

**Oxford Citizens  
Housing Association  
Corporate Plan**

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**2010-13**

## About OCHA

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This is the corporate plan for Oxford Citizens Housing Association (OCHA) for the three years from 1st April 2010. This section is a summary of who we are and what we will do during this time.

OCHA was established in 1866 to provide affordable housing in Oxford and its suburbs. Now part of GreenSquare Group, we are a diverse organisation, providing high quality homes and services to over 2,800 households across Oxfordshire.

We are a pioneering housing group focused on the needs and aspirations of residents, neighbourhoods and communities, building homes and communities where people want to live.

Working with Catalyst Communities Housing Association (part of the Catalyst Housing Group) and four local councils, we also operate the Oxford Social Lettings Agency which provides short-term temporary accommodation for homeless families.

### Our aims

As part of the GreenSquare Group, OCHA aims to be a major provider of housing, regeneration, care and support and commercial services in Oxfordshire. Overall, we aim to be:

- **Pioneering:** working at the forefront of our sector by aiming to be innovative and excellent in all that we do
- **Including:** involving and valuing residents and staff in the way we run our business; promoting equality and diversity; openness and accountability; professionalism and integrity
- **Delivering:** keeping our promises by doing what we say we will and making decisions that ensure good value and long term sustainability for our business, our communities and our environment

## A bit about us

### *Our homes*

Altogether we own or manage 2,877 homes across Oxfordshire

Type of home	Number owned
General needs (for anyone in housing need)	1,676
Older persons' housing	534
Supported housing (for people with particular needs, for example those with mental health issues)	147
Low cost home ownership (part-rent, part-buy homes)	348
Leasehold (homes, usually flats, where the owner has bought the property but we still own the freehold to the building)	33
Temporary housing	139
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,877</b>

### *Our rents*

The table below shows how our average rent in Oxford compares to the cost of renting or buying a home through other methods.

Type of home	Cost per week
<b>Rented from OCHA</b> Two bedrooms	£90.17 (at March 09)
<b>Rented from another housing association (average)</b> Two bedrooms	£89.16 (at March 09)
<b>OCHA low cost home ownership</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• £180,000 property</li><li>• 50% bought with £90,000 mortgage</li><li>• 50% rented from OCHA</li></ul>	£172.50
<b>Rented from a private landlord</b> Two bedrooms	£230
<b>Bought on the open market</b> Based on average sale price of a 2 bedroom house of £232,800 (December 2009), with a 4.5% mortgage rate	£325

### *Our performance*

<b>Performance indicator</b>	<b>Our results (December 2009)</b>	<b>Our target</b>
Overall tenant satisfaction	83%	86%
Tenant satisfaction with their opportunities to participate	81%	81%
Current rent arrears	3.8%	3.5%
Time to relet empty homes (general needs)	19 days	22 days
Average energy efficiency rating (SAP) of our homes	67	70
Repairs completed within target time: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emergency</li><li>• Urgent</li><li>• Routine</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 97.2%</li><li>• 96.9%</li><li>• 97.8%</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 99%</li><li>• 97.4%</li><li>• 97.7%</li></ul>
Repairs completed at first visit	82%	85%

For more information about our performance and how it compares to others, please see the *Our Achievements* section.

### *Our employees*

OCHA employs 71 staff in total. Central services such as Human Resources and ICT are provided by GreenSquare Group.

## Achievements

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This section tells you about some of the key achievements we made against each of our strategic objectives over the last year, and our performance against our targets.

### Customer care

- We completed a telephone satisfaction survey, and found that overall, resident satisfaction had increased from 78% to 83%
- We launched our access to services review, which will improve how we tailor information and services to our residents' needs
- We successfully contacted 20% of the people who hadn't contacted us in the last 12 months
- We launched a "real time" mystery shopping pilot, where residents rate actual experiences of our services

We said we would...	We achieved...
Answer 85% of calls within 10 seconds	89% in December 2009
Achieve 70% satisfaction with how we handle antisocial behaviour cases	69% in December 2009
Respond to 95% of complaints within target time	100% in December 2009

### Resident involvement

- We published our first residents' business plan for 2009-10; and are working with residents on the 2010-12 plan, setting out their top priorities for the coming year
- Our exciting email and telephone-based Citizen's Panel is now running with 130 members, who are giving valuable monthly feedback on our performance and service delivery
- The GreenSquare team of resident inspectors have inspected our void properties and reported back to management

We said we would...	We achieved...
Achieve top 25% satisfaction with how we take residents' views into account	81%, which is top 25% performance
Increase the number of young people taking part in resident involvement events	Despite targeting younger people, this hasn't been as successful as we would like yet. However, we are recruiting hard during March 2010.

