



Annual Report to Tenants 2022/23





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Welcome

Welcome to this year's Annual Report to Tenants for 2022/23

It has been another very busy and exciting year for everyone involved with FairOak. We are delighted to be able to tell you about our new developments this year, the success of our Customer Engagement Strategy and a range of improvements that we have made to the way we operate and deliver our services to you.

We're sure that you will also share in our pride at having been awarded Team of the Year for a Housing Association with less than 1000 properties at the recent Housing Heroes Awards in Manchester.



HOUSING HEROES AWARDS





This Annual Report tells you about what we have been doing in the past year, the changes we have made to our staff team and Board, how we have performed across all the areas of the business, how we have spent the rent you pay us and whether you have been satisfied with the service we have provided We will also be telling you about our plans for the next twelve months.

This report covers the period between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023. We hope you enjoy reading our Annual Report for 2022/23.



i If you would like to make any comments or find out more about what we do, please contact Alison Barnes on 01539 720082.



About Fairoak



Fairoak Housing Association has properties in the Northwest and Northeast of England. We provide a variety of accommodation to meet the needs of our tenants.

We manage 27 schemes providing independent living flats for rent and shared ownership and shared housing with 24 hour support staff for 108 adults with learning disabilities and autism.

At Fairoak we pride ourselves on the supportive and dedicated service that our staff provide.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to provide safe, accessible and supportive accommodation that meets the needs and desires of each of our tenants allowing them to lead as independent and fulfilling life as possible.

OUR VISION

Our vision is that all of our tenants will regard Fairoak Housing Association as their first choice provider of supported living.

OUR VALUES

We asked our tenants what values are most important to them and these are the values that underpin everything we do.



Respect We will treat our tenants with respect and our relationship will be based on fairness and honesty.

Helpful We will make sure you have a simple and easy way of raising issues, making complaints, and putting things right.

Listen We will listen carefully to our tenants and will ask for and value your views.

Understanding We understand people's needs are different so we will give you clear and accessible information on the issues that matter to you.

Honesty We explain things to our tenants and work in partnership so you can independently monitor us and hold us to account.

OUR CORE PURPOSE

Providing the keys to happy, healthy homes.

The FairOak Board wrote a Business Plan in 2019 which set out our goals for the next five years. We think our plan will support our tenants and help us to grow and provide excellent accommodation and services for people with a learning disability.



You can see our Business Plan 2019 – 2024 and find more information about FairOak Housing Association in full at www.fairoakhousing.co.uk



Who works at Fairoak?

The staff team continue to work hard to develop and grow Fairoak while keeping our tenants at the heart of everything we do.

We were honoured to be awarded Team of the Year for a Housing Association with less than 1000 properties at the recent Housing Heroes Awards in Manchester.

The staff team enjoyed a fantastic evening in Manchester where the work we do to support our tenants was praised by the judges. We said goodbye to our Housing and Support Officer Matthew Davidson. He has been a key member of our team for many years; we would like to thank him for all of his hard work at Fairoak and wish him well in the future.

We also said goodbye to one of our board members Lesley Dixon.



Winners!



Good luck Matthew!



Sharon Handley
Finance Officer



Alison Barnes
Customer
Engagement Officer



Lisa Chant
Chief Executive
of FairOak



Lisa Taylor
Housing and
Support Officer



John Holmes
Asset and
Compliance Manager

Hello everyone!

Notes from the Chair

As Chair of the Board at Fairoak Housing Association, I'm excited to share what we've been up to in the past year.

We've been working hard to support Lisa and the team in making sure that our tenants have a great place to live, and also that we continue to provide homes for more people who need them. I want to tell you about some things we've done this year.

It's almost a year ago that Board Members had the chance to meet some of our tenants, their families and some support workers at an event attached to our AGM. It was great that so many people could make it, and we're hoping to meet more of you at this year's event. As part of the NHF's 'Starts at Home' week, some of the Board were also able to join invited guests to visit some of our tenants in their homes and we were made to feel very welcome by everyone. It was also very helpful to hear what our tenants like and dislike



about living in their homes and the feedback surveys that we've seen from your families also provide us with some great insight. Thank you to everyone for taking part.

As always, our Board meetings have been very busy and some of the key things that we have been talking about include:

- Fairoak's new asset management strategy - we have a new plan to make sure that tenants' homes are in the best shape. We want homes to be comfortable and safe for everyone, as well as making sure that they're energy efficient. We have also approved a set of new Health and Safety policies.
- We've looked at our financial plans for the next few years and know that despite rising costs, we can still do the work that we want to do.



The Better Social Housing Review



- We've discussed a new Customer Engagement strategy. We love to hear about the ways in which Fairoak is listening to our tenants and helping them to influence how we do things as an organisation. We're always pleased to hear that tenants are happy with Fairoak, but we also know there's always room to do better!

