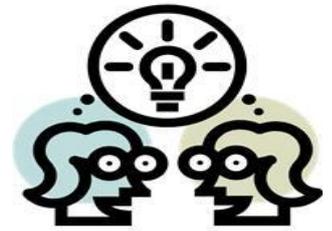


ANNUAL REPORT 2015 - 2016

Oakhurst Gardens 7th Annual Report

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. This report always receives excellent feedback with everyone enjoying the different sections.



The first thing to report is the successful commissioning of the new offices which everyone will agree were much needed with the increased number of office staff and are also really impressive.

The addition of the flat above the offices now means we have 87 properties at Oakhurst Gardens.

How we kept you informed and involved

This section does seem to be the same as in previous years with the monthly Newsletters, Surgeries, Notice Boards and the Website being our most important ways of keeping everyone informed of what is going on.



The introduction of the time allocated at the end of each Surgery for anyone to raise their concerns seems to have worked well. Both Sally and Colin are able to respond to any issues and if necessary Sally can raise the concern at Management Team. We hope you agree that this has proved to be very helpful to everyone.

We have reintroduced the 'Suggestions Box' which is located in the laundry – this has already proved very useful with a few ideas being put forward.

As always if we have something we need to make everyone aware of we continue to circulate memos to all individual properties. Thank you to Alan and John for their postal duties!

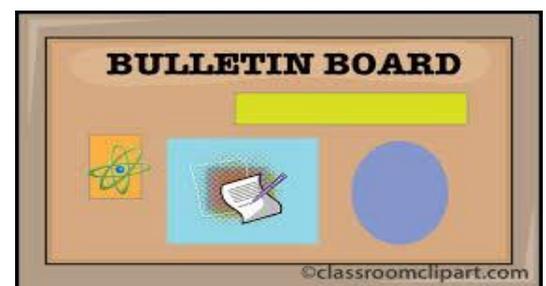
All residents are invited to attend the Annual General Meeting which this year takes place on 14th July – the Society's auditors attend the meeting to discuss the financial performance and the Chairman provides a review of activities.

The different clubs and activities continue to take place and now that we have two volunteer drivers we have been able to maintain the weekly shopping run and also restart the monthly outings. Thank you Alan and John again!

What next . . .

In the report last year we wrote that when we moved to our new offices we would consider displaying a notice board.

Although we haven't implemented this yet we will be purchasing a board where we can display the week's activities and any important information for the week ahead.



All about your home



Although it seems a little while ago now it is within this financial year that the double glazed replacement windows and patio doors on the new blocks were completed. All of the old blocks have now had the communal carpets replaced.

In our fifth entry at South & South East in Bloom awards we achieved the highest Level 5 – Outstanding!

The fantastic Sensory Garden was created and we were very fortunate to secure £8,000 lottery funding to help achieve this project. The garden already looks absolutely stunning and will continue to look better every year as the plants and shrubs become more established.

The pathway outside the gates to Oakhurst Gardens was tarmacked and Shaun had the unenviable task of repainting the black iron gates. Together with the new offices and the sensory garden we hope you agree that the entrance into Oakhurst Gardens is quite impressive! A lovely place to live, visit and work.

So what next?

We will continue with our cyclical redecoration works in your properties.

The dwarf walls at the front of the bungalows will be re-built where necessary and the front fascia's will be repainted.

The new garden contractors have already made a real improvement and this will continue over the next year.

We hope to be able to get all the edging of the grass back to where it needs to be – although is no mean feat for anyone to undertake. We also hope to ensure all exterior paintwork is repainted where necessary.

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 and Homes and Communities guidance when calculating the new rents.

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OAKHURST GARDENS

Your Neighbourhood and Community

Regular estate inspections continue to take place which residents are invited to attend. Whether residents attend or not both Sally and Colin undertake monthly inspections with all areas for improvement noted and given to the appropriate contractor, maintenance staff member to complete.



Our two resident Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators continued an excellent job of trying to ensure everyone is kept safe and secure in their home. They attended regular Neighbourhood Watch Meetings and reported any information as necessary. At time of writing we are aware that we are in urgent need of a new Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator as the two that we had have had to give up the roles for health reasons.

LRHS Property Management

We purchased one more property in Littlehampton which is used to accommodate six single people. We now have a total of five offsite properties all of which have added to the Society's assets.

The estate staff now manage a total of 165 offsite tenancies as well as the 87 tenancies at Oakhurst Gardens. Louise was promoted to Deputy Housing Manager and now works full time alongside Sally Morris. We also employed another Maintenance Technician, Stephen Greening.



So just a reminder of the estate staff: Sally Morris Housing Manager, Louise Moore Deputy Housing Manager, Colin Hills and Kim Gick Assistant Housing Managers and John Bodsworth, Stephen Greening, Shaun Lamb and Michael Stone, Maintenance Technicians.

Plans for the Future

We will continue with the growth of the LRHS Property Management Portfolio and increase staff levels as required. At this stage it is there are no further plans for the Society to make another offsite property purchase next year.

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.



All senior managers are responsible for preparing their own budgets each year. The finance team produce monthly management accounts which are circulated to managers in order they can check their expenditure against their budget.

How is our performance evaluated?

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 report to The Homes and Communities Agency and we have to submit annual Regulatory and Statistical Returns. The Housing Manager remains responsible for ensuring all regulations set by the HCA are met.

And now for all the statistics for April 2015 – March 2016!



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

During April 2015 – March 2016 there were an incredible eighteen properties that were re-let (a substantial increase from the previous year when there were only three)!

'Studio Ground Floor' = 4 First floor = 2

'Old blocks one bedroom' – Ground Floor = 1 First Floor = 2

'New blocks One Bedroom' – Ground Floor = 1 First Floor = 4 *Bungalows* = 4

Four tenants passed away, two moved to be closer to relatives, six went into 'extra care / residential homes' and six were internal moves.

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

62% of Oakhurst Garden tenants received Supporting People funding.

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

The analysis of the Tenants Satisfaction Surveys completed in 2015/16 showed:

How satisfied are you with the following :	1 Poor	2 Satisfactory	3 Good	4 Very Good	5 Excellent	N/A
Property / Communal Areas	2.5%	5%	16%	40%	31%	5.5%
Estate / Maintenance Staff	0%	0.5%	4%	22%	58.5%	15%
Careline / Support	0%	1%	7%	11%	53%	28%
Facilities	0%	0.5%	8%	23%	45.5%	23%
Information you receive	0%	0%	8%	35%	48%	9%

During 2015/16 no formal complaints were received and four concerns were recorded and resolved.

Our Governance arrangements

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

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.

Requests from last year's annual report feedback questionnaires

One tenant requested that we list all the significant projects that have been completed within the year. As this is the first time of reporting I have detailed below all the significant works that have been undertaken since I joined the Society – nine years ago!

Cavity wall and loft insulation, replacement storage heaters, new bathrooms and kitchens, double glazed windows, front doors and patio doors in the new blocks, new communal carpets in the old blocks, scooter shed, relaying of the paths to the new blocks, new Chubb Careline system, sensory garden, new office accommodation and new flat above. We also now have a total of four 'company' vehicles – two Berlingo's, a mini bus and one maintenance van.

Rustington Hall have completed two major works programme.

And that's just the projects with 'significant' expenditure.



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 17th June.

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?