## Service excellence and continuous improvement

- We have had a mock short notice inspection, which assessed our services as “fair”, but able to move to “good” very quickly
- This year, we are focusing on three key service reviews as part of the Building Excellence programme: responsive maintenance, access to services and leaseholder services

## Services for vulnerable residents

- We have won the contract to deliver floating support services in Oxford City, which will mean that we can support 550 older people in the area
- We increased our aids and adaptations budget for 2009/10 by 11% to £30,000, and promoted the service with a revised leaflet and articles in *Citizens*.

We said we would...	We achieved...
Complete at least 30 new supported housing bedspaces for vulnerable people by 2011	We have 24 new homes for vulnerable people, with 6 more due to be completed shortly in Witney.
Complete three sheltered housing rebuilds to excellent standards by spring 2010	Three rebuilds are now complete, with the last one, Lucas and Remy Place, finished in March 2010.

## Value for money

- Our good financial planning and prudence has helped us weather the housing market downturn, with strong financial prospects going forward
- Residents have helped us prioritise our strategic expenditure through the residents’ business plan
- We have been looking at how to provide more support and advice to residents who are having money difficulties, and will be recruiting a financial inclusion officer by June 2010

We said we would...	We achieved...
increase efficiency and improve procurement to achieve savings targets each year	At September 2009, we had saved £483,644 against a year-end target of £585,225 across the Group
Reduce current rent arrears to 4% or less by March 2011	3.8% at December 2009
Relet our general needs homes in less than 22 days	19 days at December 2009

## Equality and diversity

- The Equality Matters @ OCHA group has been keeping equality and diversity at the forefront of our work
- We have made really good progress with collecting information on our residents’ needs

- We have started equality impact assessments of our key services

<b>We said we would...</b>	<b>We achieved...</b>
House a proportional number of black and minority ethnic and disabled applicants to the number on the waiting lists	Close to our target figures, housing 13% black and minority ethnic applicants against a target of 15% and 23% disabled applicants against a target of 25%
Maximise the diversity information that we hold on our residents	We hold gender data for 100% of residents, ethnicity for 88%, age for 89%, 79% for religion and sexuality; and 76% for disability

### **Sustaining our neighbourhoods**

- Our SHOUT project has continued to deliver high-quality youth and community work in four of our communities, and has successfully raised £450,000 to continue work for the next five years
- We have One Community projects working with residents to improve their neighbourhood in Corn Bar and Bartlett Close in Witney and in Croxford Gardens in Kidlington
- We have implemented ReAct software to help us monitor and manage antisocial behaviour more effectively

### **New homes**

- We revitalised the Residents Design Panel, recruiting new members, and giving them specialist training to be able to give input in the design process

<b>We said we would...</b>	<b>We achieved... (December 2009)</b>
Deliver approximately 100 homes for people in housing need each year, of which 20% would be low cost home ownership	We have delivered 65 social rent homes, of which 5 were low cost home ownership units. This reflects a prudent approach in the current financial climate, and we should still meet targets across the Group.

### **Investment in our assets**

- We are setting up a Direct Labour Organisation, which should be operational by July 2010
- We are actively managing contractor performance to tackle issues that have arisen through the year
- We have an affordable warmth action plan in place, to increase the energy efficiency rating of our homes and reduce fuel poverty for residents

<b>We said we would...</b>	<b>We achieved... (December 2009)</b>
Complete 99% of emergency; 97.4% of urgent and 97.7% of routine repair jobs within target time	97.2% of emergency; 96.9% of urgent; and 97.8% of routine within target time
Achieve 98% resident satisfaction with their last repair job	95%

### **Employee satisfaction**

<b>We said we would...</b>	<b>We achieved... (December 2009)</b>
Keep staff turnover at or below 12%	20.4%
Keep short term staff sickness absence below 5 days per employee	6.7 days
Have 85% of staff who are "proud to work for OCHA" by 2010	78% (February 2009)

## Objectives

OCHA will work towards the overall objectives in the GreenSquare corporate plan, and these specific objectives over the next three years. **RBP** indicates that this objective delivers targets set out in the Residents' Business Plan.

