



Fairoak

Providing the Keys
to Happy Healthy Homes

Annual Report to Tenants 2023/24



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Welcome

Welcome to this year's annual report to tenants for 2023/24.

Once again it has been a very busy and exciting year for everyone involved with FairOak.

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 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 12 months. This report covers the period between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024.

We hope you enjoy reading our Annual Report for 2023/24.



Who works at Fairoak?

This year we have introduced some new staff with new job roles to the team. These new roles will help us to develop and grow Fairoak while keeping you at the heart of everything we do.

This year we said goodbye to our Housing and Support Officer Lisa Taylor. We also said goodbye to our Board Members Julie Chapman and Paul Johnson.



Lisa Chant
Chief Executive
of Fairoak



John Holmes
Asset and Compliance
Manager



Nathan Lavery
Repairs and
Maintenance Operative



Tom Claxton
Repairs and
Maintenance Administrator

"My passion has always been working within the learning disability and autism field. Supporting the team to aspire, and deliver, a service that exceeds all national standards is exciting. I feel privileged to work with our tenants and such a supportive and caring team."

Tom Claxton
Repairs and Maintenance Administrator



Alison Barnes
Customer
Engagement Officer



James Arnold
Housing and Support Officer

"I have worked for Fairoak coming up to a year now and it has been such an enjoyable and rewarding experience. I have loved getting to know all our tenants, support staff and my colleagues in the Fairoak office and I have made some great bonds along the way. I am proud to work for Fairoak, as we always hold the tenants best interests first, it really is a pleasure to manage our tenants homes. I have had some brilliant trips out with the tenants, my personal favourites have been two nights away at Keppleway, I really enjoyed helping with the archery and going on a walk to see Cathedral Caves. Another highlight has been attending tenant birthday trips to go bowling in Morecambe. I look forward to more trips out with our tenants in the future, as everyone always has a fantastic time."

James Arnold
Housing and Support Officer

Message from the Chair!

It's been another eventful year for Fairoak, and I'm excited to share some of my highlights with you.

Despite the challenges we've faced, we've continued to grow. We've developed new properties and welcomed more tenants into our community, which is something we're really proud of. We've also continued to invest into our existing homes, to make sure that everyone is warm and comfortable.

One of the best things we've done as a Board this year is to build a stronger connection with the Owls, our committee of engaged tenants. The Board has learned so much from attending Owl's meetings and from having them report at our meetings. The insights and experiences of our tenants (and their families and carers) are invaluable to us.

It's also been inspiring to see many of you getting more involved in wider issues like politics and health. By exercising your right to vote and speaking up about the barriers faced



Sarah Parr
Chair of Fairoak Board

by people with autism and learning disabilities, you're making a real difference and that's wonderful to see.

I want to give a special thanks to Lisa and Fairoak's dedicated staff. They've worked hard not just to provide happy and healthy homes, but also to provide other opportunities for our tenants to socialise and to learn.

Thank you for being part of the Fairoak community; we're looking forward to the next 12 months with you all.

Sarah Parr
Chair of the Fairoak Board

Our Board

"I joined the Fairoak Board in September 2023. My first meeting was at the AGM, where I learned a lot about the important work that Fairoak and the tenant Owls do.

On the Board, my role is to carefully check how the business is running and help plan for the future. Outside of Fairoak, I work in affordable housing property development and have been able to use this to give advice and support on new projects that the Fairoak team is looking at."

Rebecca Field



Rebecca Field
Fairoak Board member



What we did this year

2023/24 was another challenging year for the housing sector particularly as interest rates remained high and we continued to experience high costs of building supplies and materials and shortages of contractors and social care staff.

There has also been increasing regulation in response to poor quality service that some social housing tenants have experienced. Despite all these challenges, FairOak is in a strong financial position, and we are very happy that your satisfaction levels with the service we provide remains very high.

During the year, we have continued to invest in new homes and carried out a range of improvements to our existing properties. We have carried out in depth energy performance assessments of all our properties to determine what work we need to do to make your homes as energy efficient as possible over the next few years.

