



OCHA

**Oxford Citizens Housing Association
Corporate Plan Summary
2009 – 2012**

About OCHA

This is the corporate plan summary for Oxford Citizens Housing Association (OCHA) for the three years from 1st April 2009.

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

Together with Westlea Housing, we formed the GreenSquare Group in April 2008. 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 more about us

- At the end of 2008, we owned or managed 2,722 homes across Oxfordshire
- Renting a two-bedroom home from us costs about a fifth of buying a similar property on the open market in Oxford
- Over 99% of our homes pass the Decent Homes Standard
- We employ around 80 staff

Our objectives

In order to achieve these high standards, we have set out our strategic objectives under the following headings:

Customer care: We will achieve a year on year improvement in resident and colleague satisfaction with our customer services

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

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

Service excellence and continuous improvement: We will have achieved top quartile performance in all key service areas by 2011

Services for vulnerable residents: We will

- see a year on year improvement in the quality of life for our most vulnerable residents;
- increase the number and quality of homes and services for older people; and
- offer accommodation and services that meet the changing needs of older people

Value for money: We will improve the quality of life of our residents through efficiency gains in procurement and management initiatives

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

Sustaining our neighbourhoods: We will continue to deliver improved quality of life in our neighbourhoods and create sustainable and pleasant places where people want to live

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

Investment in our assets: We will continually assess our assets and take appropriate action to make sure that they remain sustainable; and make sure that all our homes meet the Decent Homes standard by 2010

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

More detailed information on our specific objectives and targets can be found at www.greensquaregroup.com/plans

Achievements

Some of our key achievements from 2008/09 were to:

- Extend our office opening hours and launch an enhanced out of hours service to provide a better and more efficient service when the office is closed
- Launch a freephone telephone number
- Enable residents to put together our first residents' business plan, setting out their top priorities for the coming year
- Recruit residents to the new GreenSquare scrutiny panel, to closely monitor our services and advise on how to improve them
- Complete the majority of our inspection improvement plan
- Create a small in-house housing support team to support our most vulnerable customers
- Move residents into the redeveloped Rosemary Court retirement housing scheme
- Appoint a dedicated post to collect former tenant arrears
- Continue to collect preferred method of contact data for our residents to help us communicate with people in the way they prefer
- Reach the shortlisting stage of the National Housing Federation Neighbourhood Awards for our SHOUT project
- Train a number of residents to bring their expertise to estate inspections
- Build 119 social rent and 17 low cost home ownership homes in the first three quarters of 2008
- Assess the feasibility of setting up a Direct Labour Organisation, which should go ahead in 2009
- Achieve 80% staff satisfaction in our staff survey and 78% of staff who are "proud to work for OCHA"

We will also work to deliver the priorities that residents have set out in their plan for the year as far as we can, or have a dialogue with them about constraints, issues and alternative options.

More detailed information on our achievements in the last year can be found at www.greensquaregroup.com/plans



The board and management team

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 independent member is still to be recruited.



Alice Copping (Chair)
Independent board member



Nickie Harrison
Resident board member



Monique Audifferen
Resident board member



Nicola Holden
Resident board member



Sue Brownill
Independent board member



John Jackson
Independent board member



Chris Cornforth
Independent board member



Philippa Lowe
Independent board member



Derek Day
Independent board member



Eleanor Thompson
Resident board member



Sherri Desbaux
Independent board member

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
Managing Director



to be appointed
Head of Neighbourhood Services



Ian Gilders
Head of Supported Housing

More detailed profiles of our board and management team can be found at www.greensquaregroup.com/plans