### 1. Customer Care

We will achieve a year-on-year improvement in resident and colleague satisfaction with our customer services.

#### How are we going to deliver it?

- We will maintain the strong cultural focus on excellent customer services both internally and externally
- We will achieve Quality Housing Service accreditation during 2010/11
- Using our customer intelligence, staff development and technology, we will improve access to tailored services, manage our customer relationships better and drive up service standards (setting out our approach in a Group Customer Access Strategy to be published by October 2010)
- We will complete a satisfaction survey of all our residents by April 2011
- We will make full use of our resident consultation mechanisms to inform service improvement and feed back to residents on what we have achieved and what has changed as a result of their involvement **RBP**
- Each year, we will make contact with a sample of customers who have not contacted us to check the accessibility of our services
- We will use feedback from resident inspectors and mystery shoppers to review and evaluate our services **RBP**
- We will have evaluated OCHA's DEAL programme by April 2011

#### How we will know when we get there?

*(Our current performance is detailed in brackets where appropriate)*

- We will achieve performance within the top 25% (upper quartile) of all housing associations:
  - Achieve top quartile performance of 86% in terms of overall satisfaction with our service (83%); and
  - Achieve 80% satisfaction with the outcome of last contact in our ongoing customer service surveys (78%)
- As our customers prefer to contact us by telephone we will:
  - answer 85% of calls within 10 seconds (89%); and
  - lose no more than 4% of calls (1.4%).
- In relation to complaints, by 2011
  - 60% of residents will be satisfied with how we handle their complaint (86%);
  - we will respond to 99% of complaints within our target times; (100%); and
  - 90% of complaints will be resolved informally or at stage one.
- We will achieve at least 70% satisfaction levels with how we handle antisocial behaviour and arrears cases by 2011 (ASB 69%)
- Each year, we will survey a sample of 5% of residents who have not made contact during the previous year. During 2010/11, we will contact all residents transferring from Riverside Housing Group.
- We will see positive and improving results from mystery shopping of customer services and housing officers and resident inspection, including inspections of repairs and resident involvement **RBP**

**Links:** Group customer care strategy

## 2. Resident Involvement

We will establish an even more effective dialogue with our residents to:

- understand and respond to residents' needs;
- shape our priorities;
- receive feedback on our services; and
- be accountable.

### How are we going to deliver it?

- We will increase the opportunities for residents to become effectively involved in shaping our services, and selecting contractors
- We will work with residents' groups to develop an effective dialogue and ensure they continue to be representative of their community
- We will pro-actively promote resident involvement amongst all staff, including giving them resident involvement objectives **RBP**
- We will use our telephone and email based Citizens Panel for representative and cost-effective resident consultation
- We will use a variety of methods to make sure that residents receive feedback to show the impact of their involvement
- We will regularly feedback to residents on our performance
- We will deliver on the promises in our residents' business plan **RBP**
- We will provide a range of training opportunities for residents **RBP**
- Subject to securing appropriate funding, we will provide and support all residents involved in governance and inspection structures with modern ICT phased in over two years from April 2009

### How we will know when we get there?

*(Our current performance is detailed in brackets where appropriate)*

- We will achieve top quartile satisfaction of 69% with how we take residents' views into account when we make decisions by 2011 (81%)
- We will have a 10% increase in residents active on panels **RBP**
- Responses to our surveys and involvement in our resident participation activities will continue to mirror the make-up of our resident population
- We will achieve upper quartile performance of 84% in terms of satisfaction with the information we provide (87%)
- We will have a Residents' Business Plan in place alongside the corporate business plan each year **RBP**
- We will be able to show that resident involvement activities have had an impact at a strategic and service level **RBP**
- We will see a year on year increase in the number of new attendees on resident training programmes; the number of residents completing their course and the levels of satisfaction with the training **RBP**
- Resident inspectors will report on the inspections that they carry out, and we will take action in response to this **RBP**

**Links:** Group resident involvement strategy; OCHA resident involvement policy

### 3. Service Excellence and Continuous Improvement

Residents will drive our service priorities so that we deliver continually excellent and appropriate services

