



**ATRIUM**  
HOMES

The Landlord of Choice

# **Annual Report & Accounts 17/18**



# Sustainable communities

## Quality affordable housing

### Life chances for people

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## CHAIR'S REPORT

### DEAR MEMBERS.

WELCOME TO ATRIUM'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2017/18.

Once again, I am delighted to report on further successes for Atrium throughout the year. Before I do that, I would also advise members that I am standing down after five years as Chair of Atrium. I have worked closely with some excellent colleagues on the Board and the staff team, and together we have achieved some tremendous outcomes. In this, my final report to members, I thought it worthwhile mentioning some of the key achievements of the last five years:

- Creating a Money Advice Service, helping hundreds of our tenants to access financial assistance worth - so far - nearly £1 million.
- Establishing a Direct Labour Organisation delivering void and reactive repair services for us.
- Investing almost £5million in additional housing supply.
- Preventing families becoming homeless by buying their properties through the Scottish Government's Mortgage to Rent scheme.
- Building bespoke offices in the centre of Shortlees, our largest community.
- Investing £3.1 million in our existing stock to enhance it and achieve the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.
- Providing housing to almost 500 families through our participation in the East Ayrshire Common Housing Register.
- Linking with several Ayrshire housing associations to form "Eydent", a vehicle for training, networking, and collaboration amongst housing providers.

I think this is impressive for what is a relatively small organisation.

Turning to the last 12 months, I am pleased to report a number of further outcomes underlining not just the past but the present and, I anticipate, future success of the company.

As part of our continued focus on good governance, we commissioned an independent review of the company against the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management. The review was conducted by RSM (UK) Ltd and, while recommending some actions, concluded that there was generally good compliance and no areas of serious concern. We accepted their findings and have already taken steps to address the improvements identified.

In the last 12 months Atrium completed a further new build development, this time in Shortlees. The development is on the site of BISF houses that we demolished in 2012, and adds 43 new bungalows, houses and flats to our portfolio. We also converted three empty and hard to let maisonettes in New Farm Loch into 6 x 1 bedroom flats which were let immediately to persons on the waiting list.

Working closely with the Tenant Participation Advisory Service, we were able to initiate a Tenant Scrutiny Group to review the standard at which we relet our empty homes. The Group met several times in the course of 2017/18 (and continues to do so) and their input has been invaluable. We also shared with them our emerging Fit for 21st Century Living Standard which forms the cornerstone of our new Business Plan, the principles of which were approved at a Board Away Day in March 2018. Tenant consultation on the Business Plan is scheduled for August 2018. Under

principles already approved by the Board, over the next several years we are aiming to target significant levels of investment on existing housing, as well as continuing to build new housing, while still maintaining rents at an affordable level.

The Business Plan also envisages significant differences in the way we deliver services, building on themes already introduced such as Customer First, and digitalisation of services supported by improvements in communications and IT infrastructure.

The company continues to operate on a sound financial footing and this has been an extremely important factor in our ability to develop the new Business Plan with its bold ambitions. Rental income remains steady in the face of increasing numbers of customers moving to Universal Credit, but we have also seen an increase in demand for our Money Advice Service for the same reason.

In a break from our normal approach, our Annual Report this year includes a short review of our subsidiary organisation Atrium Initiatives which provides important branded services both to Atrium Homes and its customers. We are very pleased with the way both brands (Choice Places for factoring and Atrium Property Services for repairs) have blended into Atrium Homes' services. We anticipate further expansion of both in the coming years.

Finally, as I step down, I would like once again to pay tribute to my fellow Board members and to the staff team for their efforts on behalf of Atrium, not just this past year but over all the years I have been Chair and many more besides.

Best wishes

**Jim O'Neill.** Chair, Atrium Homes



# Governance & Staff

## Board of Directors

Atrium Homes is a company limited by guarantee and a registered Scottish charity. It is governed by a Board of Directors who are all volunteers and receive no payments; all give their time freely to support the good governance of the organisation.

The Board met eight times in the course of 2017/18 to conduct its routine business and the overall average attendance at Board meetings in the year ran at 72%. It also held an Away Day in March 2018 to review and discuss the longer term strategic direction of the company.

There are 12 places on the Board and details of who served during the year are shown below. At the AGM in 2017, Graham Piggott, Joe Keen and Kenneth Stewart stood down as required by the rules. All were eligible for re-election as Directors of the Company and were duly re-elected.

As part of our commitment to maintaining good governance through effective succession planning, a recruitment drive carried out in the year saw Brian Woods and George Welsh elected to the Board at the AGM in August 2017. In March 2018, Sally Turner left the Board.

In the course of the year, we appointed RSM (UK) to undertake a comprehensive review of our governance arrangements and in particular our compliance with the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management. The exercise highlighted a high degree of compliance against all six standards but made a number of recommendations where our approaches could be made even better, along with some suggestions for future consideration. The Board has accepted the recommendations and actions have already taken place to address the matters identified.

### Regulatory Plan

Like all RSLs in Scotland, Atrium Homes is subject to regulation by the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR), which publishes an annual regulation plan, setting out the level of engagement it expects to have with each organisation and the rationale behind it. Atrium's current level of engagement with the SHR is 'low'.



