



# Annual Report

## Forgewood Housing Co-op

2007/08





# ANNUAL REPORT 2007/08

Welcome to the 2007/08 annual report for Forgewood Housing Co-op



John Burton  
Chairperson

**This will be my 2nd year as chairperson of the organisation and I am delighted to announce that the Co-op has grown from strength to strength in all of our areas of operation.**

There were a few notable events to report in the year.

The Co-op are currently working in partnership with North Lanarkshire Council on a regeneration site appraisal for Forgewood. The main purpose of the appraisal is to provide essential guidance and a strategy for the future physical regeneration of the area.

In 2007/08 we were still involved in the Gateway Protection Programme. This involved around 80 people from the Democratic Republic of Congo being given refugee status in the UK, with all the families being rehoused in the Motherwell area. The Co-op rehoused 2 of the families and we are pleased to say the project was a resounding success with both families settling in very well to their homes.

During the year, we also held our first tenant conference, and as this was during December, a Christmas Fayre for our residents was

provided. The event went down very well and we hope everyone who attended had a particularly enjoyable day.

One of the Co-op's key strengths has been partnership working, and this is evident with the various projects that have gone on in the year.

The Co-op has also generated income from the service work carried out by Bridges Housing Association.

Bridges is a subsidiary of both Forgewood and Garrion People's Housing Co-op in Wishaw, and the work is mainly carried out by John Mulholland (Director) and Cathy Brien (Depute Director) from both Co-ops.

During the year, the Co-op also entered into new territory by becoming the agent for a new build development contract in Kildrum, Cumbernauld. This has also generated income for Forgewood Housing Co-op.

I would like to thank all of the management committee and staff for their efforts in making this another successful year for the Co-op.

Please read on to find out what else has been going on with Forgewood Housing Co-op in the year 2007/08.



Our Tenant Conference at Christmas was a great occasion for everyone



The office of Forgewood Housing Co-op in the heart of the estate

## RENT CONTROL PERFORMANCE

As at 31 March 2008, the Co-op was owed £9,223.05 in actual current rent arrears. This represents just 1.64% of the annual rental income receivable (£560,121). This performs extremely well against our peer group averages.

The performance is also within the target set out in our internal management plan (3%). We are pleased to show performance on

rent arrears has been at its best for a number of years and we hope that this continues for the future.

The rents we receive are our main source of income at the Co-op and we try to ensure that anyone who has rent arrears outstanding has a suitable repayment agreement in place to reduce debt outstanding.

Sometimes we have to take Court action against tenants who continually fail to pay rent, which can lead to eviction.

We are pleased to report that no evictions were carried out in the year 2007/08.

The table below shows the Co-op's performance on rent arrears over the last 2 years.

	2006/07	2007/08
Rental income due	£536,733	£560,121
Total current arrears outstanding	£27,875	£13,086.07
Technical arrears e.g., payments not banked or housing benefit due	£12,277	£3863.02
Actual arrears outstanding	£15,598	£9,223.05
Arrears as a % of the annual rental income	2.91%	1.64%



Our improved flats looking down Davaar Drive



Rear of Davaar Drive and new build at Ashton Street

## VOID MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE

The Co-op allocated 18 properties within the year 2007/08. This is a reduction of 11 on 2006/07 and we hope that this shows more of our tenants want to stay within the Co-op's stock.

The Co-op does everything it can to ensure that when a tenant moves out, the property is in a good condition for the new tenant to move in. On most occasions, the housing officer will show a prospective tenant around a property with the outgoing tenant still there.

This helps minimise the length of time a property will be empty (void period). In the year, there were

18 properties relet and it took the Co-op an average of 11 calendar days to carry out repairs and relet the properties.

The actual money lost on voids for the year totalled £1,314.91 (0.23% of the Co-op's annual rental income) and this is a reduction on 2006/07 and also compares very favourably with our peer group landlords.

The table below shows the Co-op's performance on void management over the last 2 years.

## COMMON HOUSING REGISTER

The Co-op has been working in partnership with North Lanarkshire Council and other housing associations in the area to develop and implement a common housing register (CHR).

This would enable an applicant wishing to be rehoused to visit any office in North Lanarkshire and apply to as many different landlords as they wish, through one common form.

It is anticipated that the CHR will be up and running during 2008/09.

	2006/07	2007/08
Rental loss on void properties	£3,617	£1,314.91
Income loss through voids as a % of annual income	0.67%	0.23%
Number of relets	29	18
Average no. of calendar days empty	19	11
Less than 2 weeks empty	15	13
2-4 weeks empty	7	2
More than 4 weeks empty	7	3
No of properties let with no void rent loss	6	4

## REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE PERFORMANCE

The Co-op has an excellent track record at carrying out repairs, and information on our response times for the year are detailed below.

