



2018/19

ANNUAL
REPORT



Chair's Report



I am delighted to provide this report at the end of my fourth year as Chair of Ore Valley Housing Association.

As in previous years we have worked hard throughout the year to improve the services we provide to our tenants. We are particularly pleased to see the ongoing engagement with tenants through our Estate Management Group, and also in a number of more informal ways, such as the development of our community hub, the expansion of our weekly tea and toast sessions with tenants, and our involvement in weekly lunchtime drop in events. All of these have allowed us to take on board a wider range of views from our tenants and the wider community, influencing and shaping the services which we at Ore Valley provide.

We have developed our knowledge that communication is so important in the provision of services. In response to this we have continued to develop our social media approach and have also initiated a review of our own website to incorporate a tenant portal which will allow tenants to access a range of services digitally at any time of the day, throughout the year.

We continue to recognise the high levels of need for good quality affordable rented housing and although we have no new homes on site at present, we are however at an advanced stage in the development pipeline on several potential sites in Cardenden, Lochgelly and Cowdenbeath and we expect to see further tangible progress in the coming year.

During the year, we purchased the original Miners Institute in Bowhill, the building was last used as a youth centre by Fife Council and was closed over 25 years ago. The building is in very poor condition, our intention is to bring forward proposals in the coming year for the building to form part of a new housing project.

As well as new development we are of course determined to ensure that our existing housing stock is maintained to a high quality through ongoing annual maintenance programmes, which will continue into the future.

An increasing number of our tenants have transitioned across to Universal Credit, Ore Valley has provided a lot of support and assistance to tenants to make the experience more manageable, through the services provided by our Tenancy Support and Wellbeing Officer. This service has been very successful in supporting our tenants to resolve a wide range of issues at very challenging and stressful moments.

During the year we also saw the completion of the first year of financial contribution from the operation of the Ore Valley wind turbine, dozens of organisations and projects have received funding to sustain and develop their activities within the community, it is great to see this beginning to make a difference and we look forward to continuing to support community activities for many years to come.

It has been a busy, challenging and enjoyable year, I would like to thank my fellow Board Members, who give their time voluntarily, for their exceptional support and input and also the staff team at Ore Valley for their hard work during the course of the year.

