oak Tree was a client thus rejecting tenants' calls. This was in a period when there had been a high turnover of staff thus leading to gaps in the service being provided.
- Length of time waiting for boiler replacements parts.
- Tenants unhappy with some common areas and the condition of their private garden areas.
- Frustration experienced when the source of external water ingress is difficult to determine in some difficult cases.
- Anti social behaviour.
- Tenants unclear on information provided on rent statement letters.
- Complaints regarding members of staff.
- Tenants escalating complaints to Stage 2 when not upheld in their favour at Stage 1 (majority were still not upheld as policies and procedures followed).

## Compliments

We also recorded positive feedback, 33 compliments were received in the year.

Most compliments relate to the helpfulness of staff members, the quality of work done or the general quality of service.



# OTHA Engagement Calendar 2024-2025

Event	Timescale and Lead	Purpose
<p><b>General consultation with tenants/owners on planned &amp; cyclical programme.</b></p> <p><b>Tenants/owners consultation on specific planned &amp; cyclical maintenance projects</b></p>	<p>April 2024. Led by Suk Hopper supported by Senior Maintenance Officer (Planned)</p> <p>To tie in with timing of contracts. Led by Senior Maintenance Officer (Planned)</p>	<p>To update tenants/owners on the year ahead.</p> <p>This is our proposed programme, subject to consultations regarding Kitchens/Bathroom/Heating.</p> <p>To identify kitchen choices, close finishes etc., including post completion surveys.</p>
<p><b>Garden Competition/ Estate Walkabouts</b></p>	<p>June to August 2024</p> <p>Led by Housing Services Team</p>	<p>Garden competitions to encourage better garden maintenance.</p> <p>Discussion of estate issues including landscaping, dog fouling, and any other neighbourhood concerns</p>
<p><b>Planned Maintenance</b></p>	<p>From September 2024 as part of annual inspection programme likely to be for 25/26 programme (pre-inspections)</p> <p>Led by Director of Property supported by Senior Maintenance Officer (Planned)</p>	<p>Capturing tenants' views of replacement of items inspected as part of the inspection. Views collected during inspection process and reported as part of results analysis to inform decisions taken re deferral or progression of works.</p>
<p><b>Survey of landscaped owners</b></p>	<p>September 2024</p> <p>Led by Senior Maintenance Officer (Planned)</p>	<p>Annual review of factoring customers' satisfaction and service improvements.</p>
<p><b>Cost of Living Survey</b></p>	<p>September 2024</p> <p>Led by Housing Services Team</p>	<p>To obtain tenant feedback on the Cost of Living to inform Rent Policy</p>
<p><b>ARC report</b></p>	<p>October 2024</p> <p>Led by Management Team</p>	<p>Feedback to be requested when issuing report whether future issues should be issued separately or with newsletters or Annual Report.</p>
<p><b>Conversation Cafes</b></p>	<p>Involving all sections as appropriate</p>	<p>Held 4 times a year with invite included in preceding newsletter. Topics chosen in advance and promoted in newsletter.</p>
<p><b>CX Feedback</b></p>	<p>All sections</p>	<p>Continued use of software for a variety of purposes. Useful for ongoing surveys, short targeted surveys and large scale surveys.</p>

<b>Review of Tenants Handbook</b>	All sections	Full review of Tenants Handbook. Working party of staff to be put in place and tenant consultation to take place and the results being fed back to the working group.
<b>Promotion of My Oak Tree Portal</b>	Ongoing Led by Housing Services	Regular social media posts, promotion at sign up and standard letters. Refreshed information for tenants and owners.
<b>New tenant survey</b>	Ongoing Led by Housing Services team	Surveys being issued electronically one month after date of entry and results being monitored to ensure good service is being maintained and to pick up any areas where dissatisfaction is recorded.
<b>Review of customer complaints</b>	Quarterly & Annually Led by Management Team	Complaints are reviewed quarterly, and a report published quarterly on website. Annual report also published
<b>Repairs Satisfaction Surveys</b>	Ongoing Led by Suk Hopper and supported by Peter MacDonald	To obtain tenant feedback on the reactive repairs service and to make service improvements where dissatisfaction is noted.
<b>Survey of Factored Owners</b>	Led by Senior Maintenance Officer (Planned)	Annual review of factoring customers' satisfaction and service improvements. To be issued along with 6 monthly invoice.
<b>Policy Review</b>	Various as per policy review timetable	Domestic Abuse Policy Customer Engagement Strategy Legal Action and Eviction Policy Stage III Adaptations Policy Streamlined Eviction Policy Service Charge Policy Alterations Policy

## Ravenscraig / Bunston Grove Landscaping

Please be aware that the Association does not landscape this development and that this service is provided by Curb.

