



# Newsletter

## Spring/Summer 2022



### Message from Lisa C

After what has been an extremely difficult and challenging two years for everyone,

we are very excited at Fairoak to finally be able to restart many of the tenant events and activities that we were forced to put on hold during the Covid pandemic.

I am also delighted to welcome Alison, John and Lisa to the Fairoak team. The staff and board members at Fairoak are determined to always put our tenants at the heart of everything we do and every decision that we make.

With this in mind, one of our main focuses over the next few months will be talking with you, your families and support staff to fully understand what you would like our

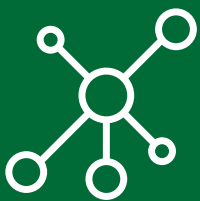
Hello and welcome to the latest edition of our Newsletter.

priorities to be, where we can improve our services and how you would like to be more involved in the day to day work of Fairoak.

Together with the Owls, our Tenant Board, we are in the process of developing our Tenant Engagement Strategy which we hope to publish in the early summer. We very much want all our tenants to have the opportunity to be involved and give us feedback, either good or bad, and you can read more about how to do this in the Newsletter and on our Social Media pages.

On a personal note, I am very much looking forward to getting out from behind my desk and visiting you all again in your homes now that it is safe to do so!

With very best wishes to you all,  
**Lisa Chant, Chief Executive**



### SHARE YOUR NEWS

We really want our newsletter and Facebook posts to show the wonderful events and activities that are happening in all of our properties across Cumbria and in the North East.

If you have any news, information, photos, events or big birthdays you would like to share, please send it to Alison at [alison.barnes@fairoakhousing.co.uk](mailto:alison.barnes@fairoakhousing.co.uk) or Fairoak Housing Association, 155 Highgate, Kendal, Cumbria, LA9 4EN.

We can't wait to hear from you!

## We also have welcomed three new members of staff this year:

We also have welcomed three new members of staff this year. Alison Barnes joined us in September 2021 as our Customer Engagement Officer. John Holmes and Lisa Taylor joined us in January 2022 as our Asset and Compliance Manager and Housing and Support Assistant.



**Alison Barnes**

"I'm really pleased to be working at Fairoak and am looking forward to working with more of the tenants over the next few months. My job is about getting

tenants involved in all aspects of Fairoak and I hope that we can get more of you involved in decision making and making sure that we are providing excellent housing for you. I'll also be planning some activities for everyone to get involved in!"



**Lisa Taylor**

"Hello, I started working for Fairoak Housing in January as a Housing and Support Assistant, Firstly I would just like to say a big thank you to all the

tenants and the staff on the interview panel for choosing me. I have enjoyed getting to know everyone over the past couple of months, everyone has been so welcoming and I feel excited for the future as a Housing and Support Assistant with Fairoak. My role is to assist Matthew, our Housing and Support Officer, with management visits and deal with any repairs or housing issues, resolving them as fast and efficiently as possible for our tenants. I also support Alison, our Customer Engagement Officer, with events and our Fairoak Owls committee. Please feel free to call the office or pop in if you have any questions."



**John Holmes**

"I joined Fairoak in a new role leading on Asset and Compliance within the organisation. My role is very broad from supporting the housing team with repairs and

planned works to making sure we stay up to date with all the changes in legislation and leading on ways to reduce our carbon footprint and where possible energy bills. In the short time I have been with Fairoak I have been made to feel very welcome by all the staff, tenants and support staff across all of Fairoak's properties."



## How to save energy

We're all worried about our energy costs going up.  
By following these tips, you could save some money.