#### How are we going to deliver it?

- We will achieve year on year improvements in performance, learning from our experiences and those of others in order to achieve continuous improvement
- We will work with the Residents' Scrutiny Panel to improve services and support and develop their role
- We will deliver our "Building Excellence" continuous improvement programme in order to improve performance and value for money and report on the outcomes to residents
- We will continue to involve residents in all aspects of running our business, from corporate planning and budget setting through to neighbourhood standards **RBP**
- We will work with residents to agree local standards, in line with the Tenant Services Authority regulatory framework by April 2011

#### How we will know when we get there?

*(Our current performance is detailed in brackets where appropriate)*

- We will achieve our upper quartile satisfaction targets detailed in objective one above by 2011
- We will achieve or be performing at the level of at least a "strengths outweigh weaknesses" inspection by the end of 2010/11
- Our "Building Excellence" service reviews will show measurable improvements in services to residents
- We will make our performance information more transparent and open to resident scrutiny during 2010/11
- Having completed all the high priority actions from our mock short notice inspection, we will complete all the medium priority actions during 2010/11

**Links:** Group continuous improvement strategy

#### 4. Services for Vulnerable Residents

We will:

- See a year on year improvement in the quality of life of our most vulnerable residents
- Increase the number and quality of homes and services for homeless people
- Offer accommodation and services that meet the changing needs of older people

##### How are we going to deliver it?

- We will expand on the work undertaken by our housing support team, to provide more support related to young people, worklessness and debt
- We will provide support services for older people in Oxford City, funded by Supporting People from October 2010 to March 2014
- We will develop more supported housing for vulnerable people, particularly those with learning difficulties, physical disabilities or mental health problems
- We will pursue opportunities to provide “extra care” housing for older people
- We will set aside an annual budget to adapt homes for disabled residents that reflects the increasing number and needs of residents with disabilities
- We will continue to promote our equipment and adaptations policy for those in need
- We will improve the ways we provide information for vulnerable people **RBP**

##### How we will know when we get there?

*(Our current performance is detailed in brackets where appropriate)*

- We will provide visiting support to over 100 of our most vulnerable general needs residents annually by 2010, meeting our target response times in 98% of cases and achieving positive outcomes in 85% of cases closed
- We will support an additional 550 older people in Oxford City from October 2010 under our new Supporting People contract
- We will have completed three sheltered housing rebuilds to excellent standards by spring 2010
- We will achieve year on year improvements in the satisfaction of our supported housing clients
- We will have extra care housing completed or in development for at least 80 people by 2012
- We will complete new supported housing for at least 30 vulnerable people during 2009-12
- We will increase the annual number of disability adaptations completed to 180 by 2011 whilst maintaining overall customer satisfaction with adaptations undertaken at 97%

**Links:** Group supported housing strategy

<b>5. Value for money</b>	
We will improve the quality of life of our residents through efficiency gains in procurement and management initiatives	
<b>How are we going to deliver it?</b>	<b>How we will know when we get there?</b> <i>(Our current performance is detailed in brackets where appropriate)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will increase efficiency and improve procurement to achieve savings targets each year</li> <li>• Each year, we will repeat our review against our peers to help us improve our value for money while maintaining excellent services</li> <li>• We will work with residents to increase their understanding of our financial position and spending priorities, and improve how we communicate with residents about value for money</li> <li>• We will follow and improve our policies and procedures in relation to rent arrears and letting properties in order to maximise our income and help residents manage money and avoid debt</li> <li>• We will review our rents and conduct adjustments for all affected tenancies</li> <li>• We will investigate new technology, such as teleconferencing as an effective way of engaging residents in more remote areas.</li> <li>• We will appoint a financial inclusion officer by June 2010</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over 80% of residents will believe that their rent equals good value for money (74%)</li> <li>• We will achieve better than average costs per property in the annual Housemark benchmarking results by 2011</li> <li>• We will achieve our upper quartile targets around rents and letting properties: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ reduce current resident arrears to 3.5% or less by March 2011, working towards our upper quartile target of 2.8% (3.8%)</li> <li>○ reduce former tenant arrears to under 0.7% by 2012 (1.4%)</li> <li>○ continue to re-let our general needs empty homes in 25 days (19 days)</li> <li>○ relet our 55+ homes in 24 days by 2010 (28 days)</li> <li>○ lose no more than 0.9% of our annual rent roll on general needs empty homes (0.4%)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• We will continue to collect at least 100% of rent each year</li> </ul>
<b>Links:</b> Group value for money strategy	