Curb have experienced significant delays in setting up this contract. This is being currently investigated by Curb and they hope to have the issues resolved very soon. Curb will commence their landscaping services as soon as the contract is in place. We apologise on behalf of Curb for the delays in providing this service.

Curb have provided contact details should you wish to report any issues in future.

Curb can be contacted on:

- Web: <https://www.curb.scot/factoring>



# Planned and Cyclical Maintenance Works

The Association's 2024/25 planned maintenance programme is now underway. The contractors will be in contact with tenants included in this year's planned maintenance programme to arrange installation dates. We do not wish tenants to miss out, so, if you have been contacted by our contractor, please confirm access availability to allow the programmed works to be undertaken.

## 2024/25 programme.

Component	Total Properties
Kitchen Replacement	133
Central Heating Replacement	148
Window Replacement	2
Non-Common Decoration	231
Common Close Decoration	43
Close Door Replacements	3

## 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 undertaken. As such, the Association believes that it is 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.
- 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 Planned Maintenance Department, on 01475 807000 or at [info@oaktreeha.org.uk](mailto:info@oaktreeha.org.uk)

# 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 our adaptations contractor, and 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



## Oak Tree Reactive & Void Framework 2024/25

As you are aware Oak Tree's Reactive and Void Maintenance Framework began in October 2023.

We are now in the eighth month and the contractor's performance continues to go from strength to strength.

Our new contractors have settled in well over the period and are now fully aware of the Association's, standards, timescales and expectations.

We have seen a definite improvement in performance from the beginning of the framework compared to the first six months of this reporting year and previous years.

This improvement has been shown in our ARC indicators passed to the Scottish Housing Regulator for the 2023/24 reporting year.

Indicator	Description	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
8	Average length of time to complete emergency repairs (hours)	3.42	2.9	2.3
9	Average length of time to complete non-emergency repairs (days)	8.12	7.9	7
10	Percentage of reactive repairs completed first time during the reporting year	78.29%	83.1%	87%

We will continue to work closely with all our contractors to ensure this on-going improvement continues, with a view of reaching our target timescales for the duration of the framework.

# Fire Safety in your home & garden – what you can do

The major causes of domestic fires are cooking, candles, smoking, heating and use of electrical gadgets. Fire can start suddenly and spread quickly, damaging your home and belongings and putting lives in danger. There are a few simple steps that you can take to prevent a fire from starting:

- Don't leave chip/food pans unattended.
- Be careful not to overload electrical sockets.
- Use chargers for devices (e.g. mobile phones, laptops etc) supplied by the manufacturer of the device. Cheap replacements have an increased risk of catching fire. Unplug chargers when not in use – always unplug them overnight.
- Close living room and kitchen doors at night. In the event of a fire this will help to hold back smoke and flames giving you vital time to escape or call for help.
- Never dry washing in front of an open fire.
- Keep matches out of reach of children.
- Keep portable heaters away from curtains and furniture. Only use the type with safety cut out which will turn them off if they should fall over.
- Ensure your furniture is fire retardant and keep combustibles away from any heat source.
- Keep an eye on lit candles – they should be on a stable surface, away from flammable items e.g. curtains, and kept out of reach of children.



## Did you know...



*Around 48% of domestic fires start in the kitchen and most are caused when cooking is left unattended.*

## What's your plan?

Even with care, fires can happen. They can spread quickly, so you need to have a plan of how you would get out of your home, and make sure that everyone who lives there, as well as any visitors, are aware of it.

## If a fire breaks out in your home

1. Close the door of the room where the fire is.
2. Get everyone out of the house if possible. If you live in a flat with access to a communal stairwell the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) advise a stay-put policy if the fire is not in your home as you may get trapped in the stairwell.
3. If you need to break a window, the safest way is to break the glass in the bottom corner.
4. Call the fire brigade – don't assume that someone else has.
5. Warn your neighbours and do NOT go back into your property.