- It's important that the Board keep a close eye on what's going on around us that might have an impact on Fairoak. This includes the changes to the Local Authority structure in Cumbria, the new Social Housing Consumer Regulation due next year and the outputs of the Better Social Housing Review.

Finally, I just want to say a special thanks to the team at Fairoak, who are amazing. We're really

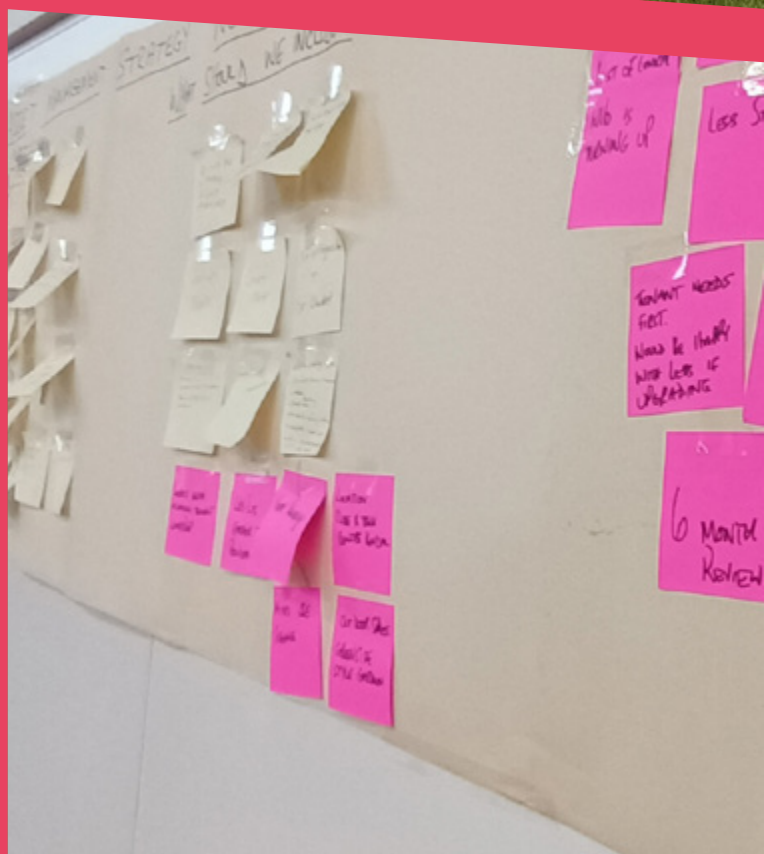
proud of their commitment and everything that they do for our tenants. We were not surprised at all that they won the 'Team of the Year' award at the Housing Heroes awards in the Summer.

Thank you for being a part of the Fairoak community. We're here to help and make things better for you. If you have any questions or ideas, please let us know. Together, we can make Fairoak an even better place to live!

Sarah Parr, Chair of the Board

• We have continued to face challenges with the rising cost of living, shortages of social care staff and contractors and rising costs of building materials and supplies. Despite these challenges, we are pleased to report that we have been able to carry out all safety checks on time and continue to spend money on improving your homes. As a result we are delighted that your satisfaction levels with the service we provide remains very high.

• Following the review of our Board and governance arrangements last year, we have strengthened the way we manage risk to ensure that we maintain our focus on you, our tenants, your wellbeing and your safety. In January, the Board held a Strategy Day where we discussed our vision for the future and our focus on continuing to develop new homes whilst making sure that we are still able to deliver the excellent service you expect from us.



What have we been doing this year?



Here is what Phil Glover, one of our newest Board members, has to say about his role on the Board:

“After joining Fair oak as a board member, although I knew I wanted to support the great work we do, I wasn’t sure what this would look like. Looking back I sensed that I would be learning a lot about the organisation and tenants as well as working with the board and staff to continue providing and improving our services.

What I wasn’t expecting was a couple of great days raising awareness through the ‘Starts at Home’ campaign which, alongside visiting tenants’ home and hearing the impact we’ve had on their lives, also involve me complimenting Tim Farron on his Doc Martins! Nor did I think I would pick up some great tips and recipes from our Fair oak newsletter. And last but not least, a fantastic day walking from Coniston with fellow board members and staff to raise money for ‘Friends of Fair oak’. I can’t wait to see what we do next!”



- In November, we asked an external expert to carry out a review of all our rents and service charges to make sure that they are fair and meet current regulations. We also improved our IT systems to make them more secure.
- During the year, we developed a new supported living scheme near Workington, together with West House Care & Support, for 4 tenants and had 3 new schemes, including our first in North Lancashire, under development which we will tell you more about later in this report.