- Use a timer on your central heating system. Set the heating and hot water to come on only when required. Contact us if you need support to do this.
- Close your curtains at dusk to stop heat escaping through the windows. Check for draughts, too. And seal gaps around doors with draft excluders.
- When washing up, and washing or drying by machine, try to fully load the appliance. One full load uses less energy than two half loads.
- Washing your clothes at 30°C instead of at higher temperatures uses around 50% less electricity
- Always turn off the light when you leave a room.
- Don't leave appliances on standby or laptops and mobile phones on charge unnecessarily.
- If using a kettle, only boil the water you need.
- Turn taps off properly – in a single week, a dripping hot tap can waste enough hot water to fill half a bath.
- Swapping one bath a week for a 5-minute shower can save money

You can find more energy saving advice here - [Cold to Cosy Homes Cumbria - CAFS](https://cafs.org.uk/cold-to-cosy-homes-cumbria/)

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## Welcome to new Fairoak Tenants



We have had some new tenants that have joined us in Kendal independent living flats... Hello and welcome to Nathan and Andrew.

We'd also like to welcome Lexi to Oaklea House in Barrow, Andrea to Shields Road in Morpeth, Graham to Heatherside in Broughton Moor and a big hello to Peter, Kerstin, Andrew, Yvonne, Ian, Kirsty and Katherine at Sandy Lonning in Maryport and Lee, Carol, Lewis and Kevin at St Johns House in Workington!

## New Fairoak Schemes

Fairoak Housing continue to develop homes to meet the housing needs of our customers and we're excited to announce our latest project at:

The Barn – Supported living for four people in Broughton Moor which we hope will be ready in June 2022 and which we have developed in partnership with West House.



Andrew at his old school



## Sandy Lonning

The seven tenants who live at Sandy Lonning in Maryport have been with Fair oak Housing since April 2021. They have been getting involved with all sorts of activities including the Fair oak Christmas card competition and day trips out.

Andrew recently visited his old Grammar School that had been converted into a hotel.

All of our tenants enjoy gardening and Peter has been doing some fantastic work at Allerby Gardens which is part of Grow West.



Peter at Allerby Gardens

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## Volunteers

“We have been volunteers since we were high school students in an organization in Mexico that promotes social inclusion for people with disabilities. When we recently moved to Kendal to complete a master’s degree, one of the first things we considered was to volunteer again. The Fair oak Housing Association was a perfect match for us! We first met several members at group activities, where a strong connection with Michael grew. For several weeks, we have met for breakfast, shared movies, had deep conversations about our lives, gone shopping, and enjoyed many pool games together. Michael is an experienced pool shark, but with practice and his orientation, we are tuning our skills and giving a fight!



Mariana and Michael

We value our time together greatly, and we invite everyone who wishes to learn, meet wonderful people and share their time, to volunteer. Any amount of time can create a positive impact on their own lives as volunteers and bring joy to others. The experience touches all of us involved and, in consequence, also transforms our communities for the better.”



Greenside Gardeners

The Greenside Gardeners decided to plant some fruit trees this year. Our amazing volunteers Margaret and Elspeth did lots of research about which trees and were lucky enough to have some fruit trees donated by the wonderful people at South Lakeland Orchard Group. We planted them in November and hope to be eating apples and pears in the next couple of years.

## Tenant News

### Barry's trip to Blackpool

Barry who lives in one of our flats at Oaklea House in Barrow has recently been away to Blackpool over night to watch a show. Barry went to see 'Friends: A Musical Parody' at The Winter Gardens. Barry is a big fan of Friends the TV show and really enjoyed the show and his night away.

Even the VERY windy weather did not put him off. Barry is happy that all the Covid restrictions have now been lifted and he can enjoy trips to the theatre again. Barry managed to fit in a quick visit to Harry Ramsdens for his lunch. Barry's next trip away will hopefully be to Manchester to watch Manchester United play in April if he is lucky enough to get a ticket.



Simon and Alison



### Christmas Card Competition

We decided to make our own Christmas Card again this year to send to all of our tenants. In November we asked you all to design a card that we could use. It was great receiving all of your fantastic entries and we were pleased that Paul, one of our board members, agreed to judge the competition.

Paul chose a very festive picture designed by Miguel from Melrose and Lisa chose a colourful picture from Simon at Olympia Gardens for the back of the card.