# Fire Safety in your home & garden – what you can do

## Looking after your smoke alarm

- Check your smoke alarm weekly to make sure that it's working.
- If your alarm beeps intermittently, this indicates a battery low fault or an alarm memory fault, which needs attention. A continuous beeping is an activation that requires immediate action to stay safe.
- Never disconnect the alarm if it goes off by mistake.
- Vacuum the grill area of the smoke alarm every 12 months.
- Never cover smoke alarms.
- Report any issues to the Association.



## Look after your neighbours

If you live in a flat, it is very important that nothing is left in the common areas that could: –

- Start a fire or be set alight.
- Block or hinder escape routes.

Our staff regularly check the closes and common areas, and you may be asked to move items that are considered a fire risk themselves or will stop people being able to get out of the block safely and quickly.

If you are concerned about items being left in your close, please contact a member of the Housing team.



## Outside Risks

We would urge you to never put ashes and other remains from barbecues or fire pits/chimineas straight into the bin and to ensure the materials have properly cooled down before doing so.

Please ensure that you dispose of ashes and charcoal properly, therefore, if you are using a fire pit/chiminea or having a barbecue, be careful and make sure any remains are cold/properly extinguished before they go in the bin.

## Estate Walkabouts

We inspect all our closes and estates at least once a quarter, but in the summer months we do a more detailed estate walkabout and try to speak to as many tenants as we can.

We let tenants know who will be in their area and when and the Housing Services team enjoy the chance to meet people and have a chat about their area.

We will also take details of any repairs needing done or any neighbourhood issues that could be improved or need action.

We collate this information and use it to improve and tailor our services better to meet the needs of our customers.

We are always keen for feedback and if you didn't get the chance to speak to staff when they were on their walkabout then please either phone, email or message us via the Web Portal with your comments.



# Housing Officer Q & A

Housing Officer Morag Sharp, shares some frequently asked questions she receives from tenants...



## **Q Can I pay my rent on-line?**

**A** We have an on-line portal available 24/7, 365 days of the year with the facilities available to view your rent account, make a rent payment, report non-urgent repairs, view recent repairs and to contact us. There are also several other services available through our on-line portal.

## **Q My circumstances have changed, and I am struggling to pay my rent.**

**A** Please contact your housing team on 01475 807000 for any difficulties with rent payments so that we can come to a suitable arrangement. We may be able to refer you to agencies that can assist you, including a benefit check.

## **Q What do I do about dog fouling?**

**A** Dog fouling can be reported to Inverclyde Council customer service number on 01475 717171 or online via the Council website. It is an offence not to clean up immediately after a dog without having reasonable excuse. Reasonable excuse does not include, not having poo bags on you. The Council have a number of Enforcement Officers who can issued fixed penalty notices of £80 for dog fouling offences (rising to £100 if not paid within 28 days) and can impose these on shared common areas (e.g. shared back courts).

## **Q What do I do about missing or damaged bins?**

**A** Please report a missing bin to Inverclyde Council on 01475 717171.

## **Q Changes to my household, do I need to tell you?**

**A** It is important to let us know if someone moves out or into your home and we will advise you on what you need to do. For example, if a joint tenant moved out, they would need to complete an assignation of tenancy. All changes to your household should be reported including those who are not joint tenants such as births, deaths or grown-up children moving away for example.

## **Q Can I keep a pet and do I need permission?**

**A** You may keep a domestic pet, providing your home is suitable and it does not cause a nuisance to your neighbours or damage to your home or garden. If you are getting a dog, please complete a dog registration form. Some of our properties have a no dogs allowed policy so please check first. Please see separate newsletter article here on the government requirements for ownership of an XL bully dog.

## **Q Can I install CCTV or a ring door bell?**

**A** Before installing CCTV or a ring door bell, you should complete a request form. If permission is granted, you will be required to submit images that your camera is capturing so that we can check it is not invading your neighbours' privacy.