Susan McDonald
Chair

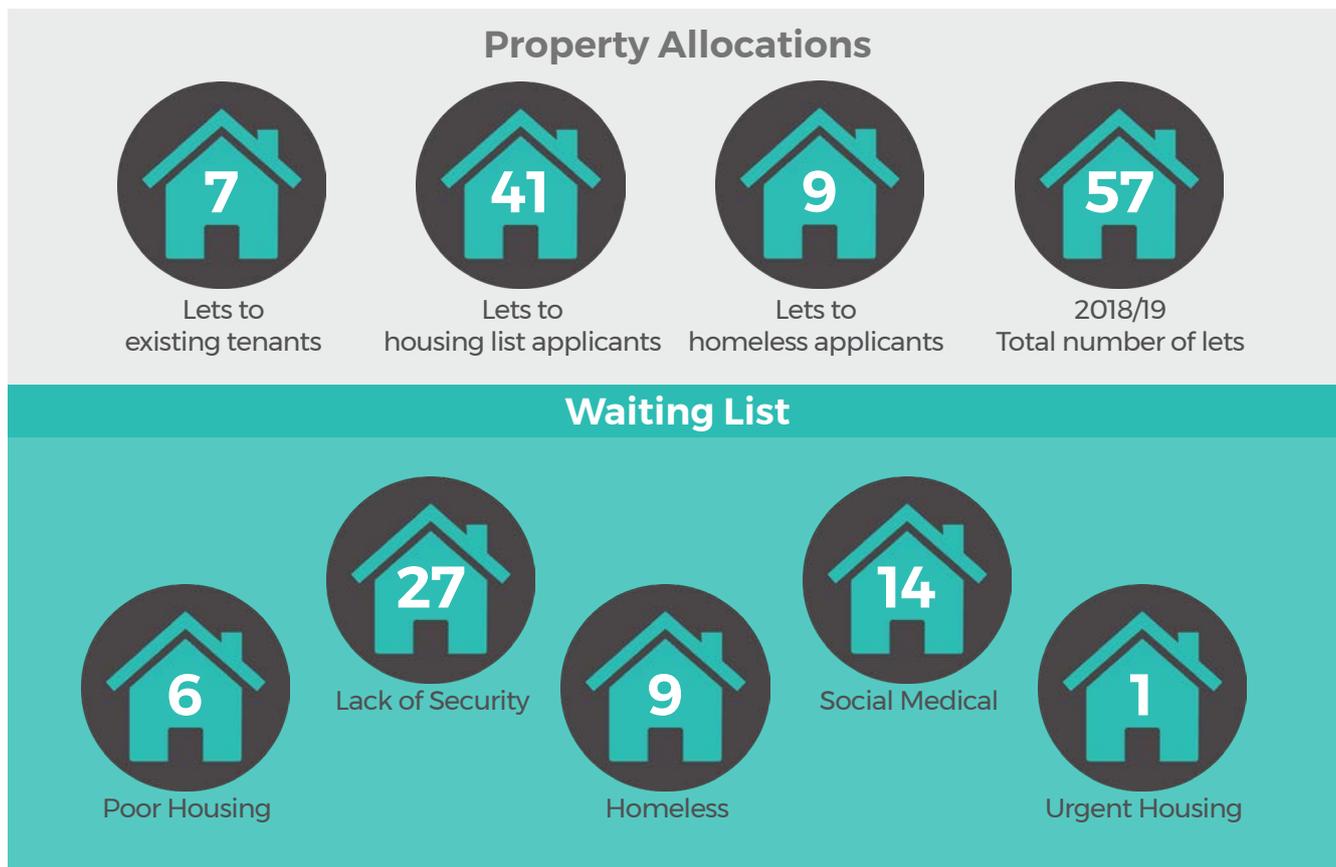
Review of Our Activities and Achievements over the Year

- We continued to implement our Tenant Participation Strategy.
- We implemented a further phase of our new rent structure.
- We re-let 57 properties.
- We carried out 36 Medical Adaptations to our properties at cost of just under £40,000.
- We continued to provide our Grass Cutting Scheme which benefits less able tenants.
- We continued to develop new housing proposals designed to address local housing needs.
- We acquired 3 flats in Cowdenbeath - for refurbishment and relet.
- We acquired one shop in Cowdenbeath which is let to an existing tenant.
- We acquired the derelict former Bowhill Miners Institute building as a project for future development.
- We continued to deliver property maintenance and improvement programmes.
- We continued to let 6 small specialist shops in Lochgelly.
- We secured the lease of 21 new homes in Dysart from Fife Council these are let to tenants as mid-market rent properties.
- Through Ore Valley Community Initiatives Ltd., the Ore Valley Business Centre in Lochgelly has provided 21 business office spaces, conference facilities, and meeting space for community groups.
- We saw the first gift aid payments coming back from our wind project, to support a wide range of community projects and activities.
- We commenced the development of our new website and tenant portal to provide greater access to information and interactive services for our tenants.
- We provided more community information through our Website, Facebook and Twitter pages.
- We continued to participate in the UK wide housing benchmarking and good practice service HouseMark.

Property Allocations

During the year April 2018 to March 2019, we relet **57** properties. The average time taken to relet was **16** days. Through working closely with our Void Maintenance Contractors we have been able to maintain our reported performance.

If you wish more information please contact our Housing Team on 01592 721917 or you can apply online by going to www.fifehousingregister.org.uk and following the link 'Apply for a home'.



Mid Market Rent Properties

Ore Valley Housing Association manage **76** new build properties. These homes are not part of our social housing stock. Instead they are let privately on a mid-market rent basis and offer tenants a good quality affordable alternative to private rented accommodation.

45 of these properties are leased to Ore Valley Enterprises by Fife Council and are located in Kirkcaldy, Lochgelly, Kelty and Dysart.

The development at Quality Street, Dysart, which is a mix of 1 and 2 bedroom new build flats with floor coverings and white goods, was transferred to us in May 2018.