• In September we celebrated Starts at Home Day. We held two events to celebrate supported housing and the difference it makes to our tenants. The MP Tim Farron attended our Kendal event and Simon Fell, MP for Furness attended an event in Barrow. The tenants were able to tell our guests about how living in a Fair oak property had given them independence and helped to increase their confidence.

- We welcomed 6 new tenants to Fair oak during the year who moved into our existing properties.
- We achieved excellent tenant satisfaction results in our latest survey, which were significantly higher than other similar landlords who provide supported housing. Again, we chose to carry out most of our surveys face to face as it is a great opportunity for us to see you all and discuss what you like about Fair oak and where you think we can do better! For the first time, we also sent a satisfaction survey to parents and family members, and you can read what they think about Fair oak later in this report.



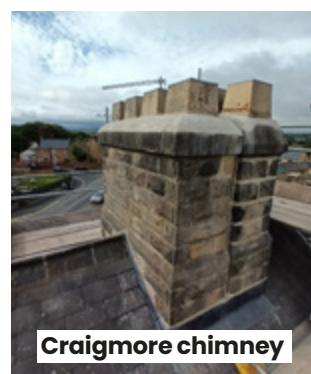
Planned Improvements

This year we have continued to invest money in improving our properties and as part of our commitment to the safety and wellbeing of all of our tenants.

This year we have...

- Replaced 21 windows and 3 external doors at Fairview House
- Replaced the 4 front upper-level windows at 139 Highgate
- Replaced 4 windows and the front door at Langdale House
- Replaced the French doors at Beast Banks
- Upgraded the laundry room at Melrose House
- Replaced 3 roof windows at Greenside
- Rebuilt the chimney at Craigmore House
- Developed the utility/laundry room at Craigmore House
- We started the planning process for upgrading the windows at Melrose House as well as redeveloping a flat.

We have an Asset Management Strategy which sets out what we would like to achieve and where we might need to invest in our properties. With the rising cost of energy bills and the need for homes to be energy efficient we are focusing on understanding what we need to do to your home to make it as warm and efficient as possible. We will be visiting everybody's home to check how energy efficient it is next year then making a plan to see if we can make it better!





New Developments



This year we have developed one new supported living scheme for adults with learning disabilities.

The Barn is a newly built supported living property near Workington which consists of 4 flats all on the ground floor with a separate area for support staff. We developed this project together with West House Care & Support.



“I am very happy in my new ‘Barn House’ I have all my things I love around me. I like my own space and I like my big rooms. I love spending time outside in my garden. I have fun with my support staff too.” Charlotte



‘The individual settings are fantastic for the people we support, and the people love living in their own homes which makes it all so much more person centred.’
Emma Christopherson, Manager of The Barn





New homes currently being developed:

Church Brow

We were delighted to be asked by the family of two sisters to develop our first supported living home in North Lancashire which would be ready for them to live in when they left college. We worked with the JMS Trust who kindly provided a large grant to allow us to buy and adapt a suitable property in Bolton-le-Sands.



Inner Ling

We successfully applied for a Homes England grant to enable us to buy a 3 bedroom house near Workington to provide a new supported living home for a young man whose current home didn't meet his needs. The property was in a very poor state of repair and we had to completely strip it out and refurbish it before the new tenant was able to move in.



Moorlands Drive

We worked with the family of a young man who was already one of our tenants in a shared supported living scheme to provide a new home which would better meet his needs.

We look forward to providing you with details of how the tenants of these new properties are settling into their new homes in next year's Annual Report!



We've welcomed a lot of new tenants into their homes this year. Hello to Ethan and Charlotte who moved into The Barn. Ivan, Max and Andrea who moved into supported living in Barrow, Barnard Castle and Morpeth. And Rebecca who moved into one of our independent flats in Kendal.



Complaints

At Fairoak we try our best to get everything right first time and provide the best service to, our tenants, their families and our other stakeholders.

Sometimes, we might get something wrong and somebody might want to make a complaint. When we deal with a complaint, we will always be fair, try and put things right and learn from our mistakes.

If you are unhappy about something that Fairoak, or someone working with us, has done or has not done, you should speak to the Housing and Support Team first who will try and solve the problem.

You said	We did
Repairs are taking too long.	We are working with the Fairoak Owls to create a chart to show how we deal with repairs and to work out what we can do to keep you informed.
We don't like too many letters.	We are using your Alertacall tablets to let you know when contractors, regular checks and management visits will be happening.
24% of you thought we could do better at listening to your views and acting on them.	We now hold consultation events so you can be involved in decisions made by Fairoak. Some of you have been involved in making decisions about your own home and how it is decorated. Others have helped us to make decisions about Fairoak.





Repairs & Maintenance

We know how important repairs are to you so we want to make sure that we get this right.