## **Q What can I do about an anti-social neighbour?**

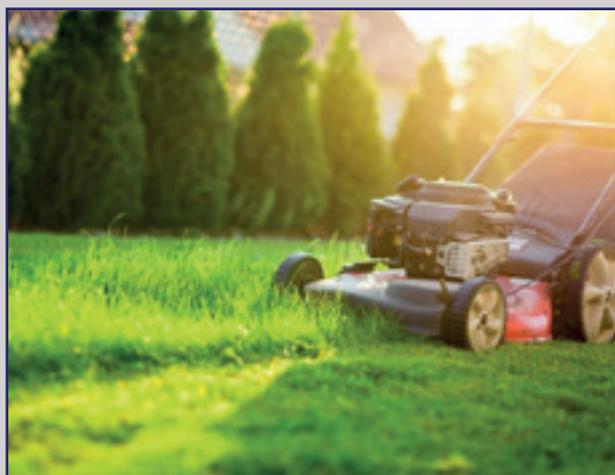
**A** If you have an anti-social neighbour, please report this to your housing team on 01475 807000 or by emailing [housing@oaktreeha.org.uk](mailto:housing@oaktreeha.org.uk). This can then be investigated by the team. You should report incidents as and when they are happening to Police Scotland on 101 (999 in an emergency) or the Community Warden on 0800 01 317 01. The Community Wardens are operational from 13:00 hrs to 23:30 hrs, 7 days a week.

## **Q Who should I report my concerns to about possible drug dealing?**

**A** Drug dealing is a police matter, and all concerns should be reported to Police Scotland. You can also report anonymously if you wish to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or online via [Crimestoppers-uk.org](http://Crimestoppers-uk.org). Crimestoppers is an independent UK charity taking crime information anonymously.

# Private Garden Responsibility

The Association would like to remind tenants that should their property benefit from a private garden area then it is their responsibility for maintaining this area, as per their tenancy agreement.



Unfortunately, the Inverclyde region has a high water table which may cause disruption to grass condition and growth in some areas. In some cases, gardens can become water logged or grass may not grow in shaded areas.

Please be mindful that equipment such as, trampolines, other types of play equipment, storage, garden furniture and pets can also cause deterioration, damage and also affect the overall condition of the garden.

These type of issues are out with the Association's control and responsibility, therefore, we are unable to take any action to resolve.



## Legionella & Asbestos Risks

### 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 contractors 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 40 West Stewart Street.

# Bogus Workers / Doorstep Crime

Doorstep crime is a problem that continues to plague our communities year on year. These incidents can have a devastating and lasting effect on victims from disruption to their homes, or property and financial loss that impacts heavily on their emotional wellbeing and health.

It's not easy to spot a rogue trader. They will often look genuine. They will look professional, have a branded van, a website, and business cards. They may even have their company listed on review sites and appear to be endorsed by reputable trade associations. They may look authentic, but cowboy traders just want to scam you.

Don't let scammers into your home. Just say no. For information about doorstep crime, how to spot a rogue trader and protect yourself visit: <https://www.scotland.police.uk/advice-and-information/scams-and-frauds/doorstep-crime-and-bogus-callers/>



# XL Bully Dogs - New Rules

From 1 August it will be illegal to own an XL bully type dog in Scotland without an exemption certificate or having applied for an exemption certificate to own that dog. You must apply for a certificate of exemption by 31 July 2024 to keep an XL bully dog. You can download the certificate of exemption online on the GOV.UK website.

Anyone who owns an XL Bully type dog MUST ensure that dog is kept on a lead and is muzzled at all times when in a public place. It is also now an offence to breed or breed from an XL Bully dog, sell an XL Bully dog, abandon an XL Bully dog or let it stray or give away an XL Bully dog. Anyone breaching these rules could face up to six months imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £5,000.



Please contact Police Scotland should you have any concerns regarding owners of XL Bully dogs not complying with these new rules.

# Garden Competition 2024

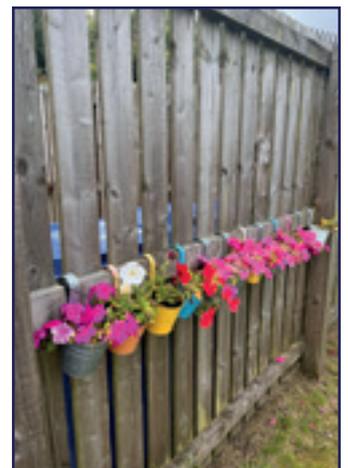


ardeners at the ready!

The Association will be carrying out a garden competition again this year. All tenants can either enter their own garden or recommend a neighbour or friends garden by contacting our Housing Services Team at our office or email [info@oaktreeha.org.uk](mailto:info@oaktreeha.org.uk) by 30th August 2024. Staff will also be submitting entries from the gardens they see while out and about.

The competition will be judged after the closing date.

**The best 5 gardens will receive prizes.**



# Data Protection - UK GDPR

The UK GDPR has been in place since 1st January 2021, and we also have the UK Data Protection Act 2018 which supplements the UK GDPR.