The Housing & Support staff



have continued our programme of quarterly visits to your homes and Lisa and John, our Chief Executive and Asset & Compliance Manager, also visited many of you during the year to check that you are happy with the service FairOak provides and that all repairs have been completed and your homes are well maintained.

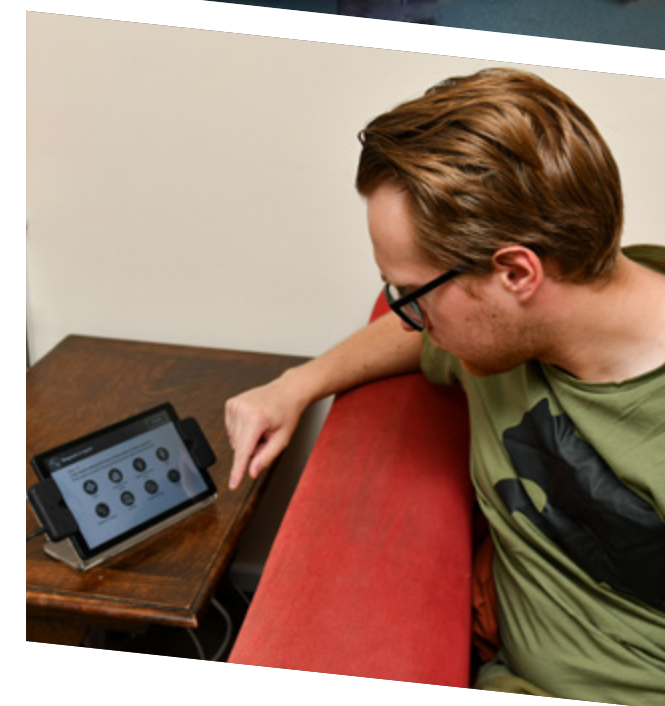
We have also carried out an audit of our IT and data protection systems to make sure that we are doing everything possible to protect all your personal



data and keep our systems safe from cyber-attacks.

This year, with help from you, we launched our new branding and our new website. We wanted our website to be easy to navigate and useful. Small groups of tenants joined in consultations with our web designer, Neil from Turnwheel and made sure that the website worked for them and showed the information that was important to them.

We have worked closely with Alertacall to make sure all of our properties have a tablet available. These have been useful to let you know when our safety checks will be taking place and when we will be visiting or holding activities and events. We have also rolled out the repair's app to all of our



properties, this means you can let us know if something isn't working just by pressing a few buttons.

Throughout the year we have continued to work on our Theme of the Month. You have attended talks on fire safety, budgeting, wellbeing and energy saving.

New Developments

This year we have developed 5 new homes for adults for adults with learning disabilities.

Church Brow, Inner Ling,
Kirkbie Green, Winifred
Street, Moorlands Drive.

Welcome to Heather, Scott, Lorna,
Jackson W, Jackson, Michael,
Pip, Alix, Amanda, Clive.



"I like living in my new home. It is close to town and the bus station, and it is less distance to walk home with shopping. It is a quiet street."

Heather,
Winifred Street



"The location is ideal for the individual we support. It allows her to have access to everything that is important to her. She is happy and content in her own little home, which is perfect for her."

Bev Glover,
West House



Planned Improvements

This year we have improved lots of our properties to make sure that you are safe and that we're looking after your wellbeing. All of our improvements were done in consultation with you.

This year we have

- Refurbished and upgraded one of the bathrooms at Craigmore House.
- Improved the kitchen and dining areas at Sandy Lonning by installing a new kitchen and making the two rooms open plan.
- Renewed the roof at 139 Highgate.
- Improved the communal lighting at Melrose House.
- Renewed the windows and doors at Melrose House.
- Replaced the gas boiler at St Wilfred's Court.
- Refurbished our office in Kendal by building a new consultation room and large meeting room for the use of tenants and staff.
- Replaced the lounge carpet at Sandy Lonning.
- Completed internal and external decoration at Greenside, 139 Highgate and Melrose House.



Repairs & Maintenance

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

At FairOak we have three main categories of repairs:

1. Emergency Repairs

We aim to fix these within 24 hours

This year **100%** of our emergency repairs were completed on time. This is better than last year when 97% were completed on time.