## 6. Equality and Diversity

We will offer a service that is fair and equal to all, reflecting the diverse needs of the communities we serve

### How are we going to deliver it?

- We will keep equality and diversity at the forefront of our work, with a specific focus on age during 2010
- We will use the profiling data that we have collected to provide a fair and accessible service to people regardless of their background or needs
- We will deliver our disability and gender equality action plans between 2008 and 2011
- We will ensure that the Citizens and Scrutiny Panels are representative of our resident community
- We will provide fair and accessible services to all our residents, catering for special needs where appropriate
- We will continue to deliver equality and diversity awareness sessions to our key involved residents, staff and Board

### How we will know when we get there?

*(Our current performance is detailed in brackets where appropriate)*

- Residents from minority groups will be at least equally as satisfied with the services OCHA provides as the resident population as a whole during the life of this plan
- The number of BME and disabled applicants we house will be proportional to the number on the local authority waiting lists
- Our staff and board will fairly reflect all sections of the community. At the moment, this means that:
  - 10% will be from black and minority ethnic backgrounds *(9% staff, 9% board)*
  - 6% will have a disability *(9% and 0%)*
  - 50% will be female *(55%)*
  - 34% will be younger than 35 *(28% and 18%)*
  - 42% will be aged 35-59 *(61% and 64%)*
  - 24% will be aged over 60 *(11% and 18%)*
- We will continue to focus on collecting equality and diversity data, aiming to hold data for 95% of residents for all equality strands *(currently ranging from 76% to 100%)* and for preferred method of contact *(85%)* in 2010/11
- We will have prioritised service areas and conducted equality impact assessments on up to the top ten priority areas during 2010/11

**Links:** Group equality and diversity strategy

## 7. Sustaining our Neighbourhoods

We will:

- Create sustainable neighbourhoods where people want to live
- Invest in our neighbourhoods to improve the quality of life and the environment for local people

### ***How are we going to deliver it?***

- We will identify areas of worklessness within our communities and prioritise our community investment activities appropriately
- We will identify grant and partnering opportunities to deliver effective community projects each year
- We will work with our partners to continue the SHOUT project
- We will continue our programme of estate inspections, and effectively involve residents in these **RBP**
- We will enhance resident involvement in the selection and procurement of estate services
- We will increase residents' sense of pride in their neighbourhood with pilot resident champion projects, and the re-introduction of the Good Neighbour Awards **RBP**
- We will continue to promote safety and security on our estates **RBP**
- We will look at the feasibility of setting up an allotment area **RBP**
- We will work within the Group sustainability strategy

### ***How we will know when we get there?***

*(Our current performance is detailed in brackets where appropriate)*

- Resident satisfaction with the area they live in will increase to 84% by 2011 (81%)
- By 2011 we will have delivered at least three specific initiatives aimed at tackling concentrations of worklessness.
- Less than 10% of residents will see vandalism and drug dealing as a serious problem in the our residents survey (13% and 15%)
- We will aim to deliver the Community Bus and Playbus projects to four of our estates, and audit play areas on larger estates **RBP**
- We will have carried out at least six Community Clean Up days each year
- We will continue to run One Community projects on two estates **RBP**
- Resident champions will report back in Citizens and on the website **RBP**
- We will have a larger "pot" of £20,000 to pay for security improvements identified by residents **RBP**
- We will reduce our business mileage and office energy consumption by 2% to help reduce our carbon footprint

**Links:** Group community investment strategy

## 8. New Homes

We will maximise the new provision and quality of housing for people in housing need

### How are we going to deliver it?

- We will work with local authorities to provide a good quality range of homes and tenures (for example intermediate market rent) for people in housing need, subject to market conditions
- We will continue to pursue a range of delivery and funding options to maximise development and land opportunities
- We will continue to have an effective dialogue with residents on all new homes that we build, via the Design and Development Group and new homes satisfaction surveys

