



Annual Report

2021/22

Chair Report



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

The past year continued to be extremely challenging in so many ways for us organisationally and for all of our tenants, to whom we provide services.

It has been impossible to ignore the continuing impact of the global covid pandemic and the very difficult circumstances this has created in terms of providing services and high levels of tenancy support to all of our tenants who have required it.

We have continued to recognise the growing need for new high quality affordable housing options and have been working hard to bring forward proposals for sites at the former Bowhill Miners Institute site in Cardenden and the former Fabtek factory site in Lochgelly which between them will provide over 60 new homes.

These new homes follow the completion and occupation of 20 new homes at Carden Mill Brae in Cardenden and 27 New Homes at Weavers Row in Lochgelly.

We continue to work on further proposals for new homes in Cowdenbeath and Lochore.

During the year we were able to complete our organisational review which resulted in the recruitment of additional staff members who are engaged directly in the provision of services to tenants and other customers. We continue to work hard to ensure that the services we provide represent good value for money.

The organisational review has also provided an increased focus on the development of our Tenancy Support and Tenant Engagement services and we are looking forward to working with tenants to help sustain tenancies and obtain views on how we can improve our services.

As well as providing new homes and improving services we are continuing to maintain and improve our existing homes and during the year we delivered kitchen replacement, roof replacement, electrical upgrades and external painterwork programmes. We were delighted to deliver. We will continue to ensure that our homes provide comfortable places to live and meet the legal and regulatory requirements.

In terms of the wider Community we have been able to continue to support a range of community organisations and projects through our community development fund which in turn is supported from our wind turbine project.

During the course of the year we welcomed a number of new Board members who have given their time to support the Governance and strategic direction of the organisation.

It has been an eventful and challenging year and I would like to thank all of 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 another challenging year.

Review of Our Activities and Achievements over the Year

Tenant Participation

Due to Covid-19 protection restrictions our engagement with tenants has been limited. This has had an adverse impact on tenant participation activities, but we have continued to deliver our core services while still providing support for our more vulnerable tenants.

Work is now underway to review our Tenant Participation Strategy for 2022-2025 and a number of tenant led focus groups are being planned to help us review this strategy and develop our Tenant and Community Engagement Plan.

We are encouraged that our Tenant Satisfaction Survey (July 2022) identified that of the tenants interviewed (291) all of them were either satisfied or very satisfied with the opportunities given to them to participate in our decision making processes.

However, we do recognise that we need to reach out to those tenants who have indicated that they would like to become more involved, either through board membership, or involvement in our estate management group or a new tenant security panel.

In addition to the above we also need to make sure our comments and complaints procedures make it easier for all our tenants to share their views and opinions so that their feedback can be used to shape how we deliver our services in the following key areas:

1. Information and Communication
2. Customer Care
3. Tenant Participation
4. Repairs and Housing Quality
5. Value for Money
6. Your Neighbourhood

If you would like to join us to discuss any of the above key service areas, please call Vicky Murdoch on 01592 721917 or emailhousing@orevalleyha.org.uk



Property Allocations

During the year April 2021 to March 2022, we let a total of 89 properties. 54 of these properties were relets with an average relet time of 48 days. In addition, following the completion of phase 2 at Weavers Row, Lochgelly and Phases 1 & 2 at Carden Mill Brae, Cardenden, we were also able to increase our social housing stock by letting a mix of 35 new build properties.

39% of all lets were made to applicants with a priority need due to homelessness.

We are undertaking a review of our internal void management procedures so that we can bring our void relet times back to our pre-pandemic performance levels.

If you would like more information about how to apply for a home, please contact our Housing Team on 01592 721917 or you can apply online by going to www.fifehousingregister.org.uk

Re-Lets



Lets to existing tenants



Lets to housing list applicants



Lets to homeless applicants



2021/2022 total number is lets

New-Lets



Lets to existing tenants



Lets to housing list applicants



Lets to homeless applicants



Total

Mid Market Rent Properties

Ore Valley Housing Association manages 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 homes are leased to Ore Valley Enterprises by Fife Council and are located in Kirkcaldy, Lochgelly, Kelty and Dysart. Ore Valley Enterprises also leases 31 homes in Lochore from Ore Valley Housing Association.