We always try to mend your repairs as quickly as possible but sometimes we need a bit more time. When this happens, we always make sure that you know when it will be completed and that you are safe.

At Fairoak we have three main categories of repairs

Emergency Repairs

We aim to fix these within 24 hours

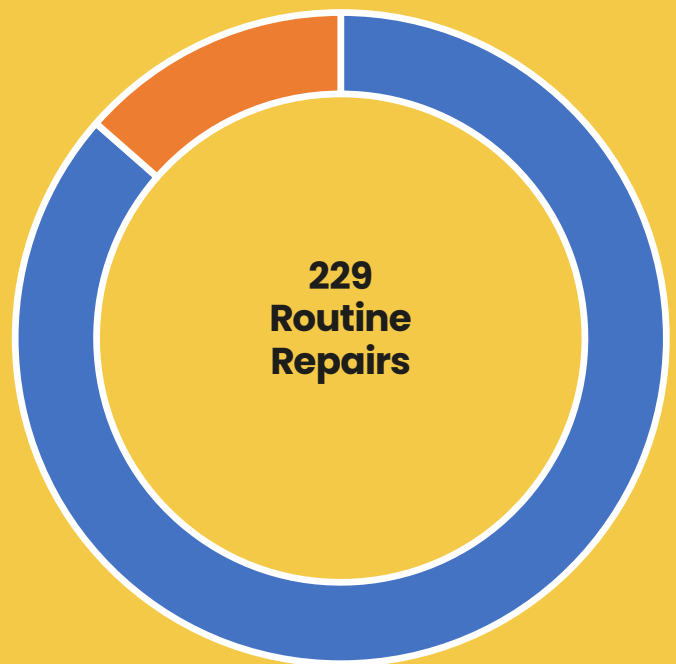
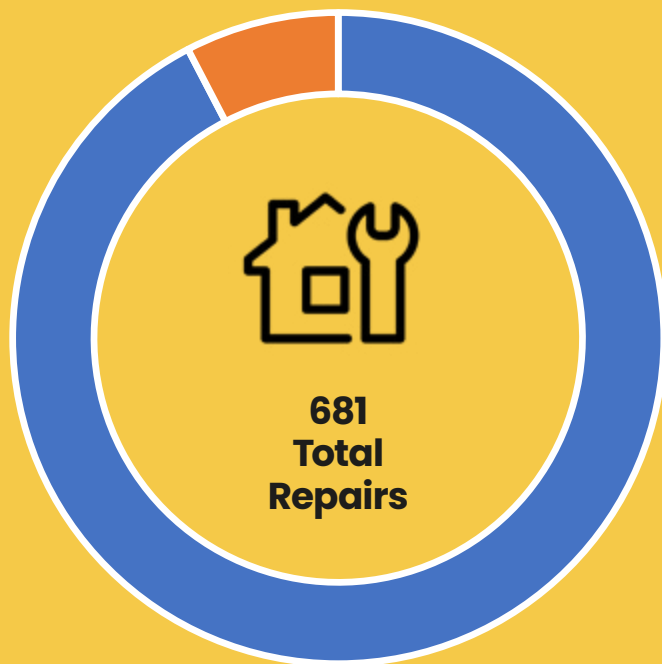
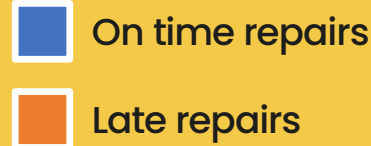
Urgent Repairs

We aim to fix these within 5 working days

Routine Repairs

We aim to fix these within 14 working days

Our tenants reported 681 repairs between April 2022 and March 2023.



We completed **629** of all our repairs on time and **52** were late.

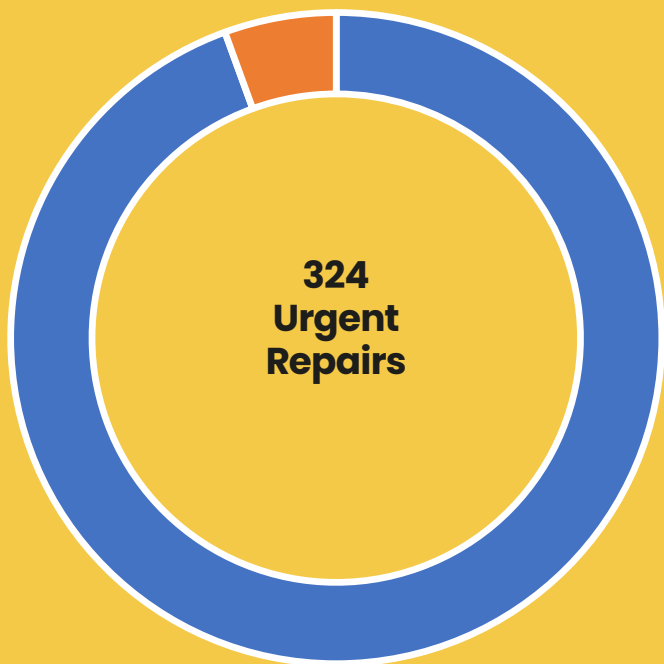
We completed **198** of these on time and **31** late.



