




Aberdeenshire *housing partnership*



 **Aberdeenshire housing partnership**
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Annual Report 05/06

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Chairman's Remarks



I want to start this years report by highlighting the very significant and sustained improvements on rent arrears, part of this is due to new and more convenient payment methods for tenants and more streamlined arrears control system but most of all the hard work and dedication of our staff. Well done to them.

We have strengthened our maintenance team with the employment of our first Property Service

Manager Daniel Bennett and a Property Maintenance Officer Allan Scott.

During the year we changed our response repair contractor and we are now working with Heatcare Oil & Gas Ltd to secure improvements to the repair service in the future. We also completed a second successful maintenance contract with Mitie (North) and started to make plans for a new longer-term relationship with them.

We submitted our long term maintenance programme to comply with the Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQS) to Communities Scotland in April 2005 and we were pleased to have our plans approved by them.

We have already made a sound start renewing doors and windows in many of our older houses and planning heating and kitchen replacements in the coming year.

Tenant satisfaction is a main goal for AHP.

We continue to work to develop Tenant Participation and in addition to a number of surveys and questionnaires to tenants we held our Annual Tenants Event in Fraserburgh. We also commissioned TIGHRA to work with us to get tenants panels set up. We produce a quarterly tenants' newsletter and this year we prepared to launch our very own website.

In the development side of affordable housing we completed our sites in Newburgh and Blackburn with significant progress made towards bringing new homes to Peterhead, Huntly and Olmedrum.

AHP also worked with the other key Housing Associations in the northeast in rising to the challenge of Communities Scotland's Building a Better Deal initiative – this relates to the provision of new housing through modern procurement processes. The five housing associations have worked to establish Devanha Ltd. Devanha will facilitate future developments and a four-year building programme is being aimed for.

AHP had a Joint Board and Staff away day where we agreed our strategic plan for the period to 2009/10.

Stanley Green, one of my fellow founder directors resigned at the AGM in October 2005, and I would like to thank him personally and on behalf of the Board for his unstinting support and efforts during his time with AHP.

I would like to thank the Staff and the Board for all their hard work and support over the past year.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alister Leitch".

Alister Leitch, **Chairman**

An effective Board is crucial to the success of Aberdeenshire Housing Partnership. Our Board members are volunteers who give up their time to support the work of the Partnership. Each Board member is also a director of the company, and each member also sits on one of our three committees: Housing, Development and Property, or Audit.

Some of our Board & Chief Executive as at 31st March 2006:



The Board

| Board Member | | Committee |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Alister Leitch, JP Chair | Founder Chair Member of the Company. Local Councillor and businessman. | Chair of the Board, and Chair of the Development and Property Committee. |
| Hazel Al-Kowarri Vice Chair | Founder Member of the Company. Chair of a local tenants' association and a Community Councillor. Employed by Victim Support Scotland. | Vice Chair of the Board and Chair of the Housing Committee |
| Carl Nelson, OBE | Founder Member of the Company. Local Councillor and retired civil servant. | Development and Property Committee |
| Sheila Thomson | Local Councillor nominated to AHP by Aberdeenshire Council. Joined the Board in June 2003 – nominated to AHP by Aberdeenshire Council. | Chair of the Audit Committee |
| William Chapman | A tenant of AHP. Joined the Board in March 2003. Retired and studying for degree in Social Policy. | Housing Committee |
| Garry Kidd | Joined the Board in April 2003. Qualified accountant with NHS Grampian. | Audit Committee |
| Bruce Mair, JP | Founder Member of the Company. Local Councillor and farmer. | Audit Committee |
| Derek Stewart | Founder Member of the Company. Building surveyor with a strong interest in disability issues. | Development and Property Committee |
| Grace Taylor | A tenant of AHP Joined the Board in January 2001. Retired but active in groups promoting special needs awareness. | Audit Committee |
| Brian Topping | Founder Member of the Company. Local Councillor and chef. | Housing Committee |
| Jonathan Young | Planning consultant, with a background in local authority planning. | Development and Property Committee |



Our Tenant Consultation Policy

Tenants' views will be considered along with other stakeholders when decisions are taken about how we develop our policies and how we deliver our services to tenants.

Our policy says:

- We will issue a policy newsletter about our new policies.
- We will send out draft policies to those tenants who have said they are interested in a particular topic.
- We will set up 3 tenant panels to look at repairs and improvements, rent setting and anti social behaviour.
- We will provide feedback through our newsletters about the views and comments we get.