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

Our Repair Service

Rogerson Plumbing and Heating continue to deliver our repairs and maintenance service and we have received excellent feedback on the quality of work and the service provided by them. We continue to see a constant high level of performance standards being provided.

Kingdom Gas continued to deliver the gas servicing and repairs contract. During the course of the year Kingdom Gas was bought by Dundee based McGill and the contract transferred to them. Plans to re-tender our gas contract were moved forward so that procurement can take place in the coming year.

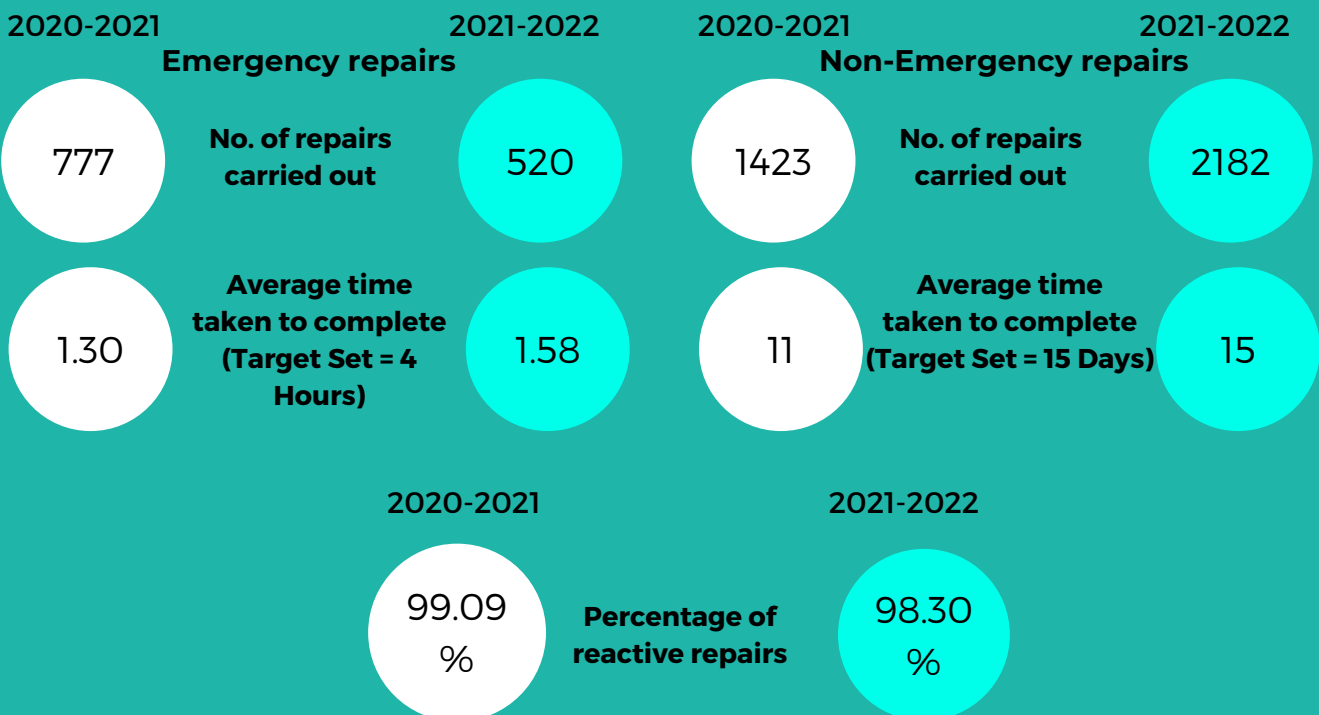
We work very closely with all of our contractors to ensure repairs are completed within given timescales to a high standard, whilst ensuring that our tenants are receiving the best and most cost effective repairs service possible.

During the year we recruited a Minor Repairs Officer, who carries out our inspections and some minor repairs that you tell us about. He works closely with our frontline team and our contractors, ensuring that the service we provide is of a high standard.

How are we doing?

During 2020-2021 we saw an increase in the amount of emergency repairs being completed. This was due to us prioritising our repairs differently so that we could deal with urgent repairs at the same time as our emergencies due to the pandemic. In 2021-2022 we saw our average days taken to complete a repair increase. This was mainly due to repairs being raised in 2020-2021 but not being completed until 2021-2022, again due to the restrictions in place during the pandemic.