These homes are very popular with our tenants and are currently managed by Ore Valley Housing Association who operate as a registered letting agent on behalf of Ore Valley Enterprises Ltd which is a registered private landlord.

Gas Services

We maintain and inspect all gas appliances within our homes, in line with legal requirements. This covers 100% of all gas heating systems, including boilers and gas fires. Gas Services must be carried out at least once every 12 months in order to meet the requirements set.

Our contractor, Kingdom Gas, have a program in place which instigates initial contact with tenants two months ahead of their Gas Service anniversary date. We and Kingdom Gas will contact tenants a minimum of three times to arrange a suitable appointment.

Unfortunately, each year, due to repeat no accesses, we have to take additional measures to ensure our tenants are safe. This includes issuing final reminders, instructing Kingdom Gas to cap the properties gas supply and force entry, if necessary.

Due to the processes in place and the majority of tenant's co-operating with us in ensuring they have an up to date gas service certificate, in 2018-2019, we met all of our gas service anniversary dates. This equates to a completion rate of 100%.

Planned Maintenance

Planned Maintenance and property improvement remains a high priority for Ore Valley Housing Association.

We carried out the following improvements this year:

- Electrical testing was carried out to **133** of our homes, with the programme of upgrade works rolling into next year.
- Phase 7 of our kitchen replacement programme resulted in new kitchens being installed in **53** homes.
- External paintwork was carried out to **102** properties.
- **13** properties received new gas boilers, improving energy efficiency.
- A total of **39** showers were fitted in properties which previously had no shower and over the course of the next year every property will have a shower.
- We continue to carry out environmental improvements and maintenance.

We will continue to develop and deliver future maintenance and improvement programmes to ensure that wherever possible we comply with both the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) and the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH). We will also consider improvements which will move us closer to compliance with ESSH 2 which is a new standard to be achieved by 2032.

Medical Adaptations

Every year we receive funding to adapt the homes of tenants whose medical needs and requirements have changed since moving to their home. These are called medical adaptations and can include bathroom alterations and the installation of mobility aids.

To determine if our tenants meet the requirements for a medical adaptation, their needs have to first be assessed by an Occupational Therapist (OT).

Between April 2018 and March 2019, we completed **36** medical adaptations compared to 23 completed the previous year. The average time tenants had to wait to have the works completed, (from the date we received the assessment from an OT), was **33** days. This compares to average completion time of 34 days in 2017/18.

A total of **£39,913.75** was spent on adaptations in 2018/19 which was jointly funded by Scottish Government grant funding.

Rent Arrears

In order for us to provide the services we do, we rely purely upon the income that comes from renting out our properties. Therefore, the money we have available for these services is directly related to the amount of rent we collect each year.

Rent arrears are made up of ex-tenant arrears and current tenant arrears. Current tenant rent arrears as at 31st March 2019 were **£111,667** which is **3.91%** of the total amount of rent that we expected to collect. Our target for current tenants is to have no more than 3.0% rent arrears, and overall we have seen an increase in the amount of rent owed by our tenants.

15% of our tenants have arrears of **£350.00** or more. We are directing additional time and resources, so that we can support our tenants who are experiencing problems with maintaining their rent payments as we recognise that this is an increasing challenge for many.

Universal Credit is continuing to have a negative impact on our arrears performance with delayed managed payment from the Department for Work and Pensions showing as actual arrears on tenants accounts.