### How we will know when we get there?

*(Our current performance is detailed in brackets where appropriate)*

- We will aim to deliver around 175 homes over the next three years, of which around 35% will be low-cost home ownership or intermediate rent properties. These targets will be continually reviewed in line with market conditions. *(65 to date in 2009/10, 7% LCHO) RBP*
- We will achieve 86% satisfaction level with our new build homes by 2011 *(67%)*
- We will have successfully secured one additional major regeneration project by 2011

**Links:** Group development and growth strategy

## 9. Investment in our Assets

We will continually assess our assets and take appropriate action to make sure that they meet residents' needs and are sustainable

### How are we going to deliver it?

- We will undertake stock condition surveys (conduct inspections and improvements) to all our properties on a five year cycle, and make adequate provision for component replacements in the business plan based on accurate life-cycle costings
- We will establish a Direct Labour Organisation in Oxford by July 2010, shaping our services around residents' needs **RBP**
- We will review the delivery approach for major works and stock condition by July 2010
- We will deliver our affordable warmth action plan to improve the energy efficiency of their homes and reduce their heating costs during 2010/11
- We will monitor our programmed maintenance contracts for resident satisfaction and performance
- We will monitor the performance of our responsive maintenance contractors
- We will ensure that we comply with gas safety requirements
- We will ensure that we complete our annual programme of Fire Risk Assessments
- We will carry out satisfaction surveys, measure performance and complete post project reviews on our major repairs contracts; and report these to residents

### How we will know when we get there?

*(Our current performance is detailed in brackets where appropriate)*

- We will achieve upper quartile resident satisfaction of 88% with the quality of our homes (85%)
- We will achieve upper quartile satisfaction of 82% with our repairs and maintenance service (80%) in 2011
- We will complete at least 99.2% of emergency, 98.3 % of urgent and 98.1% of routine responsive maintenance jobs within target times (97.2%, 96.9%, 97.8%)
- We will complete 93% of repairs first time (82%)
- We will maintain an annual average of at least 98% resident satisfaction with their last responsive repair job (95%) **RBP**
- We will have an average SAP (energy efficiency) rating for homes of 70 by 2011 (67)
- 100% of properties will have a current gas safety certificate.

**Links:** Group & OCHA asset management strategy

## 10. Employee Satisfaction

We will see a year on year improvement in employee satisfaction with OCHA

### How are we going to deliver it?

- Human resources functions will be delivered centrally by the GreenSquare Group, but in terms of OCHA staff, we will aim to achieve the targets listed opposite.
- We will ensure that health and safety requirements are correctly implemented and followed.

### How we will know when we get there?

*(Our current performance is detailed in brackets where appropriate)*

- Staff turnover will remain at or below the sector average of 17.1% each year *(20.4%)*
- Short term staff absenteeism will be less than 5 days per employee per year *(6.7 days)*
- In the 2010 staff survey:
  - Overall staff satisfaction will be 85% *(80%)*
  - 85% of staff will be “proud to work for OCHA” *(78%)*
  - 60% of staff will be satisfied that there is open communication and flow of information between all levels of the organisation *(50%)*
  - 97% of staff will feel that OCHA is focused on providing excellent customer service *(93%)*

**Links:** Group Human Resources Strategy, Learning and Development Strategy

## Board and management team

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### Board

The OCHA Board is made up of 12 members: four residents and eight independent members. In addition, the Managing Director of OCHA is a co-opted member. One resident board member is still to be recruited.

#### **Stephen Butcher**

*Independent Board Member*

Stephen originally comes from Tavistock in Devon and moved to Wiltshire in 1999. He spent eight years working for a number of housing associations in maintenance and development until he moved into the education sector. Stephen has spent the last five years working for property consultants, specialising in residential survey and valuation work. Stephen is a qualified Domestic Energy Assessor and an external tutor for the College of Estate Management.

#### **Alice Copping (Chair)**

*Independent board member*

Alice was appointed in April 2008, with over 12 years' experience in the voluntary sector. Having graduated with a degree in Management Science, Alice has volunteered with VSO in Bangladesh, trained as an adviser with the Citizens Advice Bureau and worked at Oxfordshire Housing Rights and then Barton Information Centre. She is currently Director of Policy and Empowerment at Age Concern, Oxfordshire. She also currently works on the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board and the National Age Concern Health and Social Care Partnership.