Improving What We Do

We have started recording repairs differently this year which means we can understand why some repairs might take longer than we want them to. To help us we will -

- Ask more questions to make sure we understand what is wrong. This means we'll be able to send the right person to fix the problem.
- Try and help you with your problem over the phone.
- Carry out more management visits to make sure we find things before they need repairing.
- Chase repairs more often to make sure they are fixed in time.



We completed **306** of these on time and **18** late.



We completed **125** of these on time and **3** late.



Tenant Survey Results

Every year we ask you some questions about what you think about Fairoak’s housing services.

This year we trialled the questions from the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM). The questions have been developed by the Regulator of Social Housing to make sure landlords are doing what they are supposed to do.

This year we spoke to 93 of our 99 tenants. This is 94% which is fantastic. We would like to thank everybody who helped us to do this.



-  Very Satisfied or satisfied
-  Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied
-  Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
-  I don't know

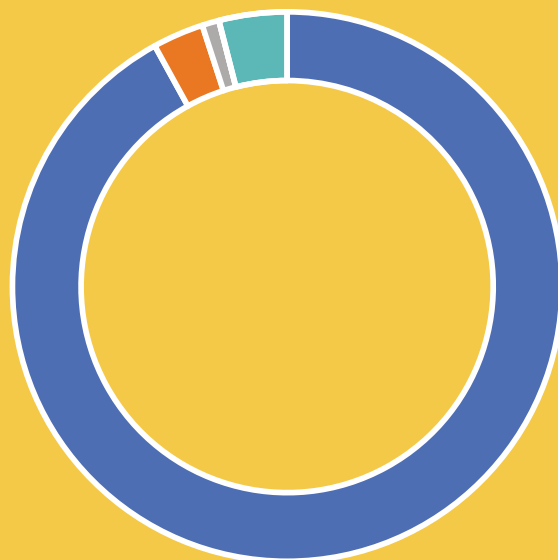
Q1 Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by your landlord?

92% were very satisfied or satisfied

3% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

1% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied

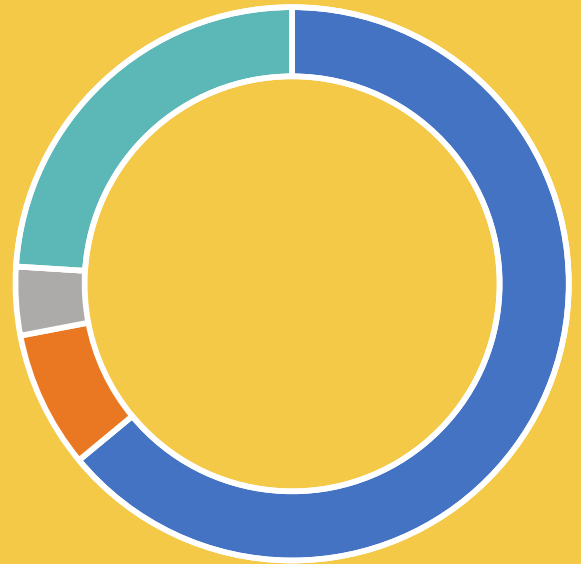
4% chose I don't know



Q3 Has your landlord carried out a repair to your home in the last twelve months?

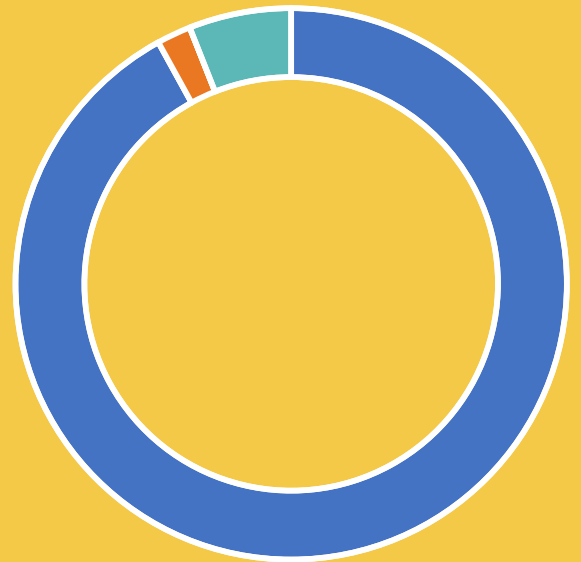
If yes, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the time taken to complete your most recent repair after you reported it?

