

# Shaping our future together

Sutton Housing Society



our review 2013/14

## Involving you

### What are we doing?

The Housing Operations Committee (HOC) made up of voluntary tenant and Board members and staff, met three times this year to review policies, scrutinize performance and influence service delivery.

In September, the members reviewed a detailed report and action plan on the 'STAR' survey results (Resident Satisfaction Survey); setting out recommendations for increasing satisfaction levels across all core services. A progress report on the actions was reported at every subsequent HOC meeting.

In December, the Society's lettings and transfer policy was reviewed. Staff who implement the policy were consulted and members of the HOC had a thorough debate about the management of the waiting list, before approving the revised policy.

Two new tenants joined HOC this year bringing valuable expertise and views.

The Society in partnership with the London Borough of Sutton, was successful in a tender process bidding for funds from the Department of Health (DoH) to improve the environment for people living with dementia at Cloverdale Court (Housing with Care scheme). This project began this year and will be completed early next year (2014-15).

Some of the improvements included the transformation of two communal lounges into a themed lounge and a sensory room, the installation of additional smart technology, upgrading all the lighting to common parts



of the scheme. A sensory garden has been designed by the entrance to the scheme. Wayfinders, artworks and colour co-ordination on each floor now assist tenants with directions.

A number of these improvements involved tenant contribution and participation, which remains ongoing. The feedback from tenants, staff, relatives and the public coming into Cloverdale is extremely positive and rewarding.

As part of the Society's commitment to community development and IT we have funded a new IT training suite at our main offices. In partnership with our IT provider we have installed new IT kiosks at some of our sheltered schemes.

### What we plan to do

Implement the STAR survey action plan over the next 2 years

The Society will be celebrating its 50th year with events involving all tenant groups.

*The external body responsible for the regulation of social landlords is the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). They set out guidelines as to what standards our services should reach, how these are scrutinised and reported.*

*Detailed reviews of our performance are undertaken by the Society's Board of Management and its Housing Operations Committee (HOC). The majority of HOC members are tenants.*

*This annual report summarises our performance, our work and the*

*financial position of the Society. It is aimed at all of our stakeholders and underpins our commitment to accountability.*

*If you would like to find out more about anything in this report or about the Society's work in general please get in touch with us at our head office, Pat Shaw House.*

# Involving you

## Customer service

### What are we doing?

We are committed to providing an excellent customer service. Last year the 'STAR' survey results (Resident Satisfaction Survey) showed 91% of our tenants expressed a positive view of their customer service experience. We are continuing to work with residents, staff and contractors to improve this.

#### **What we plan to do**

*This year we will be relaunching our website, improving content and functionality.*

*Review how we communicate with residents to ensure we are responding their needs.*

## Complaints

### What are we doing?

We aim to get things right 1st time but accept that mistakes can happen; we aim to correct those mistakes and learn from them.

This year we had 14 formal complaints, an increase by 1 from last year. All of those complaints followed the complaints procedure. Some were upheld and some were not. These complaints were reviewed by our Complaints Panel who meet annually, which is made up of tenants, SHS Officers, HOC and Board members.

This year complaints refresher training was held with all Society staff.

The profile of the complaints process has been raised by staff in a number of ways; at tenancy sign ups, at residents meetings and through newsletters and posters on noticeboards.

#### **What we plan to do**

*Build on the success of the Complaints Panel, continue to hold this annually, expanding the membership from across the Society's tenants.*

*Review the tenants complaint feedback form with HOC members.*



## Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of our tenants

### What are we doing?

This year a further two Scheme Managers qualified as Trusted Assessors improving the service delivery to tenants on minor aids and adaptations in their properties, as well as ensuring all the communal areas in sheltered schemes meet the tenants needs.

All our sheltered schemes have now had the warden call/communication equipment upgraded to be compatible with modern assistive technology. At Cloverdale Court through the DoH funding additional telehealth equipment has been purchased which can be 'bolted' on to the upgraded system, helping people to remain in their homes for life.