These laws place obligations on how we handle your personal data and give you rights and control over how your personal data is handled.

## What information does the UK GDPR apply to?

- Personal data is information which relates to a living person who can be identified from the information itself, or by linking it with other information. For example, it could be your name and address, your bank details or anything you tell us in relation to your health such as a disability.
- Processing personal data is the name given to anything that we do with your personal data that we hold. For example, entering your details into our computer systems or storing a completed form in a filing cabinet.

## What do we do to ensure continued compliance with the Act?

We carry out regular reviews of the data that we hold, how we store it, and what basis we have for processing it. We regularly review our policies and procedures, and our employees undergo initial training and refresher training so that they know how to keep your personal data secure and how to help you exercise your rights. You can find out more about what we do with your data and your rights in relation to it in our privacy statement, which you can find on our website at Oak Tree HA Privacy Notice.

## We need your help

UK GDPR requires us to take reasonable steps to ensure that the personal data we hold is accurate. To help us do this you must let us know of any changes to the information that you give us to ensure that we are holding up to date data. We need to know for example whether you have the same people living with you or whether there have been any additions to your household such as a new baby, partner, friend etc.



# Keep Safe Partner



We are a Keep Safe partner. Keep Safe is a Police Scotland initiative to help those with disabilities stay safe when out and about on their daily routines. By signing up to Keep Safe, it means we welcome anyone who is passing to use our building as a safe place to stay if they feel threatened, have lost your phone or keys or are victims of disability hate crime. We are committed to having a minimum of two staff available at all times, provide disability access and we

have CCTV in the reception area. The scheme is run with the "I am Me" charity. If you are disabled, you can carry a Keep Safe Card that may assist you if you need help.

Want to find out more, watch this video [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mlABTk\\_L28l](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mlABTk_L28l) or visit I Am Me website at <https://iammescotland.co.uk/about-keep-safe>.

## I am Me – Keep Safe Card

<b>Keep Safe</b> My name is _____	<b>People who can help me</b> Name: _____ Number: _____ Name: _____ Number: _____ Name: _____ Number: _____
<b>Things you need to know about me and my health</b> + _____ _____ _____	<b>In a non emergency call the Police on 101</b> <b>In an emergency call the Police on 999</b> On the train text the British Transport Police on 61014
<b>How I communicate</b> _____ _____	<b>I Am Me</b> <a href="https://www.iammescotland.co.uk">www.iammescotland.co.uk</a> <b>Keep Safe Scotland App</b> Available in iOS and Android
<b>Any other details</b> _____ _____	

# Management Committee Minutes - Website

**The Oak Tree Housing Association Management Committee are our governing body.**

The Management Committee (MC) provides leadership and direction, approves strategy, policy and budgets, approves the Business Plan and oversees its delivery, risks and financial well-being and fulfils the role of employer. Responsibility for the day-to-day operational management of OTHA is delegated to senior management known within Oak Tree as the Management Team (MT). Regular meetings take place to discuss a variety of reports and documents, which are required for the running of Oak Tree. These formal meetings have a minute taken to record in particular, who attended

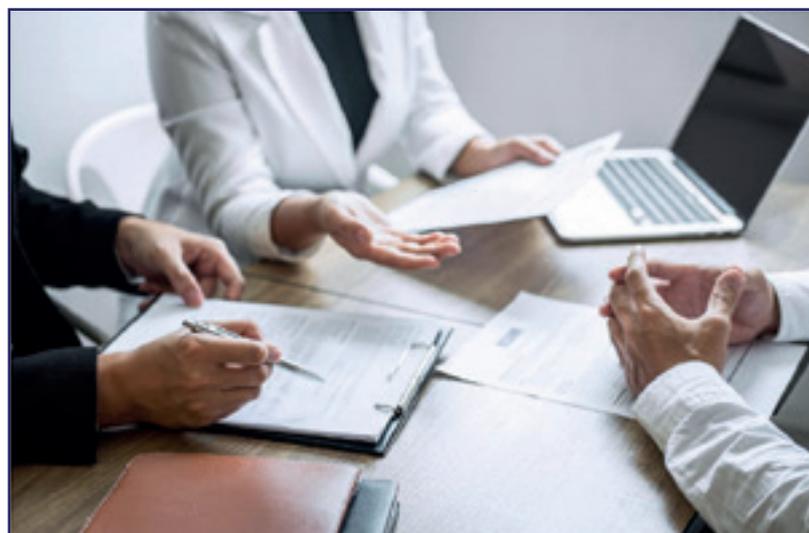


and what decisions were made. The MC minutes are available on our website, within our Publication Scheme shown here: <http://www.oaktreeha.org.uk/documents/#governanceandhr>

We are keen to hear what you think about these minutes, for example, do you obtain a good sense that the MC is providing an effective oversight at OTHA? Are you happy with the type and level of information that OTHA records in its minutes, to provide you with assurance that the MC and MT are doing a good job?