 On time repairs
 Late repairs



We completed all of our emergency repairs on time.

2. Urgent Repairs

We aim to fix these within 5 working days

96% of our urgent repairs were completed on time. You reported 279 jobs, only 10 of them were late. This is an improvement on last year where 94% of our urgent repairs were on time.

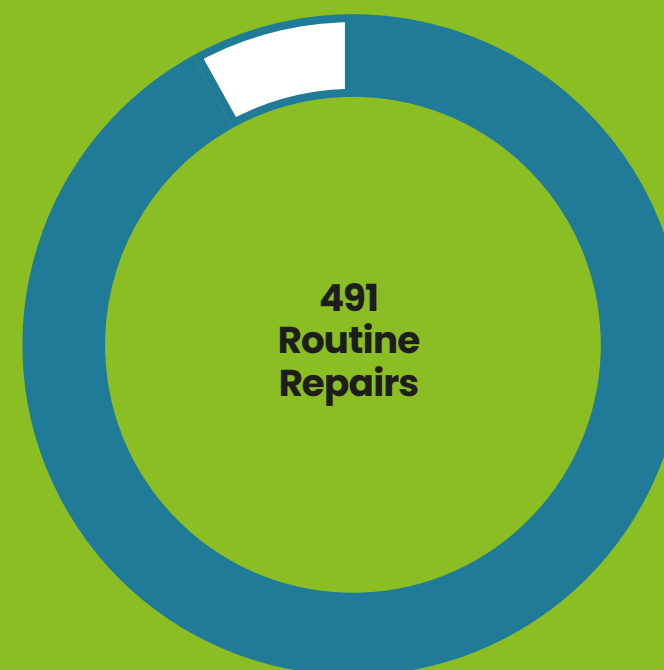


We completed **269** of our routine repairs on time; **10** were late.

3. Routine Repairs

We aim to fix these within 14 working days

This year **91%** of our routine repairs were completed on time. You reported 491 jobs; 43 of them were late. This is an improvement on last year when only 86% of jobs were on time.

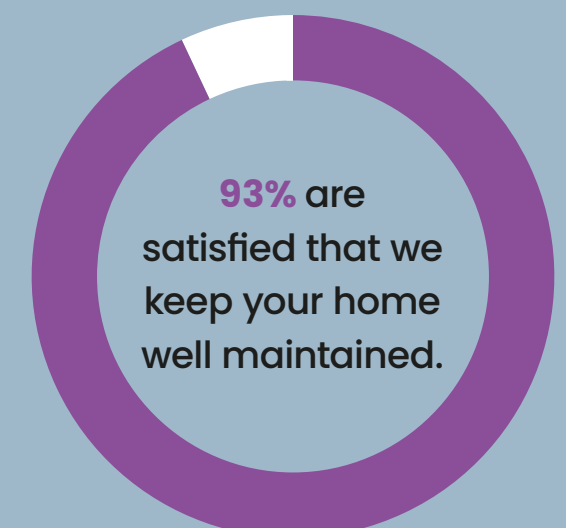


We completed **448** of our routine repairs on time; **43** were late.



We asked you about repairs. You said:

 Satisfied
 Not satisfied





As a housing association we need to make sure that your homes are safe to live in and meet very high standards.

This year, as always, 100% of safety checks were completed on time.

Providing homes that are safe

92% are satisfied that FairOak keep your home safe

100% of our homes reach the Decent Homes Standard

Asbestos – 100%

Electric – 100%

Gas – 100%

Fire safety – 100%

Water safety – 100%

89% of you were satisfied by the service provided by FairOak.



91% were happy that we listen to your views and act on them.



85% were satisfied that we keep you well informed.



Tenant Satisfaction

We want to make sure you are happy in your homes. Every year we ask you to fill in a survey to let us know how you think we are doing.

This year we completed our tenant satisfaction surveys with 74 of our 110 of you. The satisfaction measures are designed to measure FairOak's performance to you and help you to hold us to account.

97% of you said that FairOak treats them fairly and with respect.