#### **What we plan to do**

*All of the Society's staff will attend Equality and Diversity training.*

*Complete a sheltered scheme profile report, analyse the results and make recommendations to meet our tenants needs.*

*Devise a Dementia Strategy and roll it out to all staff and tenants.*

# Your home

## Quality of accommodation

### What are we doing?

All our homes meet the Decent Homes Standard. We use our 'stock reinvestment' plan for planned cyclical and improvement works to properties. This year we spent £624,418 on major works to existing properties, the projects with spend over £10,000 were:

	£'000s
Completion of bathroom and rewiring programme at Trickett House	229
New communal boiler, water tanks and solar panels at Thomas House	187
New communal boiler at Margaret House (ongoing)	34
New lift at Thomas House (ongoing)	23
Warden call upgrades at Thomas and Trickett House	37
Lift upgrade at Ronald House	30
Internal decorations to communal areas at Wandle Valley	10

### What we plan to do

*Install new communal bathrooms, carpets to communal areas and a new scooter store at Cloverdale Court*

*Install new communal boilers at Dorothy Pettingell House*

*Start a kitchen replacement programme at Lancelot House*

*Start a bathroom replacement and rewiring programme at Nairn Court*

*Install new boilers at Robertson House*

*Replace windows at Green Lane*

*Replace the roof at Thomas House*

*Start the development of 12 new flats for older persons in Hackbridge.*

*Complete the feasibility for the redevelopment of The Cedars*



## Repairs and maintenance

### What are we doing?

Repairs is the key service that drives tenants' opinions of our overall service. We will continue to focus on how we can improve this service.

We have good working relationships with local contractors and close contact with tenants which enables us to respond efficiently to day to day repair requests. We monitor satisfaction on our repairs service via questionnaires and telephone surveys. Responses are actively encouraged; returned questionnaires are entered into a quarterly prize draw.

### What we plan to do

*We will continue to hold regular meetings with contractors to review performance and ensure they understand and comply with our Code of Conduct.*

*We will seek to maintain our performance (100%) on annual gas safety checks to properties with individual boilers.*

*We will increase the number of telephone surveys on our repair service.*

### How are we doing?

#### Repairs and Maintenance

In 2013/14 we spent £349,313 on routine repairs and planned maintenance compared to £374,753 in 2012/13.

Of the repairs & maintenance expenditure 24% was spent on planned maintenance and 76% on routine maintenance. In 2013/14 we spent an average of £554 per home on routine repairs compared to £500 in 2012/13.

	Repairs notified	Target days	Completed within target
Emergencies	124	1	98%
Urgent	401	5	98%
Routine	1081	28	99%

99% of all repairs were completed within target times, compared to a SHAPE\* average (2013/14) 99%.

Of the repair satisfaction questionnaires returned: 100% said it was easy to report their repair.

99% said the repair was carried out to their satisfaction.

\* SHAPE (smaller housing associations pursuing excellence).

# Your tenancy

## Allocations

### What are we doing?

We intend to let our homes fairly and to those in the highest need in accordance with our Lettings and Transfer policy.

We have a nominations agreement with the London Borough of Sutton and work in partnership with them to meet local housing needs.

An annual review of allocations was presented to HOC members for information. It covers a variety of areas such as, how many complaints we had regarding lettings (0), how many refusals (18), how many reviews of the waiting list (1), how many sensitive lettings (2) and number and percentage of lettings to BME groups (7 out of 33 in total). The members discussed the detail of the report and made some recommendations.

### What we plan to do

Raise the profile of our waiting list to BME groups by targeting organisations, centres and faith groups who represent these groups.

Establish regular liaison meetings with the Housing Centre to improve our working practices and reduce our empty property turnaround time.

## Tenancies

### What are we doing?

The HOC reviewed and approved the Illegal Occupation policy in September. The annual Tenancy checks were all conducted on time, and no subletting was found.

### What we plan to do

Review and update our Tenancy agreements.

## Rents

We send rent statements to all tenants four times a year. Rent statements are also available on request as required. We inform tenants of changes in their rent and service charges annually.