OTHA has a practice of open communication both internally and externally, about our work and decisions. Openness may sometimes though, be set alongside obligations to keep some types of information confidential. For example, personal information about service users and employees, must remain confidential.

To discuss our Management Committee Minutes content, or to request to attend a Management Committee meeting, in order to observe a meeting, please contact Nick Jardine or Kirsty Davis either at the OTHA office, 40 West Stewart Street, Greenock, PA15 1SH; by telephone on 01475 807000, via email [info@oaktreeha.org.uk](mailto:info@oaktreeha.org.uk); or use the "Contact Us" page of the Oak Tree website [www.oaktreeha.org.uk](http://www.oaktreeha.org.uk).





## Oak Tree Housing Association Ltd

### Regulatory Status

#### Compliant

The RSL meets regulatory requirements, including the Standards of Governance and Financial Management.

### Why we are engaging with Oak Tree Housing Association Ltd (Oak Tree)

We are engaging with Oak Tree about its **development plans**.

Oak Tree has experienced issues with a new build development of 15 homes for social rent following the liquidation of the original contractor in 2022/23. Oak Tree has commissioned an independent investigation into the issues and is currently considering options for progressing the site.

### What Oak Tree must do

Oak Tree must:

- send us the independent investigation into the issues with the site and the report to the Board on this; and
- send us monthly updates on progress with considering options for the site, including details of the funding requirement and confirmation that funding is in place.

### What we will do

We will:

- review the independent investigation and engage as necessary;
- review the updates on progress with considering options for the site and engage as necessary; and
- update our published engagement plan in the light of any material change to our planned engagement with Oak Tree.

### Regulatory returns

Oak Tree must provide us with the following annual regulatory returns and alert us to notifiable events as appropriate:

- Annual Assurance Statement;
- audited financial statements and external auditor's management letter;
- loan portfolio return;
- five year financial projections; and
- Annual Return on the Charter.

It should also notify us of any material changes to its Annual Assurance Statement, and any tenant and resident safety matter which has been reported to or is being investigated by the Health and Safety Executive or reports from regulatory or statutory authorities or insurance providers, relating to safety concerns.

### Our lead officer for Oak Tree Housing Association Ltd is:

**Name:** Dean Reynolds, Regulation Manager

**Telephone:** 0141 242 0276 **Email:** [dean.reynolds@shr.gov.scot](mailto:dean.reynolds@shr.gov.scot)

# Donations

Throughout the past year, Oak Tree's Management Committee have donated a total of £1000 to seven local charities who all carry out vital work to help support the residents of Inverclyde. During what has been an incredibly difficult year, these donations have helped the organisations continue to provide services and support to our community. The seven charities we sent donations to are:



Man On! Inverclyde is a suicide prevention peer support service founded to provide mental health support to the men of Inverclyde. They offer walk ins, online support groups and one on one sessions to allow individuals the space to talk about their mental health and break down stigma barriers.



Inverclyde Women's Aid help provide specialist domestic abuse services to women, young people and children who are experiencing, or have experienced, domestic abuse, rape and sexual assault or abuse.



Ardgowan Hospice supports a community of around 80,000 people in Inverclyde. They offer a great range of support to patients, their families and carers following the diagnosis of a life-limiting illness such as COPD, heart failure, cancer and neurological conditions. They provide services such as end of life care, support for returning to work following illness and helping children cope with grief.



Inverclyde Foodbank work hard to combat hunger and poverty by providing nutritious emergency food to local people who are referred to them in crisis. Donations are vital to help ensure no one in Inverclyde goes hungry.



Starter Packs Inverclyde help to empower people to build a new life with dignity, ease their financial burden, and alleviate poverty and the mental and physical ill health that can be caused by it by providing common household goods for those in need. This allows people experiencing poverty to settle into their new home quickly, reducing the chances of having to leave the tenancy and helping to break the cycle of homelessness.



