Making community connections

PORT OF LEITH HOUSING ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018
Hello!

We’re Port of Leith Housing Association

We provide more than 2,700 high quality, affordable homes, creating places people want to live in, and around, Leith and north Edinburgh. We work closely with our customers and other partners to make Leith an even better place to live, visit and do business.

Back in 1975, Port of Leith Housing Association was formed to provide affordable housing and support for people in greatest need of a place to live in the community. As a charity and social enterprise, we have now invested over £210m in regenerating the area and we provide services to over 4,000 people who call one of our properties their home.

With Persevere Developments and Quay Community Improvements now in the Port of Leith Group, our ambition is to increase the range of housing options and support services available, making our neighbourhoods great places to live.

You can find out more about us at www.polha.co.uk

If you would like to receive our Annual Report in a different format or language please contact us on 0131 554 0403 or email info@polha.co.uk
It is with immense pride that I reflect on what has been achieved by Port of Leith Housing Association over 2017/18 as we continue to strive towards making Leith great.

We have ambitious goals to support the regeneration and wellbeing of communities in Leith and north Edinburgh, and I’m pleased to report that we’re meeting them.

The Association is playing a significant role in developing new affordable homes for social and mid market rent. With the number of households requiring high quality, affordable homes on the rise, it’s fantastic to have made such an important contribution to addressing this need through the completion of an additional 62 mid market rent homes by Persevere Developments at Leith Fort this year.

Our roots in the community are also continuing to grow deeper through our employability project, Community Works, and Quay Community Improvements. This complements other important community initiatives we support, including the Saheliya Learning Centre which provides English language and skills for work training to black and minority ethnic (BME) women in Edinburgh and the Canny Budgeting Project which supports people at risk of fuel and food poverty.

I would like to thank all of our voluntary Board members, staff members and partners for the great contributions they have made over the past year. I hope you enjoy reading more about our achievements in the following pages.

MARGARET O’CONNOR
Chairperson
A word from our Chief Executive, Keith Anderson

This has been a year full of highlights for everyone at Port of Leith Housing Association.

One of many high points for me was when we shared an update on our 2015-20 strategic plan which, for the first time, covered the whole PoLHA Group, including Persevere Developments Ltd and Quay Community Improvements. We’re now on course to create 500 homes in Leith and north Edinburgh by 2020 and a total of 846 homes over the next five years thanks to an investment of £110 million. This will be an important contribution to the 20,000 new homes which are much needed across the city and clearly demonstrates that we’re pushing forward with our key objective – to improve access to high quality, secure and affordable homes for people in greatest need at the same time as supporting the local community.

I’m also pleased to highlight that we were awarded Gold by Investors in People (IIP). This is a great achievement, which puts us in the top 7% of all IIP-accredited organisations across the UK.

With plans well underway to create hundreds of new homes at Granton Harbour, and planning consent received for the development of the former care home at Porthaven on Leith Links and an exciting Passivhaus project, which will bring 57 new, highly energy-efficient, homes to Constitution Street, we’re all set for another busy and successful year to come.

KEITH ANDERSON
Chief Executive
A look back at some of our favourite moments...

JUNE 2017

Our sheltered housing team won an award for bringing the Scottish Social Services Council’s (SSSC) codes of practice to life. Maureen Tait, our Sheltered Housing Services Manager, said: “Our whole team has worked together to make the Scottish Social Services Council’s codes and values real and meaningful to our staff and tenants. We have also developed a team charter which demonstrates our staff’s values and beliefs, and shows our tenants that we’re committed to excellent service delivery. It’s fantastic that the team’s hard work and dedication has been recognised. I’m really proud of them.”

JULY 2017

New residents moved into the extension of St Nicholas Court sheltered housing complex on Ferry Road. As part of a £1.6 million project, eight new one-bedroom flats were created, along with a sun lounge and guest bedroom. The revamp also included the introduction of additional landscaping - including allotments for the residents to grow their own fruit, vegetables and flowers – and upgraded heating systems and bathrooms in the original 35 bedrooms. 

New tenant, Frances McPherson, said: “I previously lived in a flat in Lorne Street for 50 years, but my husband has COPD and the stairs were proving difficult. We are delighted with our new home as it’s lovely and bright and requires no decorating. Plus, our four-year-old granddaughter is looking forward to sleepovers.”

AUGUST 2017

We launched our new employability service, Community Works, which supports people over the age of 16 living in Leith and north Edinburgh who are looking for work or seeking to develop their careers. Unlike other employability services in Edinburgh, Community Works is open to anyone, regardless of their employment status, length of unemployment or support needs.