■ Satisfied / happy / positive
■ Not satisfied / not happy



Support Staff Survey

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

Support Staff Testimonials >

"An excellent team of staff who provide high quality supported accommodation for people with learning disabilities. Very inclusive with beneficial social events monthly and regular tenant's meetings through the owls. A very happy place to live and work in."

"Compared to other landlords Fairoak are fab and attend to Langdale and customers quickly."

"Over the last 12 months I believe Fairoak performance has changed 100% for the better."

"Fairoak are a great team of dedicated people who work closely together to provide the best possible service for their tenants wherever they live."

"Receive good responses kept up to date and generally everything that gets responded to in a timely manner."

"Fairoak are a great team of dedicated people who work closely together to provide the best possible service for their tenants wherever they live."



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

96% of respondents were very satisfied or satisfied.

 Very satisfied or satisfied
 Dissatisfied



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

92% of respondents were very satisfied or satisfied.



Q4 On those occasions when you have spoken to Fairoak, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the response you received.

92% of respondents were very satisfied or satisfied.

"When speaking to staff at Fairoak they are always friendly and very helpful."

"I feel Fairoak Management and staff communicate well with their tenants and the tenants support staff. Give great reassurance if anyone of the clients are anxious about anything, meet their tenants for coffee mornings and involve them in lots of activities."



Complaints

Fairoak follows the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

This year we completed the Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment which includes information about the complaints we receive and our complaints service.

This year we had 1 complaint which was resolved at Stage 1.

100% of tenants were satisfied with our approach to handling complaints.

If you are unhappy with something that Fairoak or someone working with us has done or has not done you should speak to a member of staff who will try and solve the problem. If you are unhappy with this you can make a complaint by writing an email, filling in our complaints form or speaking to a member of staff.

You said	We did
We struggle with getting the bins in and out on bin day.	We organised an assisted bin collection so that you didn't have to do it.
You wanted us to get better at communicating important information with you.	We send letters in an easy read format to help you understand and we send messages about appointments and activities via your alertacall tablets.
We're confused about the rules round changing light bulbs and toilet seats.	We will be responsible for buying and replacing your new toilet seat and will change the bulbs in your flat when you are unable to do this yourself.



Tenant Testimonials

"Brilliant!"

"I feel proud of myself as I live by myself which I never thought I could do."

"I like that it's in a quiet and peaceful location. I have made it into my home and Fairoak have always been reassuring in allowing it to be my home."

"It's a place I can call my personal space."

"Simple. I like everything about my home!"

"I feel safe and it's mine, my own independence."

"I like having independence and managing my own things."

"It's my safe space."



Getting Involved

We want as many of you as possible to be involved with Fairoak so we try to give you plenty of opportunities to do this including The Owls meetings, consultations and our activities and events.

Tenant Advisory Panel

In December 2023 I was invited to join the National Housing Federation's Tenant Advisory Panel (TAP).

TAP is a special group of tenants who are passionate about housing and work together to make things easier for social housing tenants across the country.

We meet online once or twice a month and often get emails with information or things to complete. We have discussions about Together with Tenants, the new Consumer Standards and our experiences living as social housing tenants.

Lily Beck



Together
with tenants

Strengthening relationships
between housing associations
and residents.



Fairoak Owls

The Fairoak Owls are the tenant board. They help with tenant issues and work with staff to discuss the running of Fairoak.

This year the Owls have been busy doing the following

- Creating a Repairs Flow Chart
- Consulted about the new Fairoak logo
- Helped to create our core purpose
- Worked on the communication aspect of Together with Tenants
- Gave a talk about the Owls at the AGM

- Planned a quiz night to raise money for Friends of Fairoak
- Attended board meetings
- Attended the LDE meeting

Three of our Owls are now coming to meetings using tablets we bought with funding from Fibrus.

Vikki Carruthers





Campaigning

In February 2024 three tenants went to the Learning Disability England Conference in Leeds. While we were there, we discussed the Good Lives Manifesto. This was written to help MP's to understand what is important to people with a learning disability and what they can do to help them.

During the conference we discussed health inequalities and how some people had been treated by hospitals and doctors. We wanted to join in the discussion so when we were back, we invited Dr Amy Lee to come and talk to us about our experiences. She listened to our experiences and explained what goes on at the doctors on a daily basis.