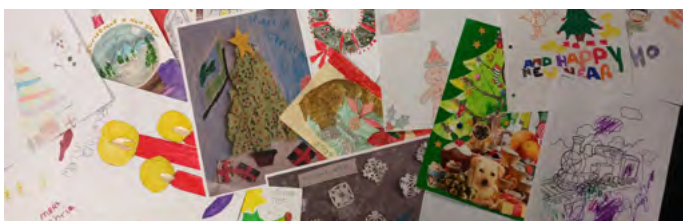
Well done Miguel and Simon.

Miguel was presented with his prize at the Christmas Board and Fair Oak Owls get together and Alison took Simon's prize to Olympia Gardens in Morpeth.

Thank you to everyone who entered and look out for more competitions this year.



Paul, Miguel and Sarah





## Miguel's trip to Edinburgh

Miguel and his friend had a trip to Edinburgh. Here is a little bit about what he did there.

"Me and my friend arrived in Edinburgh. It was such a big city, almost scary. Edinburgh has some lovely buildings and architecture. We decided to walk to Edinburgh from our Air B&B which took 40 minutes on the cycle path. We went to St Giles Cathedral which had a stone plaque about the man who wrote Peter Pan and Desert Island. The outside of the building was amazing because it looked like a crown. We went to a museum that was about the life and time of the plague. The museum was underground seeing how life was for a poor family and how they lived with the plague. This strange looking bird man was a plague doctor. He wore leather top to toe and in his bill, he had lavender to mask the smell of the dead. The museum was fab. We also went to see a fantastic museum about how the universe started. It had 4D effects, so everything popped out. I got a key ring at the shop. We went on a tour on a bus to see the city and we walked



Edinburgh Castle

to the castle and I saw the outside. It looked like something like Harry Potter or the Queens house - Massive! After three days I went back home."



## Andrew's trip to Darlington

Andrew from Craigmore house in Barnard Castle is a MASSIVE fan of Meatloaf and was lucky enough to attend 'Anything for Love' at Darlington Theatre recently with staff member John.

Andrew was given a free poster that he will put up in his room. Andrew also held a tribute night with staff on his karaoke machine singing all his favourite Meatloaf songs!!



# 📷 Tenant Photo Wall



Crafts at Langdale



Janet and Peter



Geoffrey, Agnes and Mary at Wallby Hill



Olympia Gardens gang



Easter eggs

## Social Media



Did you know we can share your stories on our Facebook page too? If you have any photographs of activities or events or if you have any news you would like to share, please get in touch with us and we will be able to post your pictures or your news.

We also have a Tenants Page where we can share information about trips and events and where you can tell us about things you have been doing. Find us at Fairoak Housing Association – Tenants Page



Fairoak Housing Association - Tenant Page



Drum Nation





# Together with Tenants Charter

## What is the charter?

The Charter was put together by the National Housing Federation in 2020 to help build stronger relationships between tenants and housing associations. There are six commitments that we have made to our tenants and will continue to work on.

We've put the commitments below with information about how we have met them in the last year.

### Relationships

Our relationship with you will be based on openness, honesty, and transparency.

#### What have we been doing?

We have employed new staff to make sure we are doing the best for our tenants. We have also been looking into events and activities where tenants can meet up with people from other properties and other areas.

### Communication

We are committed to ensuring that you will receive clear, accessible, and timely information on the issues that matter to you and how well we are performing.

#### What have we been doing?

We have worked with the Fair oak Owls and other tenants to look at how we can engage with more of our tenants and how everybody can be involved in getting their views heard. We want to get better at communicating with all of our tenants and will continue to work with you to make this happen. We will also be visiting more tenants and attending your house meetings.

### Voice and Influence

We value your views and want you to know that you are listened to.

#### What have we been doing?

We've been working on our social media sites and setting up a tenant group on Facebook. We've also completed our Tenant Satisfaction Surveys and looked at the information to inform our plans for the next 12 months. We listen to every tenant who contacts us and are always looking for ways to get even more tenants involved in what we do.