### How are we doing?

#### What is the average weekly net rent charged for different sizes of our homes?

	Rent
<b>General needs</b>	
Studio flats	£88.90
1 bed flat	£92.47
1 bed flat for older people	£88.04
2 bed flat/house	£115.10
3 bed house	£130.59
4 bed house	£138.26

#### Supported housing and/or housing for older people only

Studio flat	£78.89
1 bed flat	£91.45
2 bed flat	£100.31

#### What types of homes do we manage?

##### General Needs

General family	73
Older people	24
Single person including move-on	30

##### Supported Housing for Older People

Housing for older people (some special design features)	141
Designated supported housing for older people	153

##### Designated Supported Housing

People with learning difficulties	4
People with mental health problems	7
Young people leaving care	6
Offenders/people at risk of offending	6

**Total homes in management** 444

#### Who did we let our homes to?

Internal Transfer	1
Direct Application	11
Nominated by Local Authority	29
Referred from Social Services	0
Other	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>

#### Current tenant arrears 2.8% of annual rent debit

(SHAPE\* average 2013/14 – 2.5%)

#### In 2013/14 we had 41 lettings

#### It took on average 21 days to let a property

(SHAPE\* average 2013/14 – 21 Days)

#### 0.6% of our annual rent debit was lost due to empty properties

(SHAPE\* average 2013/14 – 0.54%)

# Your neighbourhood



## Neighbourhood management

### What are we doing?

We continue to carry out monthly estate inspections at Wandle Valley encouraging tenants to participate and contribute to the management of their estate.

We work closely with our partners, grounds and cleaning contractors and tenants to keep the neighbourhoods and communal areas associated with the properties we own safe, secure and clean.

On our sheltered schemes our Scheme Managers conduct monthly Health & Safety inspections and checks.

### **What we plan to do**

*Increase the number of tenants involved in scheme and estate inspections.*

*Investigate the possibility of allocating an annual budget to spend on improving the neighbourhood to each sheltered scheme.*

*Involve tenants in the grounds and cleaning maintenance specifications when they are due for renewal.*



## Anti-social behaviour

### What are we doing?

We believe everyone has the right to the quiet enjoyment of their home and that this shouldn't be spoiled by the unreasonable behaviour of others. As a result when we receive complaints of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) we take action.

We had four cases of ASB this year. Three of these have been resolved and closed successfully and one is ongoing. This is an improvement from last year.

Our working relationship with the Safer Neighbourhood Team as strengthened this year, helping us to act quickly in responding to complaints and ensuring appropriate action is taken against perpetrators and support given to victims.

Just as the Society expects staff to treat tenants with courtesy, promptness and professionalism, we expect tenants to treat staff with politeness. We will not accept inappropriate behaviour towards staff or any of our contractors. Where this occurs, in line with our Red File procedure tenant details are placed on a Red File register, they are informed of this and the review date. This year we have had two cases on the register. One case has been removed. The other case has remained and is being monitored.

### **What we plan to do**

*Review our Red File policy and procedure*

*All staff to receive refresher training on Red File procedure.*

# Value for money



We take providing value for money very seriously. Being careful about how we spend the money we receive ensures that the services we provide are cost effective, efficient and high quality.

## What are we doing?

We are members of Procurement for Housing. This is a purchasing consortium which generates savings using the collective purchasing power of social landlords.

We measure our performance in key service areas and continuously seek to improve upon these. We are members of SHAPE. This is a benchmarking group of small social landlords. Here our performance can be measured against other, similar organisations.

We bought new offices in Sutton. These will also provide training and meeting spaces. Relocation has also enabled the development of 3 new flats on the site of the old offices at Trickett House.

Where possible we seek to offer jobs and training to local people. This year we employed our first apprentice, Stacey Smither as Admin Assistant. We also seek to use local firms and suppliers. We find this provides comfort to our residents and improves their satisfaction.



*"I enjoyed the business and admin NVQ course at Carshalton college, but I learnt much more from my onsite training at the Society's offices"* Stacey Smither

## What we plan to do

*We continue develop a strategy to ensure the best use is made of our resources – our staff, our funds and our capital assets.*



# Summary financial statement

Year ended 31st March 2014

## Where our money came from

	£'000
Rents	2,167
Supporting People charges	127
Service Charges	450
Interest receivable	1
Other income	67

**Total income** £2,812

## Where our money went

	£'000
Management	288
Supporting People services	164
Services	476
Routine maintenance	247
Planned maintenance	102
Adaptations & improvements	78
Rent losses from bad debts	9
Depreciation of properties	252
Interest payable	75
Other	99

**Total expenditure** £1,790

**Surplus for the year** £1,022

We use our surplus to fund adaptations and improvements to our existing properties and when opportunities arise, to acquire or build more housing for rent. We also use some of our surplus to invest in resident involvement and services.