How are we doing?



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 has a program in place which initiates contact with tenants two months ahead of their Gas Service anniversary date.

Each year, due to repeat no accesses, we have to take additional measures to ensure our tenants are safe.

Due to the processes in place and the majority of tenants working with us to ensure that they have an up to date gas service certificate, in 2021/22, 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 477 of our homes, resulting in a range of electrical improvements and upgrades being completed.
- Our ongoing kitchen replacement programme resulted in new kitchens being installed in 72 homes.
- External paintwork was carried out to 215 properties.
- 28 properties received new gas boilers, improving energy efficiency.
- 12 Roofs were replaced
- 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.

Rent Arrears

Funding for paying our loans, repairs, maintenance, property improvements and all the other services we provide is reliant almost solely upon income from our rents. Therefore, the amount of money we have available to develop and improve our services is directly related to the amount of rent we collect each year.

The total value (£) of gross rent arrears as at 31st March 2022 was £128,613 which is 4.01% of the total rent due for the reporting year. Gross rent arrears are made up of ex-tenant arrears and current tenant arrears. Current tenant rent arrears amounted to £87,046 which is 2.72% of the total rent due for the reporting year.

Our target for current tenants is to have no more than 3.0% rent arrears, and despite the financial pressures caused by the pandemic we have been able to support tenants to maintain their rent payments. With the assistance of the Scottish Government Covid-19 Tenancy Grant application scheme we were able to support some of our tenants who were more adversely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic with the award of £23,072 paid towards their rent arrears.

However, we are aware that the challenge of supporting tenants to prevent them from falling behind with their rent payments will only continue as we move into a period of increasing inflation and higher costs as a result of rising food and energy prices.

10% of all our tenants have arrears greater than 1/12 of their annual rent charge. This amounts to a total debt of £66,103. 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.

With an increasing number of tenants now claiming Universal Credit, some of these tenants are finding it more difficult to manage their rent payments as living costs increase.

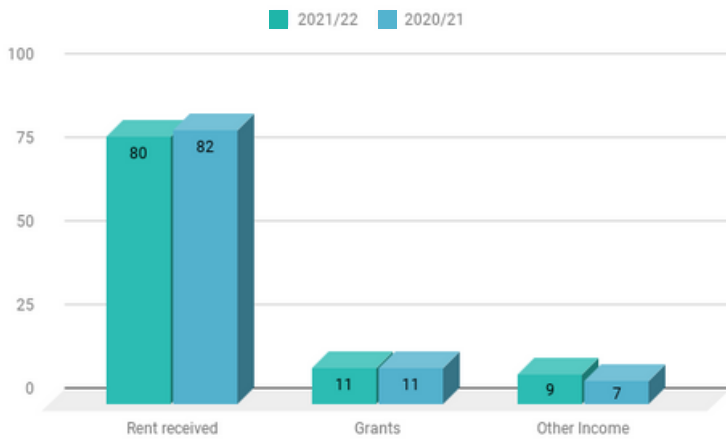
Tenants who may be experiencing difficulties can speak to our Tenancy Support and Wellbeing Officer who is available to provide advice and support to help tenants increase their household income either through referrals to programmes to get them into employment or assistance with accessing personal budgeting support or debt management services.

We are also working in partnership with a range of other providers such as Greener Kirkcaldy, Kingdom Works and the Fife Voices Advocacy Project so that we can make referrals on behalf of our tenants who may benefit from ongoing support to help them manage their money.

In addition to the above, to address our ongoing concerns about the increasing number of people who are experiencing hardship and poverty in our communities, we are now directing more resources to our own tenancy support fund and continue to provide financial support to the Cardenden Community Fridge which is an important food recycling project which provides a free to access service for everyone in the Cardenden area.

If you or someone you know is struggling to make their rent payments, please call Danielle Porteous on 01592 721917 or email housing@orevalleyha.org.uk so that we can provide the appropriate advice and support as soon as possible.