- 64%** were very satisfied or satisfied
- 8%** were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- 4%** were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied
- 24%** chose I don't know



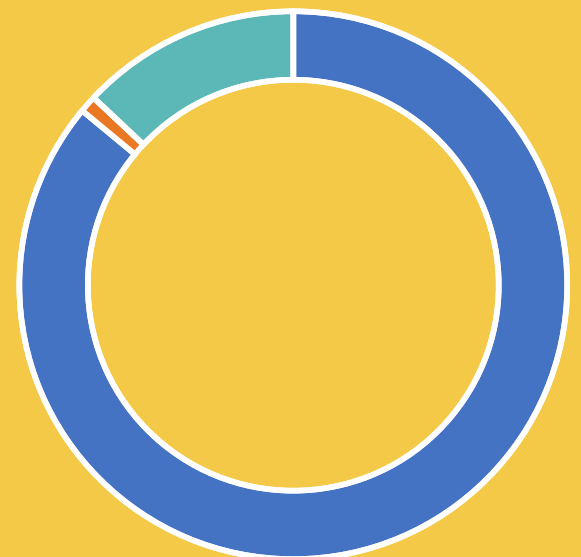
Q4 Thinking specifically about the building you live in, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your landlord provides a home that is well maintained and safe for you to live in?

- 92%** were very satisfied or satisfied
- 2%** were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- 0%** were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied
- 6%** chose I don't know



Q8 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? 'My landlord treats me fairly and with respect.'

- 86%** strongly agreed or agreed
- 1%** neither agreed or disagreed
- 0%** disagreed or strongly disagreed
- 13%** chose I don't know





Family Survey

This year we extended our satisfaction survey to include your family and friends. We are really pleased to be able to report the results to you.



Family Testimonials

'Excellent service, staff approachable and available. Great support for tenants

'Always someone to answer the phone, responses always rapid.'

'I'm not usually aware if repairs are required.'

'Everything looks in good order when we visit.'

'They always follow up on any issues re repairs.'

'They always act on any concerns.'

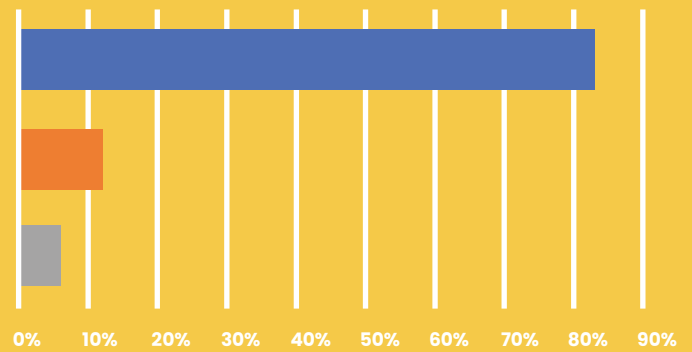
'Little interaction needed recently but in the past FairOak has been a rock for the resident we represent. Thank you.'

'Where I have marked no change, it is because performance has always been good and continues to be so.'

'I wish there were more agencies like FairOak.'

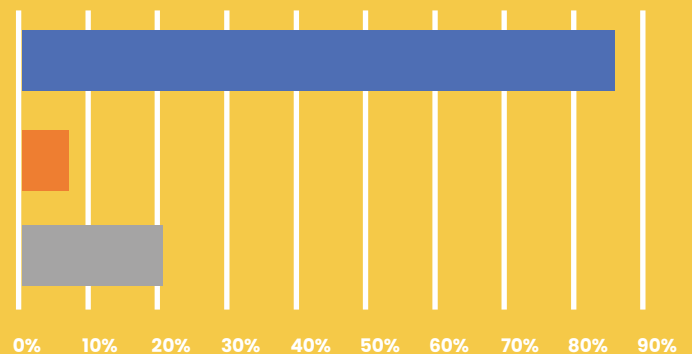
Q1 Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall service Fairoak provides your family member.

83% very satisfied
12% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
6% dissatisfied



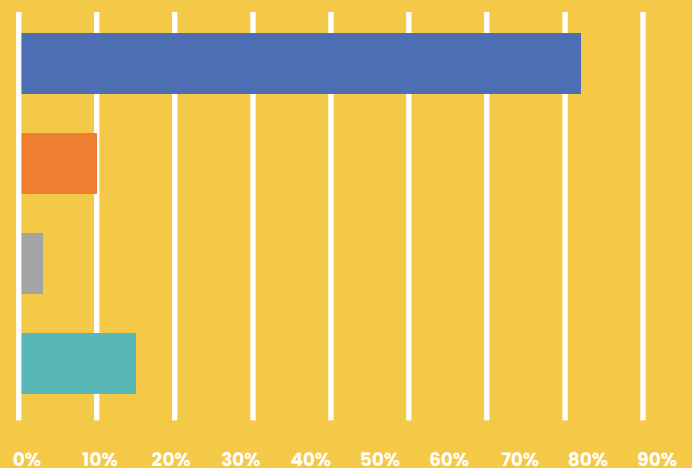
Q2 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Fairoak responds to requests for repairs.