### Income & Expenditure (summary)

	2014	2013
	£'000	£'000
Turnover	2,811	2,728
Operating costs	(1,715)	(1,578)
Operating surplus	1,096	1,150
Profit on sale of fixed assets	–	371
Interest receivable	1	3
Interest payable	(75)	(74)
Surplus for the year	1,022	1,450

### Balance Sheet (summary)

Housing properties net of grant	10,838	10,667
Other fixed assets	753	545
Cash and investments	744	432
Net current liabilities	(400)	(947)
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	11,935	10,697
Loans	1,502	1,051
Recycled capital grant fund	86	322
Share capital and reserves	10,347	9,324
Restricted reserves	–	–
Total Capital & Reserves	11,935	10,697

#### President

The Worshipful The Mayor of the London Borough of Sutton

#### Auditors

Beever and Struthers

#### Private Funders

The Housing Finance Corporation  
Royal Bank of Scotland

#### Bankers

National Westminster Bank plc

#### Governance

Sutton Housing Society aims to follow the highest standards of governance, accountability and probity. The Society's Board of Management have adopted all of the principles contained in the original National Housing Federation (NHF) code 'Excellence in Governance' (published in 2010).

For a copy of NHF code and a detailed statement of how this is applied to the operation and management of the Society please contact the Chief Executive.

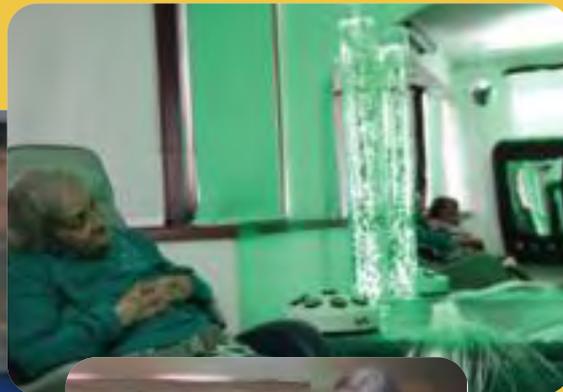
Full copies of the statutory accounts are available to shareholders on request.

# Shaping our future together:

Excellent homes, excellent services, delivered locally



IT and sensory projects at Cloverdale Court



## Our staff

### Principal Officers

**Chris Turton** BA MBA FCIH  
Chief Executive and Secretary  
**Zoë Macgregor-Williams** BA HONS  
Housing Services Manager  
**Marcie Regelous**  
Finance & Resources Manager

### The Board of Management

**Andrew Jepp** FCII – Chair  
**Steve Kent** FCIH – Vice Chair  
**Salem Ahmed** LLB – Retired  
**Adam Phippen**  
**Gavin Rodgers**  
**Len Ross** – Tenant Board Member  
**Lorraine Shaile**  
**Adrian Simpson**  
**Graham Waters** FCIH

The Board of Management is supported by the Housing Operations Committee (HOC).

### Tenant HOC Members

**Fred Allen**  
**Joy Hammond**  
**Marjorie Roberts**  
**Val Rollason**  
**Len Ross**  
**Christopher Simpson**  
**Geoffrey Martin**

## Sutton Housing Society

### Head office

Pat Shaw House  
13-19 Ventnor Rd  
Sutton  
Surrey  
SM2 6AQ  
Tel: 020 8642 1500  
Email: [info@shsoc.org.uk](mailto:info@shsoc.org.uk)

Visit our website at:  
[www.suttonhousingsociety.org.uk](http://www.suttonhousingsociety.org.uk)

## Our mission statement

Sutton Housing Society will provide affordable housing to meet the needs of local people.

The Society will work independently or in partnership with others to achieve its objectives.

We will consult and involve our residents or service users at all levels of our work.

A Charitable Registered Society.  
Homes and Communities Agency Registration No. L0721

Sutton Housing Society will aim to provide housing services and support where necessary of the highest possible quality and to continually improve on our achievements.

We will strive to be responsive to the needs of individuals and the community. We will embrace diversity, promote equality and encourage independence for all of our residents.