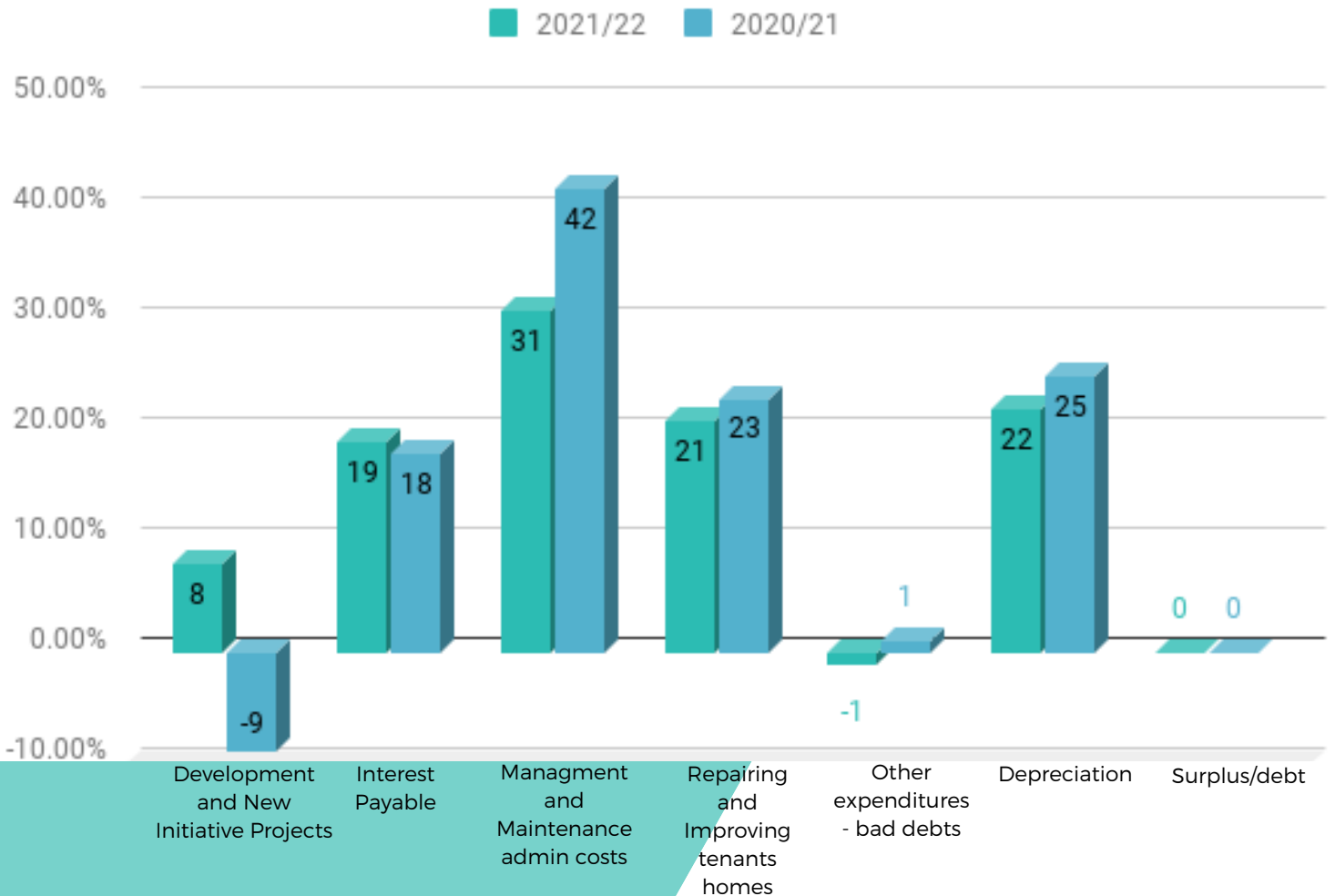
Breakdown of every £1 recieved



Income and Expenditures Account

	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022
Turnover	£3,645,705	£3,926,414
Operating Costs	£2,830,245	£3,074,913
Operating Surplus	£815,460	£851,501
Interest Recievable	£17,177	£13,717
Interest Payable	£-561,162	£-764,978
Remeasurement of pension deficit	£-335,216	£197,481
Surplus / Deficit For Year	£-63,741	£297,721