Category of repair	Target response time set	Number carried out in year	Number completed within response target time	Number completed as a percentage
<b>Emergency</b>	<b>6 hours</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>98.69%</b>
<b>Urgent</b>	<b>2 days</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>Routine</b>	<b>5 days</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>98.78%</b>

### GAS SERVICING

The Co-op is required by Law to ensure all properties with gas receive a servicing on an annual basis.

We are pleased to show a 100% performance within our annual gas servicing.

### IN HOUSE REPAIRS

Over the last few years, the Co-op has increased the number of in house repairs carried out within our properties.

The work carried out has been of a high standard with excellent response times.

### LANDSCAPE CONTRACT

Land Engineering carried out their 3rd annual landscape contract with the Co-op and we are pleased to report that satisfaction levels are high from our residents with professional landscape work being carried out throughout our estate.

The Co-op also cuts the grass in gardens of those tenants who are either elderly or are unable to maintain them for medical reasons.

### MEDICAL ADAPTATIONS

Each year, we receive funding from the Scottish Government to carry out medical adaptations within a property so that people can stay in their own homes.

In the year to date, the Co-op carried out 3 medical adaptations within our properties. These consisted of 2 level access showers and a specialist bath.

### RIGHT TO REPAIR

Our response times show good performance within maintenance, and we are also obliged by law to carry out certain repairs within a timescale as set out in within the Right to Repair legislation.

If the Co-op fails to comply with this rule, tenants can apply the Right to Repair as stated in the guidance. We are pleased to report that no tenant has exercised the right to repair with the Co-op to date.



Level entry showers have helped people stay in their home

## RIGHT TO BUY

**2 tenants purchased their properties within the year through the Right to Buy scheme.**

Since the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 came into force, Right to Buy legislation changed. For example, if you became a Co-op tenant when we acquired the stock in 1994 from the Council, and have not moved house since 30 September 2002, you would qualify for discount as set out under the Housing (Scotland) 1987 Act.

In 2012, there are proposals for the modernised Right to Buy to be introduced. This is affected by the length of time you have been a tenant, and the type of property you live in. As certain tenants have different rights, anyone wishing to make an enquiry regarding the Right to Buy should contact the office for assistance.



Some tenants have different rights from others should they wish to purchase their home

## TENANT PARTICIPATION

**Forgewood Housing Co-op Registered Tenant Organisation (RTO) have been set up since 2005, initially as a Tenant Panel, and the Co-op has supported the group since its formation.**

The RTO have always contributed to the Co-op's newsletters that are issued quarterly and have also been consulted on any policy reviews including the rent review consultation that takes place annually. The group meet regularly to discuss many estate management issues and these meetings are always productive.

RTO meetings in the year have been attended by Strathclyde Police, The Council's Dog Warden, Strathclyde Fire and Rescue and all meetings have proven to be very useful.

It is very important that we consult with any tenant groups that are set up and any views from our tenants or the RTO are taken on board and discussed at management committee level.

The RTO also made a major contribution towards the Tenant Conference and held prize raffles which generated income towards their funds.



We are committed to involving tenants in our decision making to ensure effective service delivery

## STOCK AND ALLOCATION INFORMATION

### Improved flats

2apt= 1 3apt= 84 4apt= 52 5apt= 5

### New build flats & houses

2apt= 26 3apt= 35 4apt= 10 5apt= 4

### Allocation Information

The Co-operative allocated 18 properties in the year, these were as follows:  
12 two bedroom flats, 2 three bedroom flats, 2 one bedroom new build flats,  
1 two bedroom new build flat and 1 two bedroom new build house

**The Co-op also factors 4 properties within the flats and 10 new build homes.**

## TENANT CONFERENCE ⇨

In December 2007, the Co-op held its first tenant conference in Braidhurst High School. The day consisted of many partners within the area setting up stands to allow residents to get involved.

As it was nearing Christmas, it was ensured that everyone who attended received a gift, particularly the children of the area who all met Santa in his grotto and received a nice selection of goodies.

Our thanks go out to all of the partners who attended and contributed to the day, but most of all, the people of the area for making it such a successful occasion.

Those taking part included :

NHS Lanarkshire
Citizens Advice Bureau
St Andrews Ambulance
Credit Union
Community Learning and Development
Lanarkshire 107 Radio
North Lanarkshire Leisure
North Lanarkshire Catering
Strathclyde Police
Motherwell Food Co-op
Face Painting
Badge making
Crafts and Card making
Saltire Facilities Management Ltd
Santa and his helpers
Energy Advice

## INVESTORS IN PEOPLE ⇨

The Co-op was delighted to be reaccredited Investors in People status in March 2008.