Tenant Participation

Tenant involvement is helping shape the kind of services we provide now and in the future. This is very important to the Board and staff at AHP. During the past few years we have carried out a full tenant satisfaction survey and stepped up the number of newsletters we publish – feedback has generally been quite positive.

We do know however that there are other ways we could be engaging with tenants, and have commissioned the locally based organisation TIGHRA to help us. They are a voluntary organisation whose aim is to promote and facilitate effective tenant participation in rural and remote communities of Scotland. TIGHRA is based in Inverurie and they are very highly thought of locally and on the national scene.

Throughout the following year TIGHRA will work to help us accomplish:

- A “tenant participation strategy” to help outline our objectives.
- A brand new rent setting policy which will change the way we calculate rents for all our houses and will affect all our tenants now and in the future.
- The launch of a new AHP web site will look at further improvements we can make.
- Preparing for our next, full tenant satisfaction survey.

Making Progress - Property Services Team



Property Services Team

Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)

All local councils and housing associations have been asked by the Scottish Executive to carry out an assessment of their houses and set plans to bring them up to the requirements of their Scottish Housing Quality Standard policy. AHP's Plan was approved by Communities Scotland in April 2006.

AHP have just completed a detailed review of all the houses in our ownership to check what work needs to be done to keep them in good condition over the next ten years and how we are going to pay for improvements.

Having worked out what needs to be done we then had to estimate the cost, at today's prices, of the work. We think that we need to spend around £1.77 million (at current prices) over the next ten years. As our only income is from rents these will have to be set at levels which mean that we have enough cash to pay for the work but at the same time remain affordable for tenants now and in the future.

New Repairs Contractors

Heatcare Oil & Gas, through competitive tendering, and following stiff competition have been awarded a three-year contract.

As our main contractor Heatcare has carried out all the repairs from 17th October 2005. Heatcare is an expanding Heating Maintenance and Installation Company who have successfully progressed into other trades, such as plumbing, joinery, plastering, roofing, building and electrical works.

AHP looks forward to developing and extending our relationship with Heatcare who have provided an excellent service over the past two years in respect of our gas and oil servicing and repair contract. Heatcare will also continue to provide our oil and gas heating servicing contract.

Callum McCombie and Darren McLeod, Directors, said "we are extremely delighted to be awarded this additional contract which has allowed us to meet our objective of developing a high quality multi trade service. We continue to be committed to Aberdeenshire Housing Partnership and all our customers which we believe is the key to our success."



Darren McLeod and Callum McCombie, the Directors of Heatcare

Making Progress – Property Services Team

We have strengthened our Property Services by promoting Daniel Bennett to be AHP's first dedicated Property Services Manager. Daniel brings a wealth of experience of the property industry to AHP. He is responsible for all aspects of the property side of AHP's business such as: repairs and maintenance, cyclical and planned capital maintenance programmes, the implementation of the standard delivery plan for the Scottish Housing Quality Standards, medical adaptations, refurbishments and an active role with new housing development.

We have also recently recruited Allan Scott to a new post of Property Maintenance Officer to help AHP achieve the objectives set out in the Strategic Plan. Alister Leitch, Chair of AHP, said "We knew that we had to strengthen our repairs service from feedback you gave us in last year's Tenant Satisfaction Survey. Daniel and Allan's job is to ensure that we do just that, do contact them if you have any problems with the repairs service in the future."



Development

It has been another good year for the Partnership. We have completed 10 homes in Newburgh and 22 homes in Blackburn; and soon will be completing the building of 37 homes in Oldmeldrum over the next 18 months. We will soon be starting on site at Kingseat (near Newmachar), and Upper Grange (Peterhead).



We are also pleased to be working alongside other housing associations and Communities Scotland as we look toward building more houses for rent in the future. We are founder members of the Devanha initiative which is picking up the Executive's challenge to build more efficiently within the context of Modernising Construction. AHP has a strong record in partnership developments and this puts us in a good position for the future.

Devanha Ltd will be the route for all our developments to be contracted over the next four years and will, for the first time in the north east, allow a four-year house building programme to be agreed.



Chartered Institute of Housing Conference

The Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) Scotland held its annual conference from 6th to 9th March 2006 for the third time in Aberdeen. The Chartered Institute of Housing In Scotland is the professional body for people working in housing. This is the second time that Aberdeenshire Housing Partnership has taken part in the exhibition which was held in the Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre.

We shared a stand with five other housing associations and service providers as a joint project. The group won a silver quach as first prize for the best stand at the four-day event.