Children in Poverty Inverclyde provide help and assistance to children whose families face daily challenges due to poverty and deprivation. They help facilitate local holidays for these families to allow the children to enjoy recreational and outdoor activities, allowing them to play and laugh.



Home Start Inverclyde and Renfrewshire provide emotional and practical support, and friendship, to help parents with young children, in order to give every child the best possible start in life. To help parents grow in confidence, strengthen their relationship with their children and widen their links within local communities.

# Staffing Update



## A warm welcome to our newest Landscaping & Grounds Maintenance Assistants.

Oak Tree welcomed Johnpaul in March 2024 and Ryan in May 2024, when they joined our Landscaping Team on temporary contracts. We wish both Johnpaul and Ryan every continued success in their roles.

## A warm welcome to our newest Clerical Assistant

Oak Tree welcomed Lauren in March 2024, when she joined our Admin Team on a temporary maternity cover contract. We wish Lauren every continued success in her role.



# Membership of Oak Tree Housing Association



Lifetime membership of the Association costs just **£1** and you can apply at any time. As a member, you would be invited to attend the Association's AGM where you would be entitled to vote for the Management Committee or stand for election to the Management Committee yourself.

If you would like to find out more about membership of Oak Tree Housing Association, or you would like an application form, please contact our office on 01475 807000 or email us at [info@oaktreeha.org.uk](mailto:info@oaktreeha.org.uk)

# New Look Reception Counter



If you have called in to the office on West Stewart within the last month you will have seen our new look reception area. We look forward to seeing you next time you visit.



## CCTV ~ West Stewart Street Office

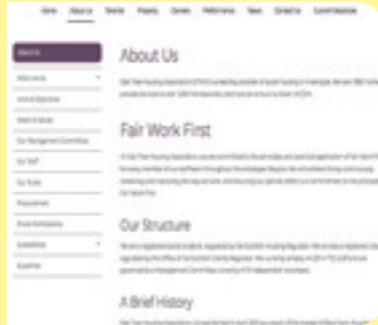
For your safety, we have also added some additional CCTV cameras at various points, both internally and externally, at our office.

Images are recorded for the purpose of crime prevention and public safety and are held in accordance with GDPR.

Please take a moment to have a look at the Oak Tree website, where you can source lots of useful information, latest news, newsletters, policy information, how to pay your rent, report a repair, updates and upcoming events. The pages below are only a small selection of information available.

## "About Us"

Information about what we do, our aims and objectives, staff and management committee members, the Associations Rules and lots more....



## "Documents"

Information on advice and services, Oak Tree and Scottish Housing Regulator documents and lots more ....



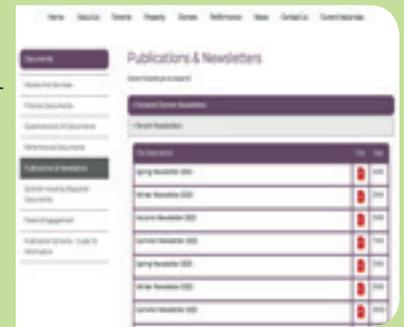
## "Latest News"

Keep up to date with all the latest news on this page.



## "Publications and Newsletters"

Recent publications and recent newsletters for your information.



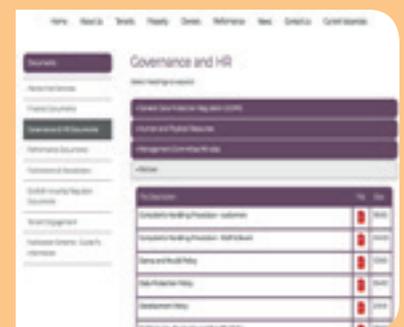
## "Pay your Rent"

Clicking on this page will take you to information on how to pay your rent, manage your rent and information about Universal Credit. It also has information to help if you have problems paying your rent or problems with debt..



## "Policies"

Under the "Documents" section are our policies and performance documents.



## "Tenants"

Information on the "Tenants" tab includes how you can help shape the services we deliver, how to be a good neighbour, tenancy information leaflets and other practical advice.



## "Report a Repair"

The Report a Repair page includes information on what defines an emergency repair, useful out of hours emergency repair information and contact details and how to report a non-urgent repair.

