



Forgewood Housing Co-operative Limited

Annual Report 2003 - 2004

Working in Partnership for the Community

**FHC**

## **Chairpersons Report**

Welcome to Forgewood Housing Co-operative's Annual Report for 2003 - 2004. I hope you will find the information contained within our report useful.

It has been a very busy year for the Co-operative, celebrating our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in January 2004. The occasion was marked with Terry Butcher, Motherwell FC Manager unveiling a plaque at the Co-operatives offices in 79 Kinloch Drive, Forgewood and making a presentation to one of Forgewood Housing Co-operative original steering group members Billy Muir. Afterwards tenants and invited guests gathered in the Community Centre in Forgewood to celebrate the occasion.

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 resulted in the creation of the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement to which all our tenants have signed up. The act focused heavily on Tenant Participation and from this all tenants are consulted on any changes to the Co-operatives service delivery. We welcome consultation with tenants to give their views on the current service delivery and voice concerns they may have, allowing the Co-operative to improve the service.

The introduction of a new computer system for reporting repairs has strengthened the repairs service to our tenants.

The Co-operative have been involved with the Forgewood Wider Action Group over the past few years. We give a clear commitment to engage with the community in a pro-active way to achieve initiatives and projects which may benefit the residents

In our partnership with Garrion People's Housing Co-operative we have established Bridges Housing Association as a resource for the voluntary housing movement and a source of income for both Co-operative's

As well as thanking my colleagues on the Management Committee I would like to thank all our staff, contractors, consultants and other agencies for their hard work and support throughout the year.

*Alan Thompson*  
Chairperson

## **Management Committee. As at 31 March 2004**

Alan Thomson	Chairperson
John Burton	Vice Chairperson
Patricia Lamb	Secretary
James Barr	Treasurer
William Muir	
Caroline Brown	
David Wood	
Charles Millar	
William Blakeway	
John McAvoy	
Margaret Gower	
Derek Hunter	
Angela Robinson	