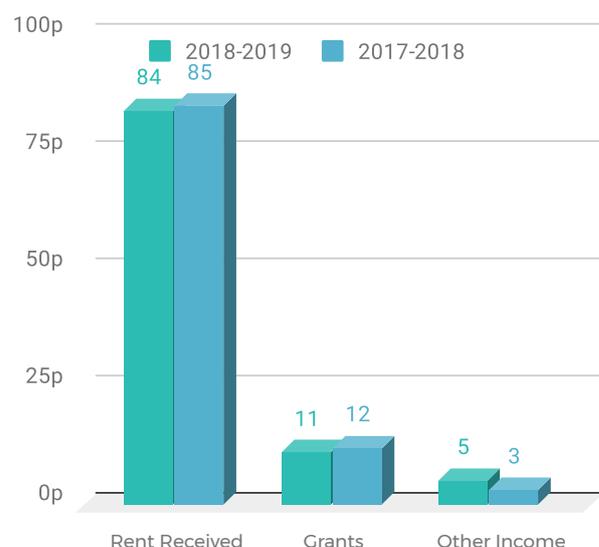
With an increasing number of tenants now claiming Universal Credit, some of these tenants are finding it more difficult to manage their rent payments. Tenants who may be experiencing difficulties can speak to our Tenancy Support and Wellbeing Officer who is available to provide advice and support to help tenants increase their household income and budget their money so that they are better able to prioritise their rent payments.

Unfortunately this has resulted in us continuing to make an increasing number of referrals to emergency support providers such as food banks and charitable grant agencies.

In order to address our growing concerns about the increasing number of people who are experiencing hardship and poverty in our communities, we are now directing more of our resources to support community engagement projects such as the weekly drop-in service at Auchterderran Church Hall in Cardenden and Lo'gelly Lunches in Lochgelly.

We are also looking at working in partnership with a range of other providers such as Money Advice Scotland and Fife-ETC so that we can support the delivery of training and employability programmes for our tenants as well as personal budgeting support services.