Equality & Diversity

Our Equality & Diversity Policy

We are committed to promoting diversity and equality in housing, employment and the provision of all our services.

Our policy says:

- We will treat all people equally regardless of: race, colour, ethnic origin, religion, cultural background, sexual orientation, gender, disability, age, marital or parental status, illness, employment status, membership of trade unions or political beliefs, or any other unjustifiable criteria.
- We will apply these principles when we build new homes, let new homes and when we employ staff members.
- The Board annually monitors our equality and diversity track record. We will also provide on request, key documents, in the native language of our tenants. For example the Scottish Secure Tenancy agreement.

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Our Annual General Meeting is held in a different area each year, to encourage the tenants to take an interest. We give as many tenants as possible, through advertising in the Newsletter, an opportunity to attend. This year the AGM was held in Peterhead.

Alister Leitch was elected as Chair, and Hazel Al-Kowarri was re-elected as Vice-Chair. Stanley Green stood down from the Board, after serving for six years. Our next AGM will be held in Stonehaven.

We were delighted to meet with the tenants who made the effort to join us and express their views on the services that we provide. Face to face feedback is important to us and we would encourage all tenants to attend such events.

Our second tenants' event was held at the Lighthouse Museum in Fraserburgh. TIGHRA were in attendance at the event, and various topics were under discussion: rent consultation and the SHQS. We received valuable feedback from those tenants who attended.

“Aberdeenshire Housing Partnership is committed to providing the highest standard of service to all customers. We achieve this by being open, fair and honest in all our practices. We treat our customers as we would wish to be treated ourselves.”

OUR COMMITMENT

We wish our customers to know the standards of service they can expect from us, our contractors and other partners.

- Queries will be answered correctly and quickly.
- All customers will be treated fairly and equally, in a polite manner.
- We will listen to what you say, use plain language and be responsive to your query.

OUR EXPECTATIONS OF CUSTOMERS

- To co-operate with staff and our contractors and other partners.
- To be courteous with staff at all times.



Performance Indicators 2005/06

Monitoring our performance is key to ensuring the continuing success of Aberdeenshire Housing Partnership. Our Board members hold quarterly performance Board meetings where a stock check is taken of management performance.

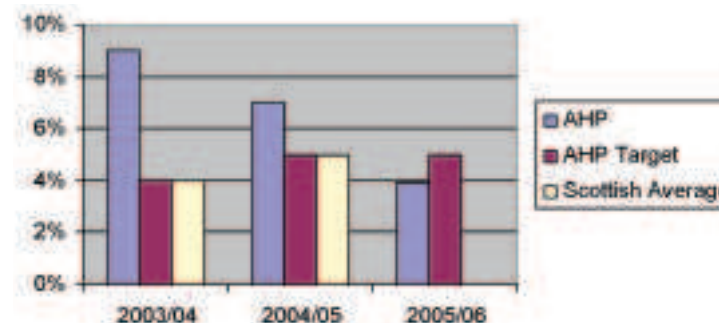
Housing Stock as at 31 March 2006

| Apt Size | 2 apt | 3 apt | 4 apt | 5 + apt | Total |
|------------|-------|-------|-------|---------|-------|
| March 2005 | 89 | 291 | 170 | 14 | 564 |
| Additions | 8 | 13 | 13 | 0 | 34 |
| March 2006 | 97 | 298 | 179 | 14 | 598 |

Allocations and voids

| | 2006 | 2005 |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|
| Number of new lets | 32 | 68 |
| Number of relets | 54 | 55 |
| Average time to relet | 16 Days | 15 Days |

The Partnership's rent arrears (current tenants) in 2005/06 were £60,181 (3.91%). 3 tenants were evicted and notices of proceedings (first stage of legal action) were issued to 163 tenants for non-payment of rent. A challenging but realistic target of 4.5% has been set for 2006/07.

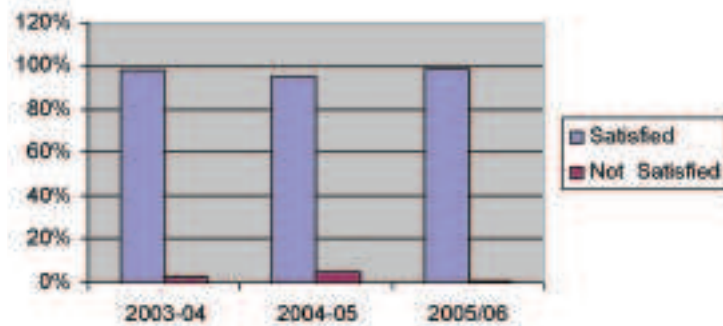


Maintenance Services

| Classification of Repair | Number carried out | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|------|
| | 2006 | 2005 |
| Emergency (2hrs) | 403 | 442 |
| Urgent (2 days) | 416 | 227 |
| Routine (10 days) | 600 | 518 |

| Classification of Repair | % Completed on time | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|-------|
| | 2005 | 2005 |
| Emergency (2hrs) | 85% | 92.5% |
| Urgent (2 days) | 72% | 90.8% |
| Routine (10 days) | 82% | 94.6% |