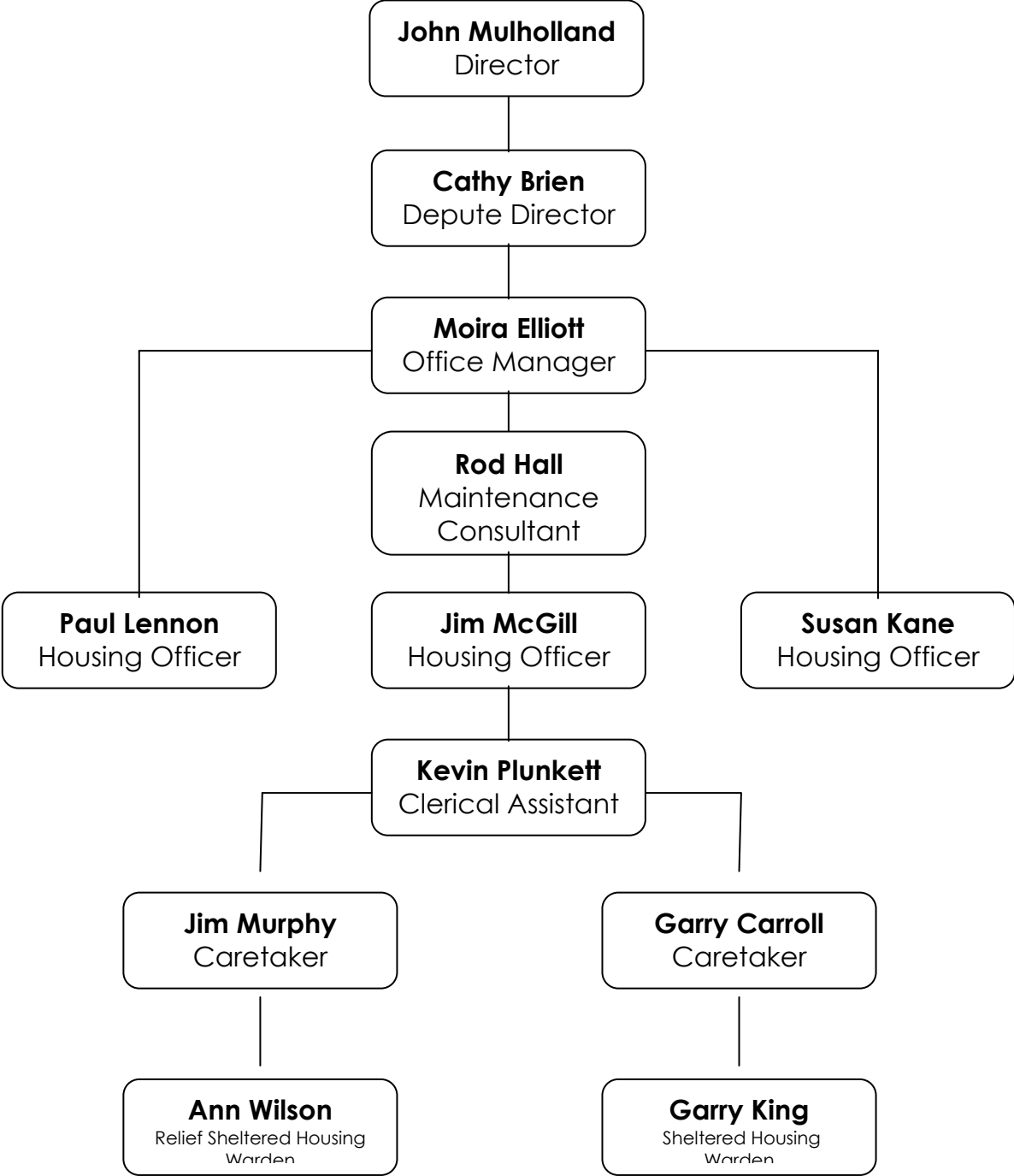
The Co-operative has a majority of tenant members and now has 96 members. The last Annual General Meeting was held on 10 September 2003 and following the Annual General Meeting the Management Committee were elected to oversee the work of the Co-operative. Monthly meetings are held where we set priorities and policies and make decisions on the running on the Co-operative.

There are presently 13 Committee Members on our committee of varying backgrounds, skills and experience. Over 72% of Committee Members were present at each monthly Management Committee meeting and we are pleased to report that all our meetings were quorate.

**Forgewood Staff Team**

The Co-operative is fortunate to have a team of professional staff who carry out the day to day work of the Co-operative and support the Management Committee.

The staff team is made up jointly from Forgewood Housing Co-operative and Garrion People's Housing Co-operative in Wishaw.



Maureen Marshall who worked in both Co-operatives has recently left our employment and we wish her well in her future career.

## Financial Highlights

### Statistics & Information

- **Annual Rental income for the year was £463,248.00**
- **The total overall income for the year amounted to £530,499.00**
- **After all expenditure had been taken into account a pre tax surplus of £3467.00 was generated.**
- **Total staff expenditure 31% of total income.**
- **Office overheads amounted to 14% of total income.**

A full copy of the Co-operative's accounts are available from our office.

**Auditor** French Duncan  
375 West George Street, Glasgow, G2 4LH

**Solicitor** Nimmo Thomson McLean  
1 Young Street, Wishaw, ML2 8HH

## **Wider Role**

The Co-operative is now a major player and partner in Forgewood in terms of social and environmental regeneration.

We intend to develop our role by participating in the business of Forgewood Community Development Trust.

During the year the Co-operative made application to Communities Scotland for funding on behalf of the Group to develop a stable Community Strategy for the group and the area. Grant funding of £9,000 was received for this purpose and Bishop Consultants are currently working on this document.

The Co-operative made another grant funding application to Communities Scotland on behalf of Forgewood Wider Action Group and a further £6,000 over 3 years was received for legal advice to the group from Bishops Solicitors.