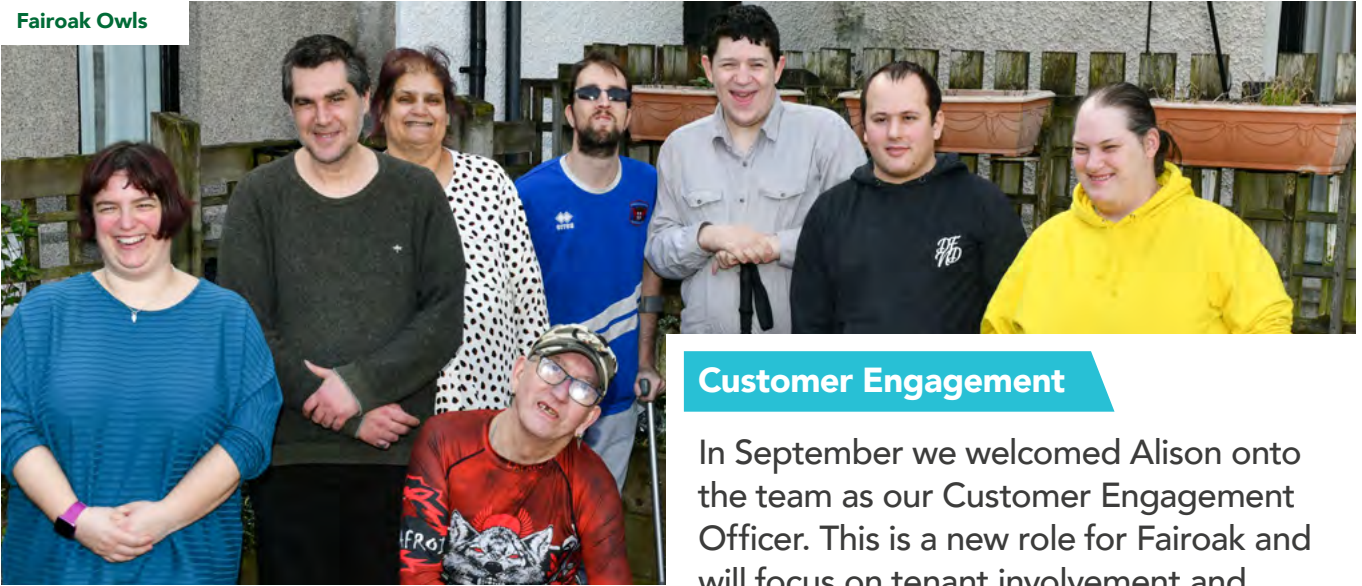
### Accountability

We will make sure there are ways for you to check what we are doing and hold us to account for the decisions that affect your home and the services we provide.

#### What have we been doing?

We have continued to work with the Fair oak Owls to discuss important issues about the decisions Fair oak make. In the future we will work with tenants in their individual homes to make sure we are listening and responding to you all.





## Quality

Tenants can expect their homes to be good quality, well maintained, safe and well managed.

### What have we been doing?

We will continue with our management visits where we can check the quality of your home and make sure any issues are dealt with quickly. We also make sure that any repairs you ask us to do are completed in the quickest possible time. We have planned improvements in lots of our properties this year so we'll be talking to you about these.

## When things go wrong

We recognise that sometimes things go wrong, that we do not always get things right and are not as accountable as we could be

### What have we been doing?

We have been looking at our complaints and compliments policy and making sure that all tenants know how to raise a complaint. There is more information about this on the back page.

## Customer Engagement

In September we welcomed Alison onto the team as our Customer Engagement Officer. This is a new role for Fairoak and will focus on tenant involvement and participation and listening to the voice of our customers and tenants. We will be developing a customer engagement strategy which will set out what we plan to do and how we plan to do it in cooperation with our tenants. We will also continue to work with our tenant board and expand our membership to include representatives from all of our properties. We will find out how we are doing through our Tenant Satisfaction Survey and use this information to improve our service to you, the tenant.

We'll also arrange events and activities such as coffee and chat afternoons, trips to outdoor centres or the zoo and information events such as fire safety and how to save energy.

We would like all of our tenants to be involved in decisions made at Fairoak. This could mean joining a tenant's board, being part of a consultation group, joining in a coffee and chat session or taking part in an information session or an activity or you could invite us to one of your house meetings.