Repairs Satisfaction



All our tenants receive a questionnaire on the service they receive from our contractors.

The results of returned questionnaires are shown above. On average during 2005/6, 99% of the tenants who responded were satisfied with the service they received. However only 5% of the questionnaires were returned.

We are working on ways to get more feedback.

AHP completed the following programme:

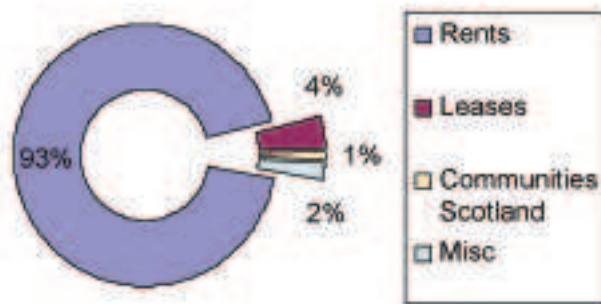
- Door & window replacements in 16 properties. The total cost of the project was £64,000.
- Heating and kitchen replacements in 5 properties. The cost of this project is £17,000.

A programme costing £16,000 was undertaken to paint 70 homes. AHP also completed 7 adaptations to tenants' homes, to make them more suitable to their particular needs, costing a further £19,000.

Performance Indicators 2005/06

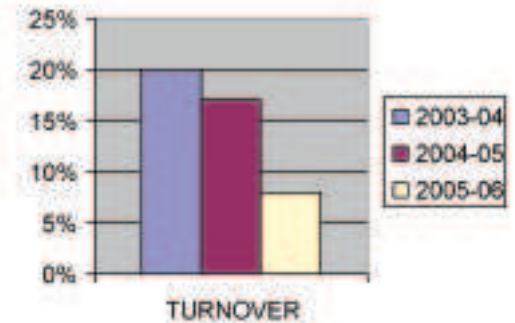
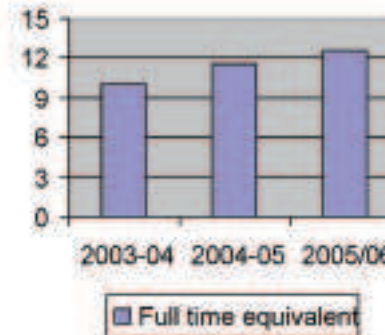
AHP Income 2005/06

The primary source of income to AHP comes from rents. We lease three properties to Aberdeenshire Council for specialist purposes, including a day care centre for older people. There is also a respite care unit and emergency accommodation for homeless people.

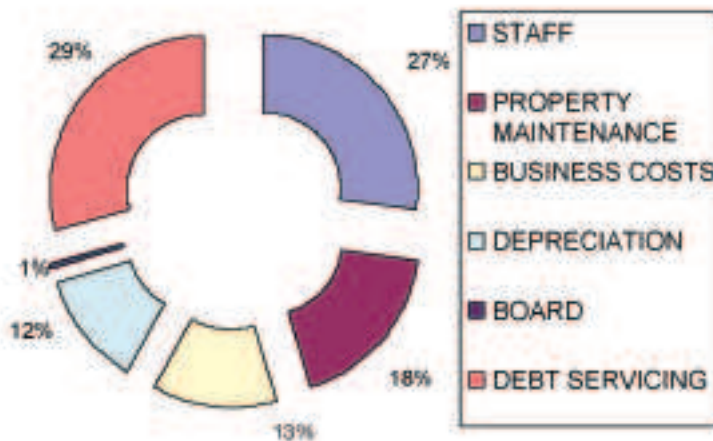


Staff

During 2005-06 AHP welcomed Stacy Angus, as Tenant Services Administrative Assistant, to the team. Stacy takes all the repairs calls to the office.



AHP Expenditure 2005/06



Formal Complaints / Complaints

AHP has a Formal Complaints Policy and we aim to ensure a reply to complaints initially within 3 working days, and a final response within 10 working days. All formal complaints are considered by the Board.