The Co-operative were involved in the selection of a Community Development worker for Forgewood Wider Action Group resulting in the appointment of Tony McKay in 2003.

Forgewood Wider Action Group consulted the Co-operative on a project to provide new community facilities for use by community organisations.

We will continue to work with Forgewood Development Trust and other groups in the area to promote community involvement.

## **Building Futures in Lanarkshire**

The Co-operative is fortunate to be part of a partnership of 9 Registered Social Landlord's in Lanarkshire who benefit from the services of Building Futures in Lanarkshire Co-ordinator, Jim Connor. This has a significant local impact and further details are available from Jim Connor at Clyde Valley Housing Association Ltd. 82-84 Brandon Parade East, Motherwell, ML1 1LY, Phone 01698 268855.

## Tenant Participation

Forgewood Housing Co-operative believe that all their tenants and clients should have the opportunity that is practically possible to be directly involved in the Co-operatives service delivery. This includes the opportunity to be consulted on decision making in the Co-operatives area of operation.

A legal requirement of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 is for the Co-operative to have in place a Tenant Participation Strategy which is reviewed on a regular basis. The strategy sets out our aims and commitment to involving tenants and service users and says how we will do this.

The strategy includes issues such as methods of communication with tenants, types of activities tenants wish to be involved in and guidance on forming Registered Tenant Organisations (RTO's)

Our strategy aims to be practical and recognises some of the difficulties associated with participation. We respect people's wishes not to participate but will continue to offer opportunities to become involved.

As a result our commitment to Tenant Participation and consultation, the following took place during the year:

- A Tenant Satisfaction Survey was completed identifying methods of consultation our tenants preferred.
- Quarterly newsletters were issued to all tenants.
- Tenants were consulted on reviews of the Arrears, Allocations, and Maintenance policies.
- Consultation also took on the Annual Rent Increase.

Some tenants expressed an interest in joining a Tenants Focus Group and we are currently in discussions with those interested on how we wish to progress with the development of the group.

## Garden Competition

We thank all of those residents who once again showed a high standard of garden maintenance this year. The best kept garden competition was judged by Jim Conner (Co-ordinator, Building Futures in Lanarkshire) and prizes were awarded to:

Mrs Allen 164 Fife Drive  
(best garden within flats)  
(picture below)



Mr & Mrs Boyle  
26 Lorne Drive (best garden in new build)  
(picture below)



Mrs McKinley 18 Davaar Drive (runner up within flats)  
Mr & Mrs Lamb 83 Kinloch Drive (runner up in new build)

## **Maintenance**

During 2003 a new Maintenance System was introduced.

Effective property management and maintenance is our main source of contact with tenants. Every effort is made to provide an excellent service to our tenants, sharing owners and all those we provide the service to.

<b>Repairs Performance</b>	<b>Percentage of Repairs Complete Within Target Response Times</b>
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Emergency	100%
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Urgent	97%
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Routine	100%
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### **Average Repair Costs**

What we spent in 2003 – 2004

Reactive Repairs	£34,111.87
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Relet Repairs	£9,354.10
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Planned & Programmed	Programme Currently Under Review
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Cyclical Repairs	£28,486.90
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### **Repairs Satisfaction Results**

The majority of reactive repairs are carried out by two contractors under the Schedule of Rates and fixed lump sum contracts.

The vast majority of tenants are very satisfied with the performance of both contractors.

## **Housing Management Performance**

### **HOUSING STOCK**

The Co-operative now owns 219 properties in the Forgewood area.

These are made up of: -

#### **REFURBISHED FLATS**

2 Apartment	1
3 Apartment	84
4 Apartment	53
5 Apartment	5
Total	143

#### **NEW BUILD**

2 Apartment Flats	26
3 Apartment Flats/Houses	35
4 Apartment Houses	11
5 Apartment Houses	4
Total	76

#### **SHARED OWNERSHIP**

3 Apartment	4
4 Apartment	3
Total	7

#### **PROPERTIES FOR OWNERS**

3 Apartment	4
4 Apartment	3
Total	7

## Housing Management Services

The Co-operative delivers its Housing Management Service from our offices at 79 Kinloch Drive in the heart of Forgewood where the highest levels of customer service are a priority.