We also joined in the campaign to get more people with learning disabilities voting at the general election. Before the election we sent emails to all of the candidates in Westmorland and Lonsdale. Pippa Smith from the Labour Party came to answer our questions about what Labour would do if they won the election. We also had a visit from Tim Farron MP. We asked him questions about how he could help people with learning disabilities and autism with housing, social care and benefits.

James H



Improving what we do

The Owls are keen to make sure that all tenants are heard and that they are all treated fairly. We will be starting a scrutiny panel and offering those interested in this training. We will also be starting work on the Real Tenancy Test by asking tenants what they understand about their tenancy and what their rights are.



Tenant Involvement



Friends of Fair Oak

Friends of Fair Oak is separate to the rest of the work that Fair Oak does and is funded through grants and donations.

The money we raise through Friends of Fair Oak helps us to run events and activities so you can meet new people, visit new places and make new friends.

This year we have received grants totalling £6800 from The Frieda Scott Charitable Trust, Cumbria Community Foundation and Fibrus and Kendal Town Council. This has helped us to run our Fair Oak holidays to Keppleway in Broughton and The Calvert Trust in Keswick.



Fundraising

All of the activities we provide are made possible through the grants we receive and the fundraising we do. This year we raised money by taking part in the Kendal Parish Church Christmas Tree Festival and by selling books and other items from our office in Kendal. We also have a donation button on our website

The Fair Oak Owls also planned a quiz night and raffle for friends and family. This was a great night and helped to raise £510 for Friends of Fair Oak.

Volunteers

We have a small team of volunteers who support our gardening club and our coffee and chat sessions.

For more information about Fair Oak's volunteer scheme, please contact us on 01539 720082 or email us on enquiries@fair Oakhousing.co.uk



Accounts and Value for Money

We make sure that we spend our money in the best possible way. This helps us to improve our services and properties and invest in developing new homes.

Below is a breakdown of how we spent our money last year.

	2023/24	2022/23
How much money was received – through rents and grants	£1,213,633	£1,031,032
How much money was spent – the cost of running Fairoak	£959,017	£764,378
Money left over	£242,935	£230,702

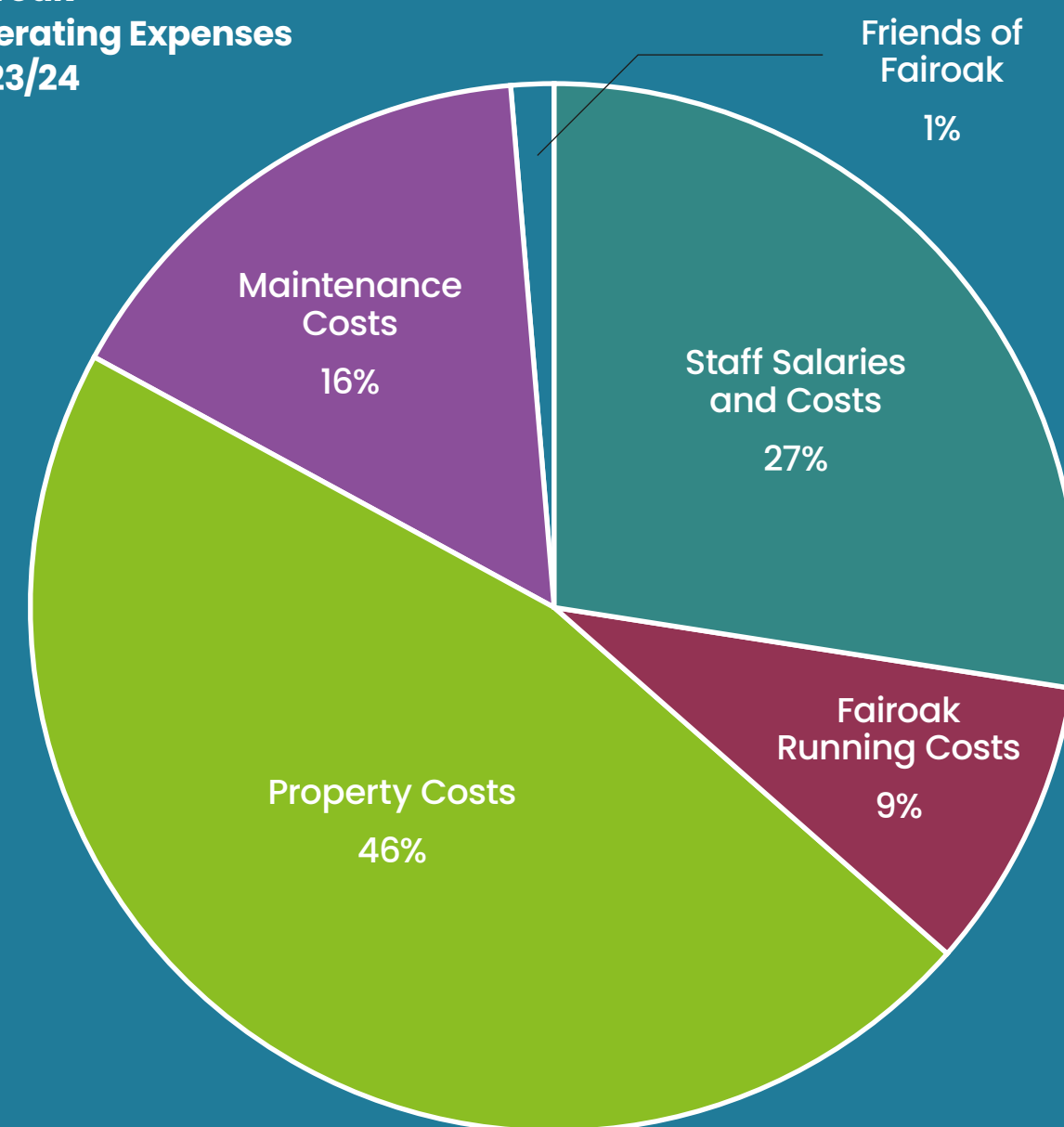
The table below shows how much money we spent in different areas of Fairoak

