

ANNUAL REPORT 2013 - 2014

It's Annual Report Time Again!

This is now the fifth annual report that I have written and from previous feedback I know you find it very interesting. For those of you who are new to Oakhurst Gardens, the Homes & Communities Agency request that we report various parts of our service to all our residents on an annual basis. As always, I hope you find this report informative, and if you would like any further information please talk to a member of the Estate Team.



How we kept you informed and involved

We continue to circulate our monthly newsletter specifically to Oakhurst Gardens and hold monthly surgeries. All residents receive a copy of the minutes of the monthly surgeries so even those people unable to attend are kept informed.



At the end of each Surgery meeting there is time allocated for any residents to raise issues / concerns or ideas for improvement which are then discussed and implemented as necessary.

The four notice boards around the site are updated regularly – they are used to inform every-one of events that are happening.

There are now two websites – one is specifically for LRHS Property Management with the Rustington Hall website containing all information / photographs etc for Rustington Hall and Oakhurst Gardens.

Songs of Praise meetings are now held in the large lounge at Rustington Hall and are well attended by residents from both Oakhurst Gardens and Rustington Hall. The high attendance reflects how much people enjoy sharing their faith and singing along to the old hymns.

Every Wednesday residents are invited to play Bingo at Booker Hall and once a month there is a Coffee Morning which involves a 'bring and buy' sale with all funds raised used to subsidise trips out.

The weekly computer club is well attended with residents enjoying 'surfing the net'!

All residents are invited to attend the Annual General Meeting which this year takes place on 2nd July – the Society's auditors attend the meeting to discuss the financial performance and the Chairman provides a review of activities.

What next . . .

We will continue to think of ways in which we can keep you involved if anyone has any ideas please talk to a member of the estate staff.

All about your home



The kitchen refurbishments were completed in July 2013.

A total of four communal carpets in the 'old blocks' were replaced last year.

The outside of Booker Hall was repainted as promised.

The Guest Suite remains popular, with new bedding, curtains and crockery purchased during the year.

For the third year we took part in the South & South East in Bloom and again achieved 'Level 5 – Outstanding' for 2013. We are currently working on this year's entry with the theme 'Growing for Gold'.

Shaun Lamb has now completed his painting and decorating level 2 training course and is responsible for all the cyclical redecorating at Oakhurst Gardens.

So what next?

Three of the 'old blocks' will have the communal carpets replaced in 2014/15.

We will be replacing all the windows and patio doors on the 'new blocks' with works due to commence in early July 2014.

The 'new blocks' will have all the windows and patio doors replaced.

Now for Tenancy and Rent Information



We continue to hold rent and service charge meetings to inform you of what we anticipate will happen in the April rent review. We use the government target rent formula ensuring that all rent increases are kept to a minimum.

We now issue quarterly rent statements so that you are kept informed of your rent account.

Your Neighbourhood and Community



Regular estate inspections continue to take place which residents are invited to attend.

We were able to get a donation from Southern Water of another six water butts which have now been fitted around the site.

Our two resident Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators continue an excellent job of trying to ensure everyone is kept safe and secure in their home. They also attend regular Neighbourhood Watch Meetings and report any information as necessary.

How Littlehampton & Rustington Housing Society has grown

LRHS Property Management

We purchased our first offsite property, 33 St Flora’s Road, Littlehampton in July 2013 with our second purchase 13 Clun Road, Littlehampton in April 2014. Both of these properties have already increased in value, therefore adding to the Society’s assets.

As I am sure you are all aware the LRHS Property Management portfolio continues to grow. Since our first offsite property in 2009 we now manage a total of 116 offsite tenancies. In order we are able to continue to provide good customer service to everyone the estate office now has four members of staff. Sally Morris remains the Housing Manager with Colin Hills and Kim Derringham assisting in the day to day running of Oakhurst Gardens. Kim is also responsible for managing the offsite properties together with Louise Moore.



Rustington Hall @ Home



The domiciliary support service, Rustington Hall @ Home has received CQC Registration and already helps . This service helps people to remain in their home whilst receiving some assistance with personal care, housekeeping, shopping etc.

Plans for the Future

Firstly it is hoped that the Society will purchase a further two offsite properties within the financial year 2014-2015.

We are also hoping to continue to grow the LRHS Property Management Portfolio which is likely to mean that the estate team will continue to grow.

The Estate Office will be moving into the old ‘Wardens House’ in late 2014. This will increase the office space and also make us easier to find!

The next programme of major refurbishment works at Rustington Hall are expected to commence in August 2014 and will take until 2015 to be complete.

We are currently investigating the possibility of employing another Maintenance Apprentice.