During 2005/06 there were 11 complaints, whilst there were 16 complaints during 2004/05.



Income and Expenditure Details for the Year ended 31 March 2005

| | 2006 £ | 2005 £ |
|--|-----------------|----------------|
| Turnover | 1,663,255 | 1,378,781 |
| Less: Operating costs | (1,169,786) | (967,427) |
| | 493,469 | 411,354 |
| Operating surplus | | |
| Loss on disposal of fixed asset | (193) | (566) |
| Interest receivable | 22,174 | 20,230 |
| Interest payable | (528,616) | (420,055) |
| | (13,166) | 10,963 |
| Surplus/(Deficit) on ordinary activities before transfers | | |
| Transfer to designated reserve | - | (7,000) |
| | (13,166) | 3,963 |
| Surplus/(Deficit) for Year | | |
| Revenue reserve brought forward | 125,897 | 121,934 |
| | 112,731 | 125,897 |
| Revenue reserve carried forward | | |

Non Accountants Guide

Rental Income
Cost of Management & Repairs to
Properties

Surplus on sale of asset
Interest on money in bank

Interest paid on mortgage

This is set aside to fund future
housing repairs
Which leaves this as a surplus

Surplus from previous years

Our reserves shown on the balance sheet
are this much.

Financial Highlights

Balance Sheet Details as at 31 March 2004

Tangible Fixed Assets

Housing properties – depreciated cost

2006
£

2005
£

Non Accountants Guide

Less: HAG and other capital grants

Other Fixed Assets

29,182,683

25,378,924

Our houses cost this much

(16,106,479)

(13,502,917)

Grants received towards build costs

27,589

43,849

Computer and office equipment costs

13,103,793

11,919,856

Assets/Liabilities

Debtors

115,058

179,884

Money owed to us

Cash at bank and in hand

701,021

655,829

Money in the Bank

Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

(678,123)

(409,457)

Money we owe to others

Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

(13,072,018)

(12,163,215)

Money owed on loans

Net Assets

169,731

182,897

Capital and Reserves

Designated reserves

57,000

57,000

Money set aside for future repairs

General reserves

112,731

125,897

Sums built up from this and previous years.

169,731

182,897

Our thanks go to the following companies for agreeing to sponsor the production of our report this year and for their continuing support of the work of the Partnership.

peterkinsolicitors



This Annual report can be made available in other formats. Please contact us at our office address or telephone 01467 641200 for further assistance.

"إذا كنتم تريدون الحصول على هذه الوثيقة، مترجمة إلى لغتكم، بطباعة الحروف الكبيرة، بلغة بريل أو على شريط تسجيلي فالرجاء الإتصال بمكتبنا على الرقم المذكور أسفله"

"如果你需要這些文件翻譯至所屬語言、大型字體、盲字印刷或錄音帶請致電以下辦公室之電話號碼。"

ਅਗਰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਨੂੰ ਅਪਣੀ ਜ਼ਬਾਨ ਤੋਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨਾ ਚਾਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਮਨੋਟੋ ਹਰਫਾਂ ਦਾ ਜਾਂ ਬਰੈਲ ਜਾਂ ਕੋਡਡ ਚਿੱਠੀ ਦੇ ਸਾਝੇ ਦਫਤਰ ਦੇ ਹੋਣ ਤੇ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਨਮਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਕਾਲ ਕਰੋ ।

'এই নথিটি যদি আপনার নিজের ভাষায় অনুবাদিত চান, বড় ছাপার অক্ষরে চান, ব্রেইল (অক্ষরের পঠন মাধ্যম) অথবা কাসেট হিসাবে চান, তাহলে মনো করুন নিম্নলিখিত নম্বরে আমাদের কার্যালয় যোগ করুন':

اگر آپ اس دستاویز کا ترجمہ اپنی زبان میں، بڑی لکھائی میں، بریل میں، یا ٹیپ پر چاہتے ہیں تو براہ کرم ہمارے دفتر فون کیجئے:

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Aberdeenshire *housing partnership*

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E mail: enquiries@a-h-p.org.uk
www.a-h-p.org.uk

The Partnership is registered with:

Communities Scotland No. CON 312

Companies House No. SC 198586

Inland Revenue Charity No. SC 029461

Auditors: Baker Tilly

Bankers: Lloyds TSB

Solicitors: McGrigors, Peterkins

Project Development Managers: Baxter, Dunn & Gray