What we spent on running Fairoak	2023/24	2022/23
Property Costs	£445,416	£372,604
Staff Salaries and Costs	£263,387	£251,094
Maintenance Costs	£150,959	£78,132
Fairoak Running Costs	£86,532	£51,957
Friends of Fairoak	£12,723	£10,591
Total	£959,017	£764,378

You can see our 2023/24 ‘Value for Money’ statement in full on our website.



Fairoak
Operating Expenses
2023/24





Future Plans

This has been another very successful year for everyone at Fairoak and later in 2024 we will be celebrating 20 years since Fairoak became a provider of supported housing.

We are all very proud of what Fairoak has achieved so far and we remain determined to continue to provide high quality homes with support that meets your needs and enable you to live your best lives!

Strategic Plan 2025 – 2029

The Board and Owl's have been working together to discuss our vision and strategy for the next 5 years and we will be launching our plan later in 2024.

New Homes

We are currently working to develop new homes in Cumberland, Durham and Northumberland and look forward to bringing you more details on these exciting developments.



New Staff

Over the past 12 months, we have listened to your feedback on how we carry out repairs and maintenance in your homes and we have recently restructured our team to include a new Repairs & Maintenance Administrator and Repairs & Maintenance Operative to provide a more focussed and improved service.



Customer Engagement Strategy

In the next year we will continue to focus on our tenant engagement and continue to improve our service to you. This year we will be focusing on how you can help influence what Fairoak do and how we can make sure we communicate with you on the things that are important to you.

Planned Maintenance

Over the next twelve months we will continue to work on our cyclical works. This year we will be

- Decorating the communal areas of some of our buildings in Kendal, Barrow and in West Cumbria.
- Rebuilding the front walls at Craigmere House
- Installing new fencing and outside lighting at the Barn
- Replacing the roof dorma-window at Greenside
- Upgrading the kitchen and bathroom at one of our flats in Durham



Fairoak

Providing the Keys
to Happy Healthy Homes

Fairoak Housing Association

155 Highgate, Kendal, Cumbria LA9 4EN

Phone 01539 720082 **Email** enquiries@fairoakhousing.co.uk

www.fairoakhousing.co.uk