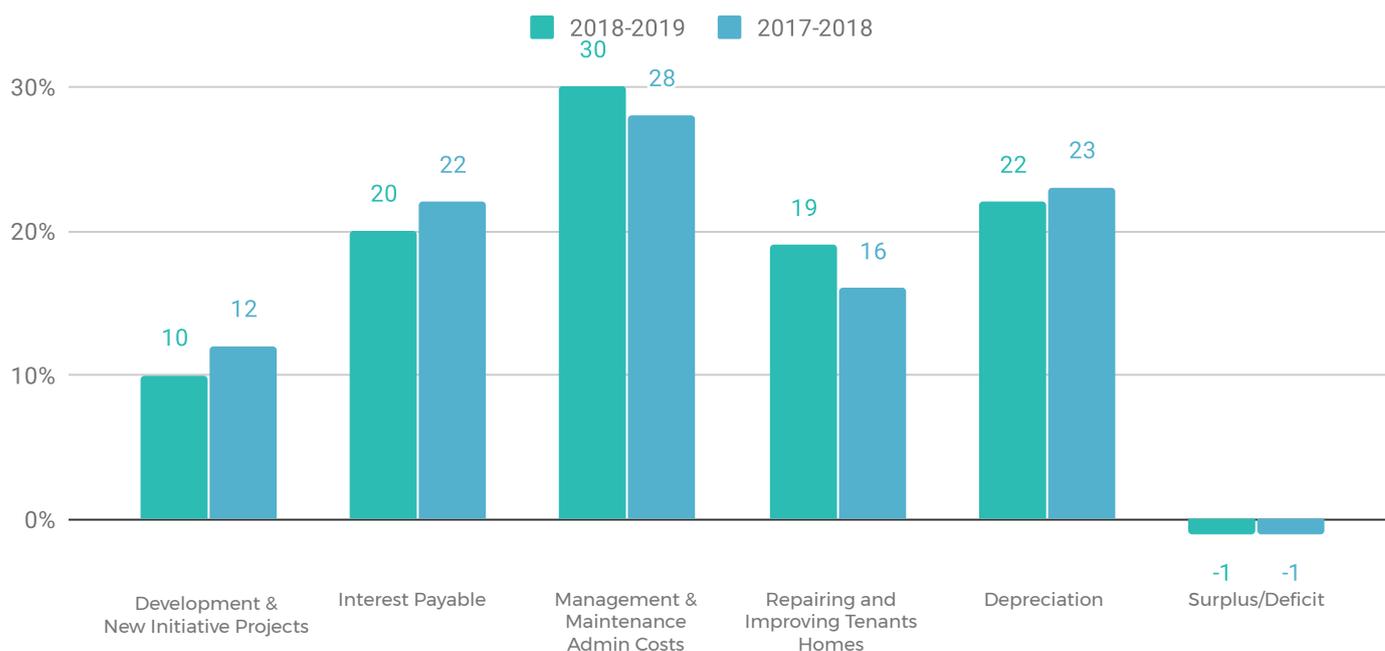
Breakdown of every £1 received



Income and Expenditure Account

	2018 - 2019	2017 - 2018
Turnover	£3,410,891	£3,215,842
Operating Costs	-£2,552,868	-£2,574,206
Operating Surplus	£858,023	£641,636
Interest Receivable	£20,935	£36,699
Interest Payable	-£706,424	-£706,579
Surplus For Year	-£48,290	-£28,244

Breakdown of Income and Expenditure Account



The Association spent the following on maintenance & improvement of our properties

£38,000

13 new boilers and heating systems

£42,000

39 new showers and bathroom improvements

£117,000

53 new kitchens

£269,000

day to day reactive maintenance and repairs to properties

£84,000

void property repairs

£22,000

ground maintenance

£121,000

electrical testing, gas servicing, external painting etc

New Build Housing Developments

Ore Valley Housing Association is a member of the Fife Housing Association Alliance, which is made up of the four Fife based housing associations (Fife Housing Group, Glen HA, Kingdom HA and Ore Valley HA) the Alliance works closely with Fife Council to deliver the programme of new affordable housing within Fife.

The Fife Housing Association Alliance enables the four partners to deliver new housing in a more efficient, cost effective, non-competitive environment which benefits the Alliance members, tenants and the wider Fife Community.

At Ore Valley we are continuing to explore opportunities for new development where there is an identifiable need for new housing, either through the housing association or through its subsidiary, Ore Valley Enterprises Ltd. which is involved in the provision of mid-market rent housing.

We are currently working on the potential to develop new housing sites in Cardenden, Lochgelly and Cowdenbeath. It is expected that two projects, one in Cardenden and one in Lochgelly, will be ready to commence construction next financial year, which between them will deliver 47 new homes.

During the year, we acquired the former Bowhill Miners Institute building (pictured below) which has been unused for over 25 years, our intention is to bring forward proposals for it to form part of a new development of homes for social rent.

We have also acquired 3 properties and a shop in Cowdenbeath High Street and during the coming year we will fully refurbish these properties to prepare them for use as quality social rented housing.

Through one of our subsidiary companies, Ore Valley Enterprises Ltd., we are currently managing 76 mid-market rent properties in Lochgelly, Lochore, Kirkcaldy, Kelty and Dysart. We will continue to consider opportunities for further mid-market rent development.



Tenant Participation

We are continuing to make good progress with the delivery of our Tenant Participation Strategy. Over the past 12 months our Estate Management Group has supported us to review our void relet standards. The tenants who have volunteered to join this group are also helping to inform and improve how we provide information for our tenants and they have provided us with valuable feedback during the development of our new website and our online digital service 'My Home'.

During the year we also worked with Naomi Breeze of Breeze Productions with drama workshops taking place with tenants and staff between July and October 2018. 13 of our tenants went on to perform their play 'Then and Now' at the 2018 Tenant Conference. In addition to the tenants who participated, 4 members of staff also joined the group. This provided a unique opportunity for tenants to speak to Ore Valley employees on a more informal basis. 6 members of the drama group have gone on to join our Estate Management Group and 10 have since participated in the Ore Valley Community Growing project.

Several of our tenants and have also been actively involved in helping to set up The Hub project in Cardenden which is aimed at hosting a range of services to support tenants and others in the wider community. This venue which is located across the road from our main office in Cardenden will also provide an important forum for any future community led initiatives or events.

Over the next year we aim to build on the early success of the Estate Management Group by developing their role and remit so that the tenants on this group can shape the development of our Tenant Participation Strategy for 2019 - 2021.

Feedback from the Drama Group:



Leeann:

'I've enjoyed the Drama Group very much. We are having a laugh as well

as looking at the serious side of things. I have gained more confidence every week.'



Peter:

'It's created an opportunity for me to get together with people that I wouldn't other-

wise be in contact with. I feel like it's been a chance for me to be heard and to be recognised.'