We look forward to hearing from you.

**If you are interested in getting involved, please contact Alison on 01539 720082 or email [alison.barnes@fairoakhousing.co.uk](mailto:alison.barnes@fairoakhousing.co.uk)**



## Fairoak Fundraiser Saturday May 7th, 2022

To support the work of Inclusion Europe, Fairoak Housing held a coffee morning on Saturday May 7th at the Unitarian Chapel in Kendal.

Tenants and staff served refreshments and cakes alongside a raffle and a tombola. We had some very generous donations from many of the shops, hairdressers, restaurants and hotels in Kendal.

All proceeds will be donated to Inclusion Europe. 100% of the money we collected will be used directly to assist Ukrainian citizens with intellectual disabilities and their families impacted by war in Ukraine.

Thank you to everybody who supported us, we will let you know how much we raised in the next newsletter.

If you wish to donate, please get in touch with us.



## Feedback and Complaints

At Fairoak we are always working to improve our services. If you've got something to share, good or bad, or suggestions about how we can do better, we would love to hear from you.

We want our tenants to let us know what they think about our services so we can recognise the things we do well and put right and learn from the things we don't do well.

Has a member of our team gone above and beyond? Has one of our contractors really helped you? Would you like to say thank you? We welcome compliments from you. We always make sure these are passed on as your thanks mean so much to the whole team.

You can call us up during office hours on 01539 720082 or let us know by emailing [enquiries@fairoakhousing.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@fairoakhousing.co.uk) You can also get in touch via Facebook and Twitter.

We try our best to get everything right first time and provide the best service to our tenants. Unfortunately, there are times when you may feel that we have not got something right and you need to make a complaint.

If you feel you need to make a formal complaint, we will follow a process which makes sure we investigate in a fair and honest way. You can read our Complaints Policy here. It's important you give us as much detail as possible to help us get to the bottom of things, including what you are seeking to resolve the situation.

Remember, complaints are when you tell us you are unhappy with the quality of our service, our behaviour or something we haven't done.



### **Confidentiality**

Any complaints will be kept confidential and we will always respect your privacy and make sure that we are fair and honest with you.

### **Complaints Officer**

The Complaints Officer at Fairoak Housing Association is Lisa Chant, the Chief Executive, who will make sure that your complaint is properly dealt with.

### **Learning from Complaints**

Fairoak will learn from complaints to improve the services we provide to you in the following ways:

- Keep records of all complaints and what we did about them
- Ask tenants if they are satisfied with how their complaint was dealt with
- Report to the board on complaints received and what we have learnt
- Publish information on complaints on our website and in our Newsletters and Annual Report



## Making a Complaint

**Resolve issues** We will always try to resolve your issues quickly to prevent a complaint being necessary. If we can't do this, you might want to make a complaint. This must be made within six months of the issue or event happening and can be done either in writing, in person, by phone or email. We will acknowledge your complaint within two working days.

**Investigating your complaint (stage one)** We will carry out a thorough investigation of your complaint and may be in contact with you for more information or to update you on progress.

**Our reply to you (stage one)** We will try to put things right and resolve your complaint, and at stage one we aim to respond within ten working days of it being received. We will explain where things have gone wrong, say sorry for any mistakes, put things right and tell you how we will learn from your complaint.

**Request for review (stage two)** If you are unhappy with our response, you can ask for your complaint be reviewed at stage two. You have ten days from receiving our stage one reply to make your request. We will acknowledge this within two working days.

**Reviewing your complaint (stage two)** At stage two the chair of our board of trustees will review the stage one investigation and your reasons for asking for a review and decide if the decision of Stage 1 is correct. We will write to you within 20 working days of receiving your request for your complaint to go to Stage 2.

**Housing Ombudsman** If after our stage two reply, you consider that we have been unable to resolve your complaint, you can ask the Housing Ombudsman to investigate. You can also contact the Housing Ombudsman at any point in the process for advice, support, and guidance.

<https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/>



**Fairoak Housing Association**

155 Highgate, Kendal, Cumbria LA9 4EN

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