Breakdown of Income and Expenditure Account



Balance Sheet

As of 31st of the March

	2020/21	2021/22	
Fixed Assets			
Housing Properties	£36,913,227	£41,702,761	Housing Properties less depreciation
	<u>£36,913,227</u>	<u>£41,702,761</u>	
Other Fixed Assets	£864,380	£857,541	Vans, Office Equipment, Retail
	<u>£37,777,607</u>	<u>£42,560,212</u>	
Current Assets			
Debtors	£816,792	£831,389	Money owed to us
Cash at bank and in hand	£4,111,117	£1,771,137	
	<u>£4,927,909</u>	<u>£2,602,526</u>	
Creditors: amounts due within one year	(£1,315,240)	(£1,688,436)	Money we owe to other people
Total assets less current liabilities	£41,390,276	£43,474,302	
Creditors: amounts owed after more than one year	(£40,628,893)	(£42,415,195)	Bank loans still to be repaid & housing grants to be set against housing properties
	<u>£761,383</u>	<u>£1,059,107</u>	
Capital and Reserves			
Share capital non-equity	<u>78</u>	<u>81</u>	Represents members shares at £1 each
Revenue reserves	£761,305	£1,059,026	Company's reserves
	<u>£761,383</u>	<u>£1,059,107</u>	

Housing Adaptions

Every year we receive funding to adapt the homes of tenants whose medical needs and requirements have changed since moving into their home. These 'medical adaptations' can include bathroom alterations and the installation of stair lifts and other major adjustments to the home. They can also be simple adaptations with things such as handrails being fitted. The adaptations are completed following a referral from an Occupational Therapist who is a healthcare professional.

Between April 2021 and March 2022, we completed 63 medical adaptations compared to 23 completed during the previous year. The impact of the COVID pandemic which resulted in delays in being able to carry out work, when lockdowns limited access, caused longer waiting times for some tenants. In the year prior to the pandemic the average completion time from referral by the Occupational Therapist was 34 days.

A total of £33,439.40 was spent on adaptations in 21/22 which was mainly funded through grants received from the Scottish Government.



New Build Housing Developments

Ore Valley HA 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 development of new sites in Cardenden, Lochgelly, Lochore and Cowdenbeath. It is expected that two projects, one in Cardenden and one in Lochgelly, will be ready to commence construction this financial year which between them will deliver around 60 new homes.

One of our projects is the historic C-listed former Bowhill Miners Institute building (pictured) which has been unused for around 30 years. It will include the provision of 10 new homes.

The site of the former Fabtek factory in Lochgelly has also been acquired and plans to demolish the derelict building on the site are being taken forward. A planning application for 46 homes and 2 retail units is being prepared.

We have also completed the full refurbishment of an uninhabitable tenement building and a shop in Cowdenbeath High Street. The four homes created provide much needed high quality living, in a greatly improved building in the town centre and the shop has been relet.

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.



Ore Valley Community Initiatives



The Ore Valley Business Centre, based on Main Street in Lochgelly, saw another year of high occupancy and footfall despite the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. 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 on the built environment.

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, economic growth and the provision of much needed services. New tenants in the last year include brokers The Mortgage Bank, Dialog Freight who are an international shipping company and Mindful Monkeys who offer support to families. Several of our existing businesses expanded their operations in the centre as well as many saw increased demand for their critical services during the pandemic.

In the last year, in addition to the new businesses we welcomed, we also saw a further significant increase in footfall due to the large number of events hosted in the centre and an expansion of public-facing services (such as being the site of our Sustainable Transport Hub which hosts our electric car club vehicles and electric car charging) and support projects offered by the tenant businesses themselves. As a result, the centre continues to deliver on its aims of spurring job creation and delivering improvements to our local community.



Lochgelly Miners Institute

The historic Miners Institute continues to be the home for a varied number of businesses including the popular Zodiac School of Dance, Studio 129 who manufacture clothing, furniture upholstery and vintage car interiors, award-winning photographer Sara Webster and hair salon Studio L.

Retail Units

Our commercial retail unit operation expanded to include our first site in Cowdenbeath as well as our existing properties in Lochgelly. Despite the pandemic, all seven remained fully occupied throughout and continue to offer affordable options for commercial space in the heart of both towns.



Wind Turbine Update

The Association's wind turbine is located near South Dundonald and last year was the device's fifth year of operation and clean power generation. 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.