The scheme aims to provide organisational performance through better planning, implementation and evaluation of learning and development programmes, across organisations of all sizes and sectors. We were first given the accreditation of Investors in People in 2005.

Appraisals for staff are held every 6 months and training and development plans for staff are put into place following the appraisal.



The Registered Tenant Organisation were kept busy during our conference



All of the kids received a gift from Santa at our big day

# STAFF

The Co-op operates a joint staffing agreement with Garrion People's Housing Co-op (GPHC) in Wishaw, and all staff share duties between both Co-ops.



**John Mulholland**  
(Director)



**Cathy Brien**  
(Depute Director)



**Paul Lennon**  
(Housing Manager)



**Susan Kane**  
(Housing Officer)



**Sharon O'Rourke**  
(Part Time Housing officer)



**Elaine Hyslop**  
(Housing Officer, based at GPHC)



**Kirsty McCourt**  
(Administration officer)



**Kevin Plunkett**  
(Administration Assistant, GPHC)



**Jim Blyth**  
(Maintenance Officer/Clerk of Works)



**Billy Gibb**  
(Maintenance Assistant)



**Jim Murphy**  
(Maintenance Assistant)



**Garry King**  
(Warden, Law View Sheltered Housing Complex, GPHC)



**Ann Wilson**  
(Relief Warden, Law View Sheltered Housing Complex, GPHC)



Mrs and Mrs Dowie of 81 Kinloch Drive win the best kept garden within the new build stock



Mr and Mrs Muir of 164 Fife Drive are the winners of best garden within the flats

## GARDEN COMPETITION

The Co-op's annual garden competition is still proving to be very popular.

Every year prizes are awarded to the best kept in the area and we continue to see standards rising. In the summer of 2007 the winners were as follows:

Best new build : **81 Kinloch Drive**  
Runner up: **26 Lorne Drive**

Best within flats: **164 Fife Drive**  
Runner up: **172 Fife Drive**

## CHARITABLE EVENTS

All staff took part in strip for Scotland event in November 2007 and raised money for Cash For Kids. Sharon O'Rourke, Susan Kane and Kirsty McCourt completed the MoonWalk in Edinburgh in June 2007, raising over £700 for breast cancer. **Well done to the girls.**



The staff "strip for Scotland" to raise money for charity



The Moonwalkers raised around £900 for breast cancer research

## INTERNAL MANAGEMENT PLAN INTERNAL AUDIT

Part of the Co-op's internal management plan refers to joint working between our management committee and staff.

Every year, a Saturday is set aside so that everyone involved at the Co-op can get away and discuss the Co-op's future aims and objectives. These days prove to be very useful and outcomes from the day are then incorporated into the Co-op's internal management plan.

While statistics show that the Co-op is performing well in all areas of operation, we try and ensure we continually improve our services.

That is why we arrange an internal audit to look at certain areas of our work and the services provided to our customers.

An internal audit on housing management and maintenance services took place in early 2008 by Dorothy Robertson Associates.

We are pleased that good practice was identified in many areas, and any recommendations by the auditor have been implemented.

This audit will continue in the next year and will cover different aspects of the Co-op's business to ensure continuous improvement.

## COMMITTEE NEWS

Everyone connected with the Co-op was saddened to hear of the sudden death of Margaret Gower, who was a committee member since the Co-op's formation in 1994 and was part of the original Forgewood steering group.

A commemorative plaque to honour Margaret's work in Forgewood has been erected at the entrance to the cul de sac in Fife Drive.

As at 31 March 2008, our management committee consisted of:

John Burton, Chairperson  
Alan Thomson, Vice Chair  
Billy Muir, Secretary  
Jim Barr, Treasurer

Bernadette Burns, Moyra Cullen,  
John McAvoy, Isabella Stevenson,  
Janette Duffy, Marina Johnstone,  
David Wood, Charlie Millar,  
Tomasz Borkowski



Margaret will be sadly missed by everyone connected to Forgewood

## WORKING TOGETHER TO INTEGRATE OUR COMMUNITY ⇨

Over the last 2 years, there has been an increase in tenants from the Polish community within our stock.

We are committed to tenancy sustainment, and to show this the Co-op worked in partnership with Citizens Advice Bureau and the Polish residents by holding evening information sessions. As a result, it was felt necessary to translate key documents into Polish. After securing funding from the Scottish Government, (formerly Communities Scotland) the Co-op organised the translation of the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement, the Co-op's tenant handbook and a migrant workers handbook.