Angela:

'The past few months at Drama Group has proven that anything is possible if

you put your mind to it. I have grown in confidence and really feel like I have flourished.'

Ore Valley Business Centre

The Ore Valley Business Centre, based on Main Street in Lochgelly, saw another year of high occupancy and increased footfall. The centre offers a variety of quality commercial office spaces within a highly energy efficient design aimed at minimising its environmental impact and reducing its carbon emissions.

The centre is designed to support the development and growth of new businesses which in turn can deliver benefits to the local community through the creation of jobs and needed services. New tenants in the last year include Circles Network who are an organisation supporting people suffering from the impacts of isolation, Fife Headway who are a charity supporting people recovering from brain injury and Restoration Fife who are an organisation that helps people recovering from drug problems.

In the last year, in addition to the new businesses we welcomed, we also saw a significant increase in footfall due to an increase in the number of events hosted and an expansion of public-facing services and support projects offered by the tenant businesses. As a result, the centre continues to deliver on its aims of spurring job creation and delivering improvements to the local community.

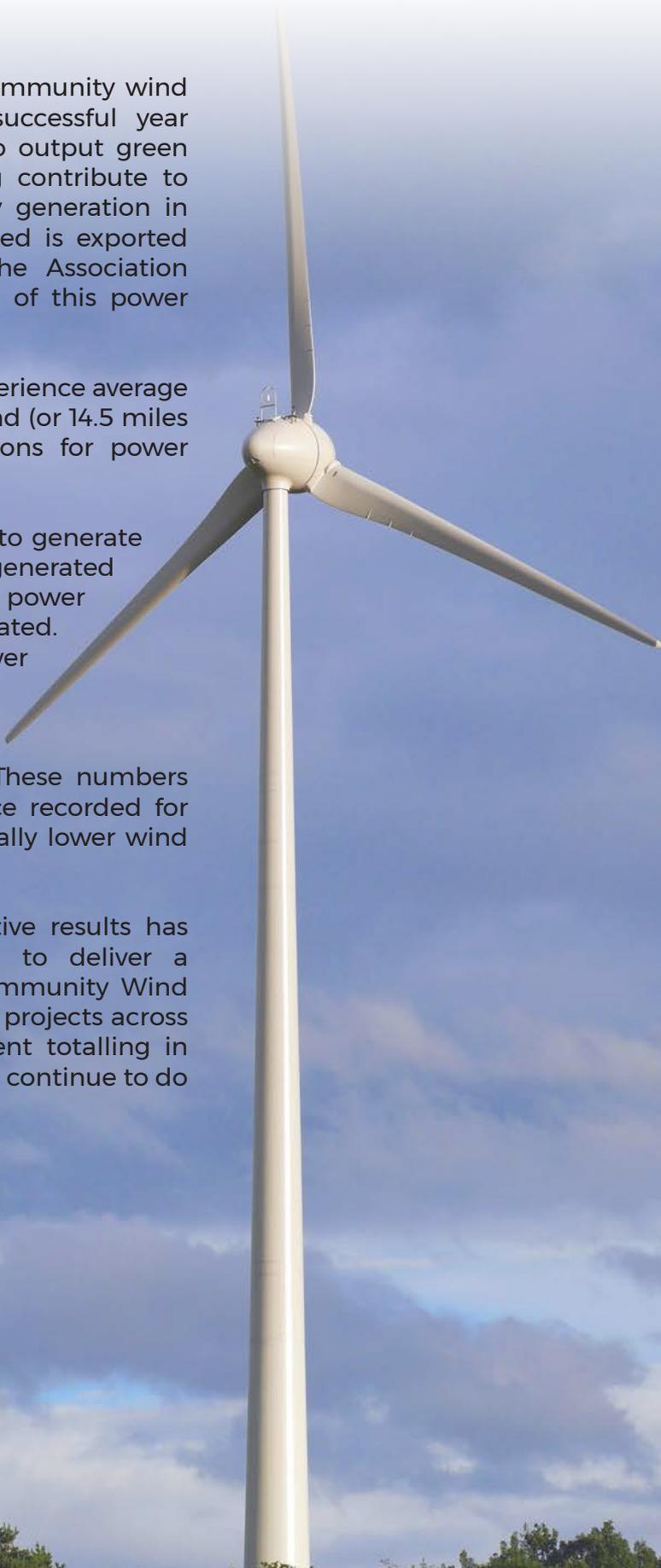
Wind Turbine Update

The Association's award winning community wind turbine has completed another successful year of energy generation, continuing to output green electricity to the grid and helping contribute to a record year of renewable energy generation in Scotland. All of the power generated is exported back to the national grid and the Association derives an income from the resale of this power and associated subsidies.

2018/19 saw the turbine location experience average wind speeds of 6.5 metres per second (or 14.5 miles per hour) which are ideal conditions for power generation.

Last year, the turbine was available to generate electricity for 99.3% of the year and generated 1.8 megawatts (1,815 kilowatts) of power which was slightly more than anticipated. This equates to the total annual power demand of 472 Scottish homes and carbon savings equating to 529 tonnes of carbon, the equivalent emissions of 130 Scottish homes. These numbers are slightly behind the performance recorded for 2017/18 which is due to the marginally lower wind speeds over the past year.

However, this second year of positive results has enabled the project to continue to deliver a community return through our Community Wind Fund which has so far supported 35 projects across the Cardenden area with investment totalling in excess of £50,000 and the hope is to continue to do so over the coming years.



Governance Framework

How are we managed?

We have a framework which ensures that we are accountable to our tenants and regulators.

We have appointed board members