The turbine itself is a 500kW Enercon E53 turbine with a height of 73 metres to the blade hub and a maximum height of 99 metres to the highest blade tip. Its clever design allows it to generate power at lower wind speeds (as little as 6 miles per hour) than other turbines and can also handle higher wind speeds (up to 60 miles per hour) before having to cease power generation. 2021/22 saw the turbine location experience average wind speeds of 6.3 metres per second (or 14.1 miles per hour) which are ideal conditions for power generation.

Last year, the turbine was available to generate electricity for 99.1% of the year and generated 1,722,691 kilowatts (1,722 megawatts) of power which was slightly below anticipated output due to a relatively quiet period of wind between April and September last year. This equates to the total annual power demand of 430 Scottish homes and carbon savings equating to 302 tonnes of carbon, the equivalent emissions of 74 Scottish homes.

However, this latest year of positive results has enabled the project to continue to deliver a direct community return through our Community Wind Fund which has supported a number of local projects and the hope is to continue to do so over the coming years.

Value For Money

To us at Ore Valley HA, Value for Money (VFM) 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, communities and quality of life through social and economic benefits.

The previous tenant satisfaction survey showed an increase in the level of satisfaction with the value for money provided by Ore Valley HA. A headline from the recently completed survey indicates that satisfaction has increased again.

However this is an area where we will never be complacent and in the coming year we will be working with tenants to consider how we can improve satisfaction levels in relation to the provision of Value for Money.

We do accept that people will generally want to pay less and receive more and whilst this may not always be possible, we will do our best to control the costs over that which we have influence.



The Future

In previous years I have spoken about uncertainty and the risk it poses and have always been optimistic about the future. This year there are once again possibly even greater uncertainties and risks which we must face. We are active in our preparation for whatever comes in our direction to ensure that we can continue to provide the homes, services, support and the best possible value for money needed by our tenants and within our communities.



We always continue to learn lessons from our peers across the housing sector and from our own experiences. We will continue to develop new approaches and improve our existing practices to deliver services effectively. Our objective is always to learn and continuously improve.

During the coming year we are planning to work with our tenants and others to develop our approach to tenant and community engagement activities. To do so we have now put in place a dedicated member of staff whose role it is to move this highly important work forward.

Despite this time of great uncertainty and continuing challenge we continue to look ahead, to pursue, support and deliver our commitment, to increase the number of homes we provide, our involvement in community initiatives, improving the quality of our existing homes and delivering high quality associated services.

There is no doubt that the looming cost of living crisis and the removal of the energy price cap, combined with labour and supply chain issues resulting from Brexit, will continue to have a very significant impact on us all, whether that is in managing household finances or managing larger scale budgets which support the provision of services by organisations such as Ore Valley HA.

New Government targets relating to the reduction of carbon emissions and slowing the impact of climate change pose an additional significant challenge, which will impact on how we approach future maintenance programmes, we will continue to gather and improve the data we have on our homes and prepare options on how we may proceed to move closer to the targets set.

The Board has considered and approved strategic objectives for Ore Valley HA focussed around the themes of; Equality and Social Justice, Housing Quality, Tenant Safety, The Environment, Sustainability and Service Improvement all supported by the presence of a strong corporate core.

Our main objectives for the next year are :-

- To hold equality and social justice at the heart of what we do.
- To engage, listen to and involve our customers in what we do
- To provide more homes.
- To provide better homes.
- To improve our services.
- To develop a strong corporate core delivering good organisational governance.

We expect and look forward to a busy year ahead and will work hard to deliver a bright future.

Andrew Saunders
Chief Executive Officer



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Consultants

Solicitors

TC Young LLP, Edinburgh

Auditors

Bird Simpson, Dundee

Quinn Internal Audit Services,
Livingston

Finance Services

Chiene & Tait, Edinburgh

Bankers

Royal Bank of Scotland
Scottish Building Society
Triodos

Architects

ECDA, Glasgow

Quantity Surveyors

Hardies, Dunfermline
F3 Building Surveyors,
Edinburgh

Structural Engineers

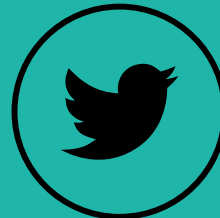
Bayne Stevenson
Associates, Dunfermline

IT and Web Support

Brightbridge,
Grangemouth
Adonis Media,
Dunfermline
Housing Online, Lancing



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