## MEMBERSHIP OF THE CO-OPERATIVE ⇨

There were 134 share members as at 31 March 2008. We have been actively promoting membership of the Co-op in various ways, including information on our newsletters and website, as well as encouraging new tenants to consider applying for a share with the Co-operative.

The share costs a one off £1 fee, and membership allows you to attend our management committee meetings as an observer, as well as standing for election at our Annual General Meeting in September.





Flats in Dinmont Crescent



Our new build development in Ashton Street



One of the best kept gardens

## REGENERATION OF THE AREA

**Regeneration work in Forgewood has taken a step forward with the commencement of demolition works to North Lanarkshire Council properties.**

The council approved demolition of these flats to create a cleared site to provide a mix of affordable rented housing and housing for sale, after a review of its housing stock in the area. Of the original 457 properties in Forgewood, before demolition, 95% of these are flatted. It is intended that by developing low rise housing, with back and front doors, that this will improve the housing mix in the area.

It is also intended that the introduction of new housing for sale, along with other work that

partners are undertaking will enhance the housing mix in the area, as it is also important to make the area more sustainable and to improve housing choice for local people.

The Co-op is in continuous discussion with key partners in the area, and hopes to play a significant part in the new build development that will be planned in the future.



Davaar Drive flats

# FORGEWOOD HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED

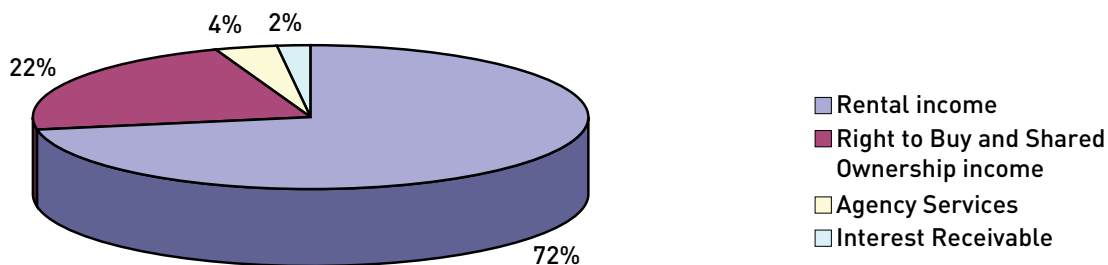
Analysis of income & Expenditure for the year ended 31/3/08

Financial Auditors  
French Duncan  
Chartered Accountants  
375 West George Street  
Glasgow  
G2 4LH

## INCOME

Rental income	£ 565,579
Right to Buy and Shared Ownership income	£ 173,377
Agency Services	£ 28,000
Interest Receivable	£ 16,303

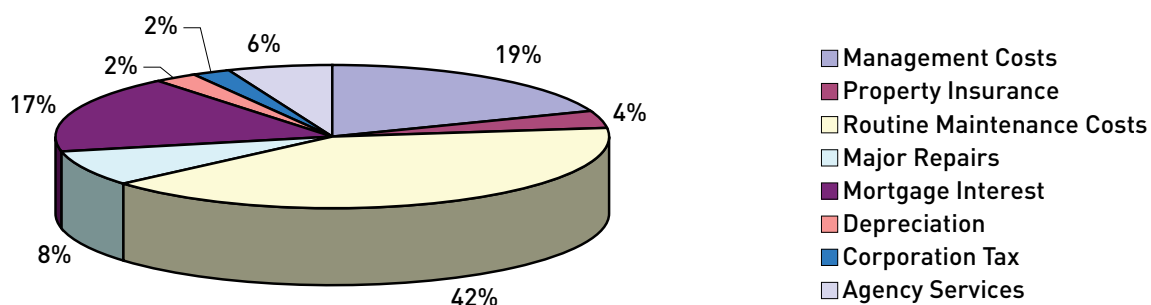
Income for the Year to 31/3/08



## EXPENDITURE

Management Costs	£ 114,806
Property Insurance	£ 23,639
Routine Maintenance Costs	£ 244,107
Major Repairs	£ 48,195
Mortgage Interest	£ 105,005
Depreciation	£ 14,961
Corporation Tax	£ 13,370
Agency Services	£ 36,723

Expenditure for the Year to 31/3/08







INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Scottish Housing Regulator (Communities Scotland) Reg No HAC271  
Registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts No. 2439R(S)

Forgewood Housing Co-op Ltd  
79 Kinloch Drive  
Motherwell  
ML1 3XD

Tel - 01698 263311  
Fax - 01698 263399

Email - [enquiries@forgewoodcoop.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@forgewoodcoop.org.uk)  
Web - [www.forgewoodcoop.org.uk](http://www.forgewoodcoop.org.uk)