



## **Osprey Housing Group**

### **Assurance Statement: November 2020**

Osprey Housing is the parent body of the Osprey Housing Group incorporating the separately registered Osprey Housing Moray.

In accordance with the requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator, we the undersigned provide the following statement in respect of assurance and compliance for the Osprey Housing Group:

The Board of Directors of Osprey Housing confirm that based on comprehensive evidence available to us and scrutinised throughout the year we are assured the Osprey Housing Group complies with all relevant standards and outcomes in the Charter; all relevant legislative duties; and the Standards of Governance and Financial Management.

This Assurance Statement is provided on behalf of the Governing Bodies of Osprey Housing and Osprey Housing Moray. The Governing Body meeting structure is such that the sources and level of assurance in relation to compliance is clear to each individual RSL body.

Governing Body members are directly involved in the ongoing development and monitoring of the evidence base that provides us with the level of assurance needed.

#### **COVID-19 Pandemic: Impact**

Our 2020 Assurance Statement represents the unprecedented times and circumstances in which the Osprey Group is now operating.

The UK and Scottish Governments' announcement of full lockdown in late March triggered implementation of the Group's Major Incident Plan. The resultant impact and risk assessments enabled a response action plan to be drawn up and applied ensuring we were able to continue to provide services albeit on a restricted and prioritised basis.

Implementation of the Major Incident Plan and particularly the switch to remote working was smooth and without interruption to core contact and delivery of the restricted service levels. The Board is reassured by the agility of the Group's core infrastructure to ensure business and service continuity.

The Scottish Housing Regulator was advised of the restricted service levels, impact on normal compliance with regulatory standards and emergency measures applied in relation to continuation of Governance and services to tenants and other customers. The Board of OH can confirm that it was kept advised and informed at all stages and approved the response action plan.

#### **Re-emergence**

After the initial response phase while continuing to manage the ongoing impact of COVID-19 the Group has planned and gradually implemented our recovery. The Board has been fully involved in and approved the recovery strategy with ongoing monitoring. The Group has started to evolve a 'new normal' in relation to how we work, continue to deliver services and



stay in good organisational, financial and personal health. Our recovery plan anticipated the need to become very agile in the knowledge that our plans and approach can be disrupted at any time.

The strategy and associated action plan provide a structure and framework based on organisational capacity, focus on tenant/staff/governing body welfare, meeting the needs of tenants and key guidance from Government, SHR and other key bodies such as the SFHA.

The Board is assured the strategy has identified the range of new risks that will impact short and longer term for both the organisation and its tenants/customers. The Board is also aware the strategy has been submitted to the SHR as part of the Group's update on how the ongoing impact of COVID-19 is being managed.

Key objectives of the Osprey Group COVID-19 Recovery Strategy are to:

- Identify new risks/issues facing tenants
- Further strengthen resilience
- Focus on any specific areas of the business likely to be affected
- Ensure the organisation can respond quickly to the government's varying levels of restrictions affecting individual people, businesses and the nature of interactions.
- Evolve a "new normal" business and service delivery model that takes account of potential long term and long-lasting changes that support/enhance service improvement.
- Prioritise people, safety and continuous engagement - allocating staff/other resources accordingly.
- Reshape the business plan and business continuity strategy
- Ensure increased focus on communications

## **Overall Assurance**

Overall, sources of assurance have been mapped against regulatory requirements and standards in a detailed compliance register within the assurance framework already in place. Evidence of those sources of assurance include:

- Performance monitoring reports on key business areas such as finance, asset management, housing management, service delivery, development and risk management
- Detailed reports and updates from the Chief Executive and Senior Management team
- Internal audit reports
- Reports and analysis from external auditors, appointed advisers and specialist consultant advisers all of whom provide external independent evaluation, feedback and validation
- Independent Brexit and COVID-19 resilience evaluation including scenario stress testing
- Innovative peer review process with Berwickshire Housing Association
- Use of Self Assurance Toolkit
- Outcomes from comprehensive Board Appraisal process



- Consultation with Osprey Tenants and Residents Association and outcomes of scrutiny projects undertaken by the Association's Scrutiny Panel.

Our level of compliance remains subject to constant review and scrutiny with a view to trying to achieve continuous improvement.

This Assurance Statement was agreed at a joint meeting of the Osprey Housing and Osprey Housing Moray Governing Bodies on 25 November 2020.

I am authorised to sign the statement on behalf of Osprey Housing Group and for complete transparency the statement is signed by the Chair of Osprey Housing Moray.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M Scott".

Signed:.....

M Scott

Chair, Osprey Housing

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "L Allan".

Signed:.....

L Allan

Chair, Osprey Housing Moray