Board members are elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), however in between AGM's, we can co-opt people onto the Board, who can then be elected at the following AGM. Any member is entitled to stand for election to the Board; there can be a maximum of 15 members of the Board and it meets every month.

Experience and training

Our Board members bring a wide range of their own knowledge and experience to the Association, Board members are also provided with additional training to assist them in fulfilling their duties. There are currently 10 Board members, 2 of whom are tenants of Ore Valley Housing Association. We are always looking to recruit tenants who are interested in getting involved and perhaps joining the Board.

Committees and other groups

In addition to the main Board, we have one linked Committee:

The Finance, Audit & Risk Management Committee meets every 3 months and considers:

1. Accounting policies and practices and any changes to them.
2. The extent to which the financial statements are affected by any unusual transactions in the year and how they are disclosed.
3. Whether the Association is obtaining good value for money from its external auditor.
4. Recommends to main Board appointment of the external auditor.
5. Whether there are sufficient, systematic reviews of risks faced by the Association and its subsidiaries, whilst reviewing internal financial control and risk management systems.
6. Finalising our program of internal audits, reviewing the outcomes and agreeing action plans aimed at delivering service improvement.
7. Consideration and evaluation of projects which result in significant expenditure and risk.

Value For Money

To us, value for money means making the best use of our resources so that we are achieving the best possible outcome for our tenants. This means making sure that our rents are affordable while still being able to provide the quality of housing and the level of service our tenants expect from us.

It also means, delivering maximum value to all customers whilst minimising costs. We do believe it is important to control costs and minimise waste, however this is not our sole consideration; we also know that effective responses to the needs of our tenants and other customers is crucial to making the best use of available, or limited resources.

As a small Housing Association, it is important that we constantly review our expenditure, services and processes; paying the right price for the goods and services we buy. The focus on delivering value for money and continuous improvement is helping us develop and invest in keeping Ore Valley's services strong for both current and future tenants.

Value for money is not always entirely straightforward, as outcomes are not just about getting the most for our money, it is also about what difference we make to the environment and communities through social and economic benefits. The tenant satisfaction survey carried out in 2016/17 showed an increase in the level of satisfaction with the value for money provided by Ore Valley Housing Association.

However this is an area where we will never be complacent. We do accept that people will generally want to pay less and receive more, we will do our best to control the costs over which we have influence.