How do we give value for money?

Value for money is tested on a cyclical basis, which requires retendering and evaluation of external service providers, striking a balance between cost and customer focussed outcomes. Wherever possible, residents are involved in these processes.

All proposals for major works are discussed at the monthly 'surgeries' and wherever possible we ensure that residents are able to exercise choice.

There is a requirement that all works costing in excess of £5,000 need to have three comparative quotes and a proposal is made to the Board, where a final decision is made.

How is our performance evaluated?

The Society's performance is evaluated in the context of the achievement of standards within approved budget forecasts and if necessary corrective action is taken. The performance is reported at least quarterly to the Society's Trustees who form the Management Board.

The Society operates systems of personnel management with regular supervision and appraisal processes. This ensures that regulatory quality standards are maintained, that financial viability is sustained and the outcomes are further tested on a regular basis against customer satisfaction, which is obtained through consultation meetings and surveys.

This holistic approach ensures that the Society is able to prove it is providing value for money services. If anyone would like any further information on performance evaluation please do not hesitate to contact Sally Morris, Housing Manager.

So who do we have to report to?



We now report to The Homes and Communities Agency (previously Tenant Services Authority) and we continue to submit annual Regulatory and Statistical Returns. The Housing Manager remains responsible for ensuring all regulations set by the HCA are met.

The Society's business plan's are reviewed regularly at Management Team Meetings to ensure all agreed targets are completed within timescales.

And now for all the statistics for April 2013 – March 2014!



It is a requirement that within our Annual Report we provide you with various statistics – so here goes:-

During April 2013 – March 2014 we were particularly busy with a total re-letting of 15 properties of which:

Studio – Ground Floor = 3 First Floor = 4

One Bedroom – Ground Floor = 2 First Floor = 3

Bungalows - 3

Three tenants passed away, seven tenants moved to residential care four tenants undertook internal moves and one tenant moved offsite.

We had NO voids during this period and so achieved 100% occupancy.

56% of Oakhurst Garden tenants received Supporting People funding.

There were NO rent arrears from any tenants during this period.

The analysis of the Tenants Satisfaction Surveys completed in 2013/14 showed:

How satisfied are you with the following :	1 Poor	2 Satisfactory	3 Good	4 Very Good	5 Excellent	N/A
Property / Communal Areas	3%	7%	25%	30%	18%	17%
Estate / Maintenance Staff	0.5%	6%	16%	24%	38%	15.5%
Careline / Support	0%	5.5%	21.5%	21%	31%	21%
Facilities	0%	0%	9%	25%	20%	46%
Information you receive	0%	5%	16%	35%	34%	10%

During 2013/14 no formal complaints were received and ten concerns were recorded and resolved.

Our Governance arrangements

There are currently eleven Management Board Members. Sue Holland (Chairman), Simon Kenning (Vice Chairman and Secretary), Derek Whittaker (Chairman of Strategy Committee), Mike Scott (Chairman of Finance Committee), Anthony Jones (Chairman of Audit Committee), David Cakebread, Robert Page, David Cross, Hazel Williams, Janet Gladston and Thomas Ridley.

Robert Page, Hazel Williams and Simon Kenning take a special interest in Oakhurst Gardens.

The Management Board meets at least four times a year and also convene the Annual General Meeting.

Making a Complaint

From time to time all organisations can make mistakes and so we welcome the opportunity to put things right when you are dissatisfied. We have introduced a ‘concerns register’ where all informal complaints are recorded with all actions taken reported – this register is reviewed regularly by the Chief Executive Officer and Board Members.

Most dissatisfaction can be quickly resolved by talking to the Housing Manager. However we recognise that some tenants may want to use the formal complaints procedure. If you are unhappy with the way in which your complaint is dealt with you can ask for the issue to be further reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer. After this if you are still dissatisfied the matter can be referred to the Chairman of the Management Board. Finally if you feel that you remain unhappy you can ask for the Independent Ombudsman Service to look at your complaint. Full details of how to make a complaint can be found in the Tenants Handbook.

Feedback

We would welcome your comments on the production of this report and you can do this by returning the feedback form below or you can tell us what you think at one of our regular meetings.

All returned feedback forms will be entered into a free prize draw. You could win one of two £10 gift vouchers. Please hand completed forms back into the Estates Office by Friday 11th July.

Name : _____ Property No: _____

Did you find the report clear? Yes ____ No ____ Partly ____

What section did you find most interesting? _____

What additional information would you like to be included in future reports?

What is the best thing about living at Oakhurst Gardens?

What would you most like to see improved at Oakhurst Gardens?