76% very satisfied
6% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
18% had never had to speak to us about a repair



Q3 How satisfied are you with the general condition of your family members home including kitchens, bathrooms and windows.

72% very satisfied
10% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
3% dissatisfied
15% didn't know





Tenant Testimonials

We asked our tenants what living in a Fairoak property meant to them...

"I feel like I have a safety net if I need to reach out for help."

"It's a way of independence, making friends and getting special opportunities."

"I've been here for 23 years; this house is my home. I like the changes that have been made."

"It means my own personal space that I control."

"Good, I have my independence and that."

"A sense of security in knowing I have my own home."

"Safe, happier. 10 out of 10 for everyone."

"It means the world to me; it gives me independence. When I first lived on my own it was scary but with the support of staff, they have helped me with ease."

"I like here, that's the best!"

"It means a lot. I can sit in the flat and do my own thing. The staff help me with all my jobs. I'm settled now."

"It's really nice."

"It means a lot to me. It's good that I'm central to town and central to my mother. I am independent and do stuff on my own, if I need help, I can always go to Fair oak and ask the staff."

"I feel very safe in my home. I have all of the buzzers and cameras and things that make me safe. The OK each day button is very useful because you can press it when you have a problem."

Emma Cribb





Tenant Involvement

We want as many of you to be involved in Fairoak so we try and give you plenty of opportunities to this. This year we launched our Customer Engagement Strategy. We also started to do more consultation events and have recruited more of you onto our tenant board.

Customer Engagement Strategy

Our customer engagement strategy was launched in April 2022. It is a plan that shows how we are involving tenants in decision making about Fairoak and about your homes.

We have worked with some of you to help you understand what Fairoak does and how you can be involved in making decisions about your home. We have put on over 52 events and activities to make sure as many of you as possible can be involved in what we do. We have used surveys and feedback to help us understand what we can do better and how we can do this. Finally we have listened to you and, with your help, are focussing on improving the way we communicate with you over the next year.

The Fairoak Owls

“The Fairoak Owls have been busy this year. We worked with staff on the Customer Engagement Strategy and we also did some work around the Fairoak Values and Behaviours.

Some of the Owls represented us at conferences. In October Vikki went to the Tenant and Resident Engagement conference in London, Gemma went with some other tenants to the Home Focus group in Gateshead, me and Lily went to ‘The Way Forward’ Conference in Carlisle and Miguel went with Rebecca to The Learning Disability England Conference in York. We have also helped to plan activities for the year and organise events like the coffee morning for Ukraine.

I was voted in as chair of the Owls in January. It’s hard work but I enjoy planning for meetings and hearing what people have to say.”

Kirsty, Fairoak Owls Chair

Consultation Panel

“The consultation panel was set up to get more tenants involved in decisions and get feedback on important matters.

This year we have had consultations on our customer engagement strategy, the asset management strategy, our tenancy agreement and the tenant’s handbook. We have also had consultations in properties where tenants have decided how their home should be decorated or what sort of carpet they would like.

Our aim is to help Fairoak tenants to get a say in what Fairoak does and help them to improve.

It helps tenants from different properties and areas to get to know each other and work together to make a difference.”

Ryan Dobson,
Consultation Panel Chair

 If you’re interested in joining a consultation event or would like to find our more please contact Alison – alison.barnes@fairoakhousing.co.uk.

Improving what we do

Our tenants were keen that we worked on communication with them. We have installed Alertacall tablets in all of our properties and will be using them to send messages to tenants about maintenance visits, events and activities. We will also be trialling a repairs app for easier reporting and video calling between staff and tenants.

We plan to attend more conferences and national events with tenants and work with other organisations to deliver training to our tenant board.

News and Events

This year we have held over 52 tenant events and activities for tenants including BBQ’s, coffee and chat sessions, consultations and conferences.













Friends of Fairoak

Friends of Fairoak help us to run activities and events and recruits volunteers to help.

The money we raise through Friends of Fairoak helps us to put on trips and activities so you can meet new people, visit new places and make new friends.

This year we have received grants totalling £5500 from The Hadfield Trust, Cumbria Community Foundation and The Frieda Scott Charitable Trust. This has helped us to run our Fairoak Holiday to the Calvert Trust in Keswick as well as lots of other activities.






Volunteers

We have a small team of volunteers who are a real asset to FairOak. They support us with our Gardening Club, Coffee and Chat sessions and also with one to one befriending sessions.