#### **Sue Brownill**

*Independent board member*

Sue currently lectures in the School of the Built Environment at Oxford Brookes University where she has taught on professionally recognised courses in housing, planning and tenant participation. Her speciality is community and neighbourhood regeneration and she has also been involved in a number of community regeneration projects in London Docklands and East Oxford.

#### **Chris Cornforth**

*Independent board member*

Chris is a Professor at the Open University Business School. He joined the School in 1988 to develop an innovative new management programme for the managers of voluntary and non-profit organisations. His research focuses on the governance of public and not for profit organisations. Chris was a founder member of the Oxfordshire Co-operative Development Agency.

#### **Derek Day**

*Independent board member*

Derek is retired. He is a solicitor with over 27 years experience in local government, including 14 as Chief Executive of the London Borough of Enfield. Derek also has extensive experience of the NHS at a national level. He has been a non executive member of two NHS Trust Boards. Prior to moving to Oxford he was chair of a housing association in North London.

### **Sherri DesBaux**

*Independent board member*

Sheri lives in Greater London and has a background in education, learning and development. She has worked as a higher education tutor and lecturer and also held senior management positions in the public and voluntary sectors before becoming a consultant. Her independent work includes developing strategies regarding the provision of affordable homes for ex-service men and women.

### **Nickie Harrison**

*Resident board member*

Nickie grew up in Banbury and has lived there most of her life. Having worked in Human Resources, Nickie took some time out to travel around Australia and New Zealand and now works for an online auction company. As well as travelling, Nickie enjoys adventurous sports.

### **John Jackson**

*Independent board member*

John has worked at Director level for the past twelve years in local government and is currently Director for Social and Community Services at Oxfordshire County Council having previously been its Director for Resources. He is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

### **Philippa Lowe**

*Independent board member*

Philippa has lived in West Oxfordshire since 1992. She has spent 10 years working with local authorities, seven years as NHS Finance Director in Oxfordshire, two years as NHS Chief Executive in Oxfordshire and seven years in management consultancy. She is currently Finance Director with Mid Essex Hospitals NHS Trust and sits on the Board of Mid Essex Hospitals NHS Trust. Her particular interest is in supporting vulnerable groups.

### **Steven Peachey**

*Resident Board Member*

Steven has lived in Witney all of his life. He worked as a builder and window fitter for many years before changing paths and becoming a pub landlord. In 2003 he left the pub trade and began working as a support worker in a day service for adults with learning difficulties, a job that gave him great opportunities to gain many new skills including NVQ 3 in Social & Health Care, Makaton (sign language), first aid, breakaway skills and much more. He has also learnt about the need and importance of good communication skills.

### **Andrew Smith**

*Managing Director (OCHA) and co-opted board member*  
See below

**Eleanor Thompson**

*Resident board member*

Eleanor has been an OCHA resident for over three years. Although she is officially retired, she works two days a week for a small charity which provides housing for adults with learning disabilities. She also manages a Saturday shower and breakfast project for homeless in Oxford City Centre and is currently in consultation with other voluntary agencies with aim of starting new group and meeting place for homeless and vulnerable women.

## **Management Team**

The Managing Director and Heads of Service form our Management Team, who are responsible for the day to day running of the business.

### **Andrew Smith, BArch, DipArch, MBA – Managing Director (OCHA)**

Andrew joined OCHA in 2000, with 20 years' experience in housing associations, including Circle 33. He also chairs the Oxfordshire Rural Housing Partnership and sits on the National Housing Federation's Rural Alliance. Before this he was an architect in private practice.

## **Heads of Service**

### **Errol St John Smith – Head of Supported Housing**

Errol joined OCHA in 2010. He has been Head of Business & Resources at Tower Hamlets Homes and Housing Strategy Manager at Peterborough City Council plus other roles in various housing associations..

### **Philip Brady - Head of Neighbourhood Services**

Phil joined OCHA in 2009 with considerable experience of working in social housing, both for housing associations and large local authorities. Until recently he was Head of Operations for Charter Community Housing Association and he has also worked as an Area Housing Manager for Oxford City Council and as Business Manager with Cherwell Housing Trust's supported housing department.

### **Wendy Spray, MA, Dip Soc Admin – Head of Resident and Community Investment**

Wendy joined OCHA in 2001, with over 20 years' experience of resident involvement and community development. She has worked in Botswana, Islington, Blackbird Leys and at Oxford Brookes University where she led a course in Resident involvement.