Our Staff



Andrew Saunders
Chief Executive
Officer



Joanne Cargill
Executive
Support Officer



Nick Clark
Business
Development
Manager



Victoria Murdoch
Business
Development
Assistant



Jordan Rodger
Business
Development
Assistant



Colin McInnes
Housing Manager



Tommy Braid
Housing Officer



Kittaya Sung
Housing Officer



Ryan Doyle
Housing Trainee



Danielle Porteous
Tenancy Support &
Wellbeing Officer



Maryjane Elder
Senior Corporate
Support Officer



Megan Sneddon
Customer Services
Advisor



Elaine Ganley
Customer Services
Advisor



Alice Quinn
Technical Officer



Lesley Fleming
Corporate Support
Officer/Housing
Officer - MMR



Teri Grubb
Finance Assistant



Kerry Curtis
Finance Assistant



Michael Linklater
Finance Manager



Mark Fleming
Communications
Officer



Alan Ross
Cleaner/Caretaker

Our Board

Chair Susan McDonald
Tom Allan
John Flynn
Isobel Muirhead

Vice Chair Gavin Smith
Tom Dougan
Alan Johnstone

Secretary Andrew Gibb
Rosalind Eals
Mark McLintock

The Future

Once again this year there is a great challenge when trying to predict what the future may hold amidst the political uncertainty following, amongst other things, the referendum decision to leave the European Union. Three years on from the referendum on EU membership, the impact of that decision seems just as unclear.



Despite this time of uncertainty and continuing economic pressures we continue to look ahead with a commitment to increasing our housing provision, our involvement in community initiatives, improving the quality of our existing homes and associated services.

During the coming year we will see a number of legislative and regulatory changes which will impact on our workload and resources. For the first time we will be treated as a public body in terms of freedom of information legislation. The Scottish Housing Regulator has introduced new regulatory standards and we are required to carry out robust self assessment and evidence in order to give assurance to the Regulator that we comply with these standards.

There is much focus within the news on a number of issues which we should take account of in relation to our work :

- The impact of climate change.
- The number of homeless families with children in unsuitable temporary accommodation.
- The need to provide truthful and accurate information to the population.

In fulfilling our role we will do our absolute best to take account of these quite fundamental issues. Our main objectives for the next year are :

- To offer support to all of our tenants who are affected by issues which impact on their ability to sustain their tenancy and on their sense of wellbeing.
- To upgrade our website and tenant portal to provide more useful information and opportunities for tenants to utilise online digital services.
- To complete a comprehensive satisfaction survey of our tenants.
- To support our tenants to participate more fully in shaping our services and setting standards for performance, through a range of formal and informal structures and digital opportunities.
- To continue to deliver a programme of maintenance and improvement to our housing stock in the form of new kitchens, new showers, electrical system upgrades as well as continuing to maintain our properties through cyclical works such as external paintwork and gas heating maintenance. In particular we will be considering how best to comply with new regulations in relation to fire safety, as well as other areas which may impact on tenant safety.
- To prioritise measures to achieve compliance with EESSH (Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing) which will have a direct impact on comfort levels and energy costs.
- To continue to review housing needs in our core area of central Fife and identify opportunities to develop new housing.
- To continue to work in partnership through the Fife Housing Association Alliance and consider opportunities for closer collaboration with others in delivering and improving services.
- To continue to manage and distribute funds to support community projects and activities from the wind turbine operated by one of our subsidiary companies at Dundonald in Cardenden.

Above all else we remain committed to sustain high levels of customer service to our tenants and others seeking to access our services. We are here to help. We look forward to a busy year ahead and welcome comments and views on all aspects of the service we provide.



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Housing Association



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Consultants

Solicitors

Thorntons Law LLP, Dundee

Auditors

Bird Simpson, Dundee
Quinn Internal Audit Services, Livingston

Finance Services

Chiene & Tait, Edinburgh

Bankers

Royal Bank of Scotland
Scottish Building Society

Architects

ECDA, Glasgow

Quantity Surveyors

Hardies, Dunfermline
F3 Building Surveyors, Edinburgh

Structural Engineers

Bayne Stevenson Associates, Dunfermline

IT and Web Support

Brightbridge, Grangemouth
Adonis Media, Dunfermline
Housing Online, Lancing