Community Works Manager, John Murray, said: “I’m extremely excited to be part of this service which helps to fill the gap in local support for people with employment needs who don’t meet the eligibility criteria set by other services. With the introduction of Universal Credit, there has never been more pressure on people receiving benefits to gain employment, so we’re thrilled to be able to help our tenants and other people in Leith and north Edinburgh.”

“It is lovely living here. It’s a big change as I lived in my last home for 51 years. I’m getting used to the open plan living layout and I’ve had my granddaughter across who has helped me make it feel like home with photographs and ornaments.”

New tenant, Jane Kelly
We celebrated Scottish Housing Day by opening our doors and inviting tenants along to find out more about how our organisation is run. Tenants took part in a guided tour of our offices where they were welcomed by Keith Anderson, our Chief Executive, and other members of staff. Tenants heard all about the work we’re doing before having some lunch with staff. Keith Anderson said: “This was the first time we have opened our doors to our tenants and I’m pleased they had the opportunity to discover more about how everyone at PoLHA is working hard to make Leith the best place to be and to provide great places for people to call home.”

“It was a very enjoyable tour and the staff were all very helpful and good at answering questions. I am very impressed with the work that POLHA is doing and glad that community is a strong aspect of their function as it is very much needed.”

Customer who attended Doors Open Day

We marked the start of a new chapter for the historic, 18th century, Leith Fort site with the opening ceremony for 94 new affordable, colony-style homes. We worked with the City of Edinburgh Council, and with grant funding from the Scottish Government, to create 62 new homes for mid market rent by our subsidiary Persevere Developments and 32 homes for social rent by the City of Edinburgh Council. The multi award-winning development includes a mix of one, two, three and four-bedroom homes, which are a modern take on the traditional Edinburgh colonies concept. All homes have private south-west facing gardens and main door access. Tenants also have access to parking within the site and a communal landscaped area.

“We are very excited to be bringing another development of high-quality, affordable and family-friendly homes to Leith. It has been an honour for all partners to have played a role in breathing new life into this iconic site by delivering such a successful modern interpretation of the Edinburgh colonies. The history of the site plays an important part in the story of Edinburgh. We hope that a new community will flourish and write its own history here.”

Our Chair, Margaret O’Connor
DECEMBER 2017

We were proud to be awarded Gold by Investors in People (IIP) under its new framework for business improvement through people in the UK. Achieving the Gold Accreditation puts us in the top 7% of all IIP – accredited organisations for exceptional leading, supporting and managing of staff teams. We also received the IIP Health and Wellbeing Award for fostering a healthy and happy staff team.

“This is the first time we have been assessed by Investors in People against its new set of standards, so we are really proud to have received Gold and to be recognised for our commitment to continuous improvement for our people and our customers.”

Keith Anderson, Chief Executive of Port of Leith Housing Association

FEBRUARY 2018

We updated our 2015-20 strategic plan which now covers the whole PoLHA Group, including Persevere Developments Ltd which provides mid market rent homes and Quay Community Improvements which delivers commercial services for profit to be reinvested back into the community.

“The 846 affordable homes we plan to build over the next five years will be an important contribution to the 20,000 new homes which are much needed across the city. We are also staying focused on investing in our existing homes and making Leith a great place to live, work and do business. Our plans to develop Quay Community Improvements and to extend our employability project, Community Works, will be integral to this.”

Keith Anderson, Chief Executive of Port of Leith Housing Association
Our new project Community Works reported a very successful first few months of helping people find ways into education, training and work. It supported more than 100 people between launching in August 2017 and March 2018, including Florin, aged 55, who had been working in the UK for 11 years in a variety of manual jobs, including cleaning and construction. In October 2017 he became unemployed and was living in a homeless shelter. Having mostly done casual work, Florin didn’t have any formal or British qualifications and all his paperwork was in Romania.

“I met with Rachel from Community Works and we worked together on a plan to help me find work and accommodation. She helped me to write a CV and Rachel emailed it to several companies. They also put me in touch with a charity who are helping me to find my own tenancy.

“Shortly before Christmas, Community Works found out about an agency who were looking for staff to start work the next day. Rachel suggested that I visit the agency and I was offered a contract. “I’m still working on a temporary contract and it is going well. I have also passed the first part of the Construction Skills Certification Scheme test and I’m bidding for accommodation. When I get permanent work, I’d like to get my own place. I’m still meeting with Rachel and I plan to get more qualifications while I search for permanent work.”