“I meet with my volunteers at least once a week. Sometimes we do activities, sometimes we have breakfast or lunch. I’ve also been to a Coldplay concert with them. They are very helpful with everything and give me the opportunity to do things I might not get to do otherwise.”

Michael

 For more information about FairOak’s Befriending Scheme please contact Alison Barnes on 01539 720082

Fundraising

All of the activities we provide through Friends of FairOak are made possible by the Fundraising activities that we do.

As well as receiving grants we have also raised money through the donations button on our website, by taking part in the Kendal Christmas Tree Festival and by selling books and other items in our office window.

We also have an Easy Fundraising Account where you can shop online and when you check out the retailer makes a donation for free. You can sign up for free here

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/>





Accounts and Value for Money

Every year, we have a financial audit, (this is like an inspection), to see what money we have received, (from rent and grants), and what money we have had to pay out.

We aim to put achieving value for money at the heart of everything we do which means that we will have more money to invest in things which directly benefit you and enable us to develop new homes.

We are delighted to report that this year we have made another healthy surplus, (money left over). This is less than last year because we recruited 3 new members of staff to help us improve the service we provide.

Below is a breakdown of our figures compared to the previous year:

	2022/23	2021/22
Total coming in from rents & grants	£1,031,032	£1,012,387
Cost of running the Association	£764,378	£675,573
Total amount left over	£230,702	£284,088

This shows that the money we received more than covered all the costs of running the Association and left us with enough funds to continue to improve our properties and invest in developing new ones. Over the next 12 months we will also continue to raise money

for Friends of Fair Oak which will allow us to do the extra things that we may not otherwise be able to do, including recruiting volunteers, setting up activity groups, organising social events and our annual weekend away!

Operating Expenses	2022/23
Staff Salaries & Costs	251,094
Fairoak Running Costs	51,957
Property Costs	372,604
Maintenance Costs	78,132
Friends of Fairoak	10,591
Total	764,378

	2021/22
	164,532
	58,669
	357,758
	92,438
	2,176
	675,573



You can see our 2022/23 'Value for Money' statement in full on our website.

Future Plans

This has been another exciting year for everyone at Fairoak and in 2024, we will celebrate 20 years since Fairoak became a provider of supported housing.

We are all incredibly proud of what we have achieved so far and our dedicated board and staff team remain determined to continue to provide high quality homes which meet your needs, allowing you to live as independent and fulfilling lives as possible.

New Homes

Having completed one new scheme in Broughton Moor this year, we look forward to bringing you more details of our three new schemes in Workington and Bolton-le-Sands. We are also working with support providers and commissioners to develop supported living homes, during the next 12 months, in West Cumbria, Barrow-in-Furness, South Lakeland and North Lancashire.

Customer Engagement Strategy

In the next year, we will continue our focus on tenant engagement and improve how we communicate with you. This will include asking you what you think about our service and future plans and letting you know what we are doing as a result of your feedback. We look forward to working with you, your families, and other supporters, to meet the targets and actions of our Customer Engagement Strategy.

Friends of Fairoak

Since we set up Friends of Fairoak in 2016, we have raised over £45,500 to fund opportunities and activities for our tenants, and we have lots of exciting plans for fundraising ideas, activities and events planned for 2023/24. We plan to continue with our monthly coffee and chat sessions, start monthly well being walks, create opportunities for tenants from other areas to join in some of our activities and events and continue to recruit volunteers to support our tenants.

Planned Maintenance Programme

In the next 12 months we will be spending around £150,000 on improvements to your homes which include things like new kitchens and bathrooms and replacing windows and front doors. We will make sure that we spend money to make sure that your homes are dry, warm and healthy and cost effective for you to live in.

Other Plans for 2023-24

- We will be carrying out detailed energy performance assessments of all our properties to better understand how we can make them as energy efficient as possible.
- We will be improving the way that we carry out our quarterly management visits and Lisa and John, our Chief Executive and Asset and Compliance Manager, will aim to visit all your homes in the year and check that you are happy and that all repairs are being done as they should.
- We are aiming to increase the number of small local contractors that we work with to improve the quality and time taken to complete repairs in your home which will support local communities and provide better value for money.

- We are working with our friends at Alertacall to improve what you will be able to do with your 'I'm O.K.' tablets including a new button to report repairs and video calling options so that you can easily talk to us and show us any problems in your homes.
- We will be launching a new website and will be asking you what you would like to see included.
- We will be continuing with our 'Themes of the Month' to provide information and training sessions to help you live safely and happily in your homes.
- To help with the rising cost of living, we will continue to work with you to make sure that you receive any financial help that you are entitled to and support you with budgeting, particularly in the winter months.





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