Our staff team are responsible for providing an approachable and sympathetic service on matters relating to Rents, Housing Lists, Allocations, Estate Management and Maintenance.

### Rental Information

#### Rent Increase 2003/04

	<b>Non Technical (i.e. actual arrears outstanding)</b>
Current Tenant Arrears	£10,315.82
Former Tenant Arrears	£5,921.84
Rent Loss on Void Properties in year	£2,566.50
Average number of working days to relet Voids	9.72

#### Allocation Report 2003/4

Apartment Size	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Total</b>
Relets	9	20	4	0	<b>33</b>
Allocation Type	Internal Transfer		6		
	Nomination		-		
	General Waiting List		44		
	HOMES		-		
	Ethnic Origin		33 White		

### Equal Opportunities

**31<sup>st</sup> March 2004**

Number of Applicants on list	244
Number of Applicants - White Ethnic Background	242
Number of Applicants on list Asian Ethnic Background	2
Number of with disability	7

### Housing Waiting Lists

A full review of the Co-operative's housing waiting lists took place in April 2004, which resulted in a large reduction in the number of applicants requesting rehousing in the Forgewood area. The Co-operative strives towards a healthy waiting list, and always looks at options to attract applicants onto the lists for accommodation in the area.

## **Partnership Working with North Lanarkshire Council**

Forgewood Housing Co-operative has a close working relationship with North Lanarkshire Council, and has entered into agreements in the following areas:

### **Nominations Agreement**

A nominations agreement between the Co-operative and North Lanarkshire Council is in place to enable the Council to maximise the housing available to meet its statutory obligations.

The agreement also assists the Council and the Co-operative to make the best use of resources and meet housing need. As at 31 March 2004, a review of the nominations agreement was in progress, due to the low demand for stock in the Forgewood area.

### **Homelessness Protocol**

Section 5 of The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a statutory duty on Registered Social Landlords to comply with a request from the Local Authority for accommodation for a statutory homeless applicant. After regular consultation with the Council, a Homelessness Protocol is now in place to deal with Section 5 referrals and the Co-operative will provide statistics on any lets made to statutory homeless applicants.

### **Common Housing Register**

Consultation between North Lanarkshire Council and all Registered Social Landlords in the North Lanarkshire area is ongoing to have a local Common Housing Register (CHR) in place. The CHR involves the landlords in North Lanarkshire devising a single application form by which anyone seeking rehousing in the area can register their need, and specify their housing preferences. Participating landlords then prioritise and select applicants from the single pool of applicants according to their own allocations policy.

The Co-operative will continue to update tenants on the progress of the CHR.

## **Right to Buy**

There have been no applications made under the Right to Buy in the year.

## **Development**

The Co-operative's original Development objectives have been met successfully through our programmes of improvement and new build.

However we would hope to continue to act as a major force for change in Forgewood.

## **Complaints**

Forgewood Housing Co-operative hopes that those who receive a service from us are happy with the way they are treated. Our complaints procedure is available in our offices to those who are not pleased with the service.

Between April 2003 and March 2004 no formal complaints were received.

## **Housing (Scotland) Act 2001**

The Co-operative have been successful in signing up all of its tenants to the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement.

## **Forgewood Housing Co-operative Limited**

79 Kinloch Drive

Forgewood

Motherwell

ML1 3XD

**Tel No** 01698 263311

**Fax No** 01698 263399

**Email** [enquiries@forgewoodcoop.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@forgewoodcoop.org.uk)

## **Opening Hours**

Monday - Friday

9am – 4.30pm

Registered with Communities Scotland Registration No. HAC 271.

and the Financial Services Authority Registration No. 2439 R (S)



On request from the Co-operative's offices we will provide translations of all of documents into various languages and other formats i.e. computer disk, tape, Braille, large print.