March also saw us bring Window Wanderland, which transforms everyday streets into outdoor art galleries, to the streets of Leith for the first time ever.

The event, which was organised by our subsidiary company Quay Community Improvements, gave Leithers the chance to show off their creativity. Shop fronts and windows in and around the Great Junction Street, New Kirkgate and Constitution Street areas were transformed by eye-catching artwork created by residents and community groups.

“We’re thrilled that so many people got involved in bringing Window Wanderland to Leith and took to the streets to admire all the fantastic artwork.”

Clare Halliday, Business & Community Initiatives Manager at Quay Community Improvements
Overview of our properties for social rent (as at 31/03/2018)

- 1&2 bedroom: 2,209
- 3+ bedroom: 195

Total: 2,404

We also own 130 shared ownership properties and 201 mid market rent homes.

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2017/18 In Numbers

Our income from rent and service charges includes £11.6m from social housing and £379k from shared ownership properties. Other sources of income received includes housing grants of £2.5m to fund new homes, a wider role grant of £97k for community initiatives and a supporting people grant of £51.5k. We also generated income through the planned sale of 10 properties and selling seven homes to tenants through the shared ownership scheme. The £1.3m income from interest and ‘other’ includes £700.4k of lease income from Persevere Developments, a Gift Aid donation of £199.5k from Persevere Developments and housing grants of £128.7k to fund mid market properties.

Key elements of our £14.7m expenditure include housing depreciation of £3.9m, housing management and services costs of £4.2m, maintenance costs of £4.1m and interest on loans of £948.6k. The £467k expenditure on community initiatives includes contractor payments of £73k, Training Opportunities In Lothian trainee payments of £6k, community initiatives payments of £14k, salaries paid to staff of £271k and overheads of £102k.

We generated a surplus of £2.6m.

Annual surpluses are required to cover long-term maintenance obligations to property, repayment of loans and future risks.
### Repairs completed on time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Emergency</th>
<th>Immediate</th>
<th>Urgent</th>
<th>Routine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014/15</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>95</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Rent loss

From arrears and empty flats (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Empty flats</th>
<th>Arrears</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014/15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Properties vacated

Turnover as a % of total properties

- 2014/15: 8.2%
- 2015/16: 8%
- 2016/17: 7%
- 2017/18: 6.8%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number vacated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014/15</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Number of properties let to new tenants

- Number of homes let
  - 2014/15: 182
  - 2015/16: 184
  - 2016/17: 162
  - 2017/18: 167

- Average time to relet property (number of calendar days)
  - 2014/15: 34
  - 2015/16: 35
  - 2016/17: 25
  - 2017/18: 21
**Management costs per property**

Management costs per unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2014/15</th>
<th>2015/16</th>
<th>2016/17</th>
<th>2017/18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>£1,122</td>
<td>£974</td>
<td>£1,186</td>
<td>£1,219</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total spend on building new properties**

- **2014/15**
  - £16.1 million
    - £5.5 million
    - £10.5 million

- **2015/16**
  - £4.8 million
    - £1.8 million
    - £3 million
  - £3.1 million
    - £1.1 million
    - £2 million

- **2016/17**
  - £9.5 million
    - £5.4 million
    - £4.2 million

- **2017/18**
  - £2 million
  - £1.1 million
  - £4.2 million
  - £5.4 million
A BIG THANK YOU TO...

Our Board of Management

We are very grateful to all the members of our Board of Management during the year ended 31 March 2018 for their contributions:

**Margaret O’Connor (CHAIR)**
Chief Executive of a Leith based charity. Local Leith resident and Board Member from 2010.

**Richard Bolton**
Chartered accountant and local Leith business owner. Board Member from 2012.

**Anthony Gillespie (APPOINTED SEPTEMBER 2017)**
Qualified accountant with an MA in Economics and Law from the University of Edinburgh. Currently Director of Business Support at the National Library of Scotland. Board Member from 2017.

**Victoria Hope**
Runs her own marketing consultancy. Law graduate before moving to marketing, with a wide experience in communications, project management and branding. Leith resident. Board Member from September 2016.

**Gordon Munro**
City of Edinburgh councillor for Leith. Board Member from 2003.

**Philip Neaves**
Independent property and planning consultant. Chair of Persevere Developments Ltd. Board Member from 2011.

**Helen Phillips**
Wide experience in local community activities. An Association tenant and Board Member from 2011.

**Caitlin McCorry**
Service Manager, Community Housing with East Lothian Council, previously Assistant Director at Barony Housing Association. Leith-born with strong family connections to Leith. Board Member from September 2016.

**Brian Reilly**
Leith born self-employed financial analyst and banker specialising in treasury management for banks. Board Member from 2015.

**Neil Stewart**
Solicitor advocate managing a team with a varied caseload of civil litigation claims. Holds a BSc (Hons) in Geography. Local resident. Board Member from September 2016.

We would like to thank **Ruth McNeil** who became a Board Member in 2008; **David Spilsbury** who joined the Board in 2014, **Neil Gardiner** who became a Board Member in 2015 and **David Mawdsley** who became a Board Member in September, who all left the Board in the period to March 2018.
Our staff team

Our thanks also go to our staff team for their dedication over the period 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018:

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**
Keith Anderson

**ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & ICT**
**Head** Mike Beniston
**Manager** Neil Donald
Michael Connor
Ian Treger

**FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES**
**Manager** Ngeme Ntuli
Lynda Hanna
Nikolaos Koutris
Lauren Mackinnon
Aileen Punton
Jane Stewart-Leslie
Nora Wardell

**CUSTOMER SERVICES**
Claire Ironside **Director**

**FINANCE**
**Manager** Heather Kiteley

**CORPORATE SERVICES**
**Manager** Glen White
Jackie Grant
Lisa Haddow
Alison Petretti

**COMMUNICATIONS & CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT**
**Manager** Charlotte Gray
Wendy Chan

**HOUSING MANAGEMENT TEAM**
**Manager** Joyce Cuthbert
Simon Davies
Paul Henderson
Alison Hope
Leanne McAndrew
Paul McMahon
Finbar Moreby
Louise O’Connor
Samantha Sutherland
Claire Traynor
Rosemary Whalen
Ann Yourston

**QUAY COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS**
**Manager** Clare Halliday
Marek Blotnicki
Charles Blues
Slawomir Bogdanowicz
Arkadiusz Chudak
Kebba Conteh
Robert Falconer
Thomas Jenkins
Scott Kerr
Patryk Kowalski
Sharon Lawrie
Dawid Lehmann
Artur Lisieski
Gary Porter
Agnieszka Rudyk
Chelsea Smith
Gregorz Szamot
Liam Telfer
Lucasz Wicher
Paul Wylie

- Chelsea Smith works part-time with POLHA and part-time with Quay
- Alex Burns worked in Maintenance and is on a secondment to the Development Team
- Stephanie Scott moved from Customer Advice Team to the Maintenance Team
- Sharon Lawrie works part-time with POLHA and part-time with Quay
SHELTERED HOUSING TEAM
Manager Maureen Tait
Suzie Connery
Marjorie Fraser
Martin Hunter
Liz MacAulay
Kerry Peace
Rachel Stockton

CUSTOMER ADVICE TEAM
Manager Lucy Whittaker
Lesleyann Clark
Sharyn Cox
Natasha Duckham-Venters
Jenni Gegan
Rachel Gilburt
Ann Robertson
Stephanie Scott
Christine Seydak
Chelsea Smith

TENANT SUPPORT TEAM
Team Leader Fiona Neilson
Louise Byrne
Susan Colvin
Leo Paredes

COMMUNITY WORKS TEAM
Manager John Murray
Rachel Hutton
Sharon Lawrie
John Reid
Jane Whiting

PROPERTY & NEW BUSINESS
Director Gordon Cameron

ASSET & PROCUREMENT TEAM
Manager Angela Morgan
Andrea Fletcher
Jamie Patterson
Jonathan Smith
Alan Whitelaw
Marie Williams

DEVELOPMENT TEAM
Manager Wendy Farmer
Deborah Bailey
Alex Burns
Kate Duckham
Martin Hall
Melanie Huey
John Moore

MAINTENANCE TEAM
Manager Kevin Wilson
Nikki Adamson
Kevin Armstrong
Jim Bett
Steven Donoghue
Scott McRorie
Sara Oliver
Stephanie Scott

FACILITIES TEAM
Team Leader Duncan Graham
Shona Maxwell
Craig Ross
Serena Selkirk
Dee Shiels

Our thanks to staff members who left PoLHA over this period:
Jane-Beth Brown, Amy Butler,
Noreen Combe, Liz Dalley, Andrew Devlin, Kevin Donaldson, Asima Hussain, Chris McGuire, Sarah Middlemiss, Gordon Scott