**JAMES O'NEILL**  
Chair



**JOE KEEN**  
Vice Chair



**GRAHAM PIGGOTT**



**MARIE COYLE**



**KEN STEWART**



**DAVID AITKEN**



**KARA ALKER**



**ANTHONY ODENDAAL**



**MARY NILSEN**



**SALLY TURNER**  
Left 28 March 2018



**BRIAN WOODS**  
Appointed 29 August 2017

**GEORGE WELSH**  
Appointed 29 August 2017



## Training & Development

A key part of ensuring staff effectiveness is to invest in staff through regular training activity. In the course of the year staff attended a range of training and development sessions aimed at maintaining core skills, enhancing overall effectiveness and introducing new knowledge in response to changes in our operating environment. Not all staff attended every training session but we did use some to bring the whole staff team together.

### Staffing

In 2017/18 Atrium Homes employed 25 staff, while Atrium Initiatives employed a further six. With staffing being one of our three largest costs (along with investment in our housing stock and interest payments on borrowings), we want to maximise the effectiveness of our staff team. The Atrium Group as a whole takes its responsibilities as an employer very seriously and aims to provide a safe, healthy and modern working environment. In return, we ask for staff commitment to our objectives and that staff operate as one team for the benefit of our customers.

### Eydent Conference

In November 2017 we participated in the Eydent Conference, along with three other local housing associations. Eydent is the name of the alliance of Ayrshire housing associations, a group we helped set up in 2012. This was the third Eydent-run conference focussing on housing and the related activities of housing associations, and was attended by over 125 delegates from Ayrshire associations and beyond.



TRAINING	DATE
Governing Body Leadership Programme	May 2017
Legionella Training	June 2017
Governance Training	June 2017
Measuring Good Value for Money	June 2017
First Aid	August 2017
Health & Safety Training	September 2017
Customer First Training	September 2017
Data Protection for Board	October 2017
Welfare Reform Training	November 2017
Eydent Conference	November 2017
PIP and Attendance Allowance	January 2018
Universal Credit Roll Out	January 2018
Challenging PIP	February 2018
GDPR Training	February 2018
Chairing Skills	February 2018
GDPR Training for Board	February 2018
Tackling Digital and Social Exclusion	March 2018
Procurement Training	March 2018



# Finance

## Overview

Overall turnover has remained consistent with the prior year.

**There was an increase of 2.1% in rental income due to the inflationary increase applied and a reduction in rent loss through voids.**

Operating costs as a percentage of income increased slightly from 67.4% in 2017 to 68.9% in 2018. However, we continued to control costs and performed favourably within the short and long term budgets set, posting another operating surplus in the year, which will be used to fund the future planned maintenance programme across all our housing stock.

Successfully managing the financing of our core activities remains a key priority and this remains on track with our previous performance in this area. Our budget for further investment in the planned maintenance programme has been increased to ensure that every property we own meets Atrium's own "Fit for 21st Century Living" standard.

We continue to manage our finances with a long term perspective. Opportunities will always be weighed up as they arise and we are keen to ensure that we maximise value for money outcomes for our tenants. With this in mind, we completed a development of 43 additional units within the Shortlees area. As at 31 March 2018, £4.6m had been spent on these units, in line with the total projected cost.

### SUMMARY INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2018 & COMPARATIVE

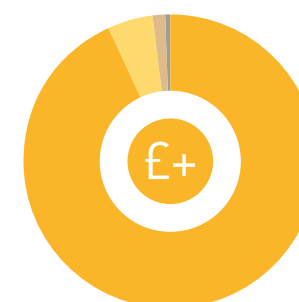
	17/18	16/17
Turnover	5,193	5,114
Operating costs	(3,650)	(3,534)
<b>Operating surplus</b>	<b>1,543</b>	<b>1,580</b>
Gain on sale of housing accommodation	-	(20)
Interest receivable	20	24
Interest payable	(454)	(483)
Other finance charges	(4)	(11)
<b>(Deficit)/surplus for the year</b>	<b>1,105</b>	<b>1,090</b>
Reserves brought forward	15,058	13,968
<b>Reserves carried forward</b>	<b>16,163</b>	<b>15,058</b>

All figures shown  
left are in £,000s

INCOME	TOTAL £,000	As %
Rents	4,860	93.2%
Other	260	5.0%
Medical Adaptations	73	1.4%
Interest Receivable	20	0.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,213</b>	<b>100%</b>

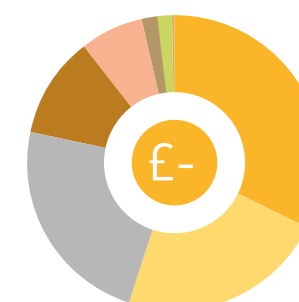
EXPENDITURE	TOTAL £,000	As %
Maintenance	1,330	32.4%
Depreciation - Social Housing	935	22.8%
Loan Interest	454	11.1%
Management	957	23.3%
Other	287	7.0%
Medical Adaptations	78	1.9%
Bad Debts	63	1.5%
Other Finance Costs	4	0.1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,108</b>	<b>100%</b>

### INCOME



**93.2%** RENTS  
**5.0%** OTHER  
**1.4%** MEDICAL ADAPTATIONS  
**0.4%** INTEREST RECEIVABLE

### EXPENDITURE



**32.4%** MAINTENANCE  
**22.8%** DEPRECIATION SOCIAL HOUSING  
**23.3%** MANAGEMENT  
**11.1%** LOAN INTEREST  
**7.0%** OTHER  
**1.9%** MEDICAL ADAPTATIONS  
**1.5%** BAD DEBTS  
**0.1%** OTHER FINANCE COSTS



# Tenant Participation

We try to engage with tenants and other service users in a variety of different ways. Tenant participation is about our tenants taking part in decision making processes and influencing decisions about housing policies, housing conditions, and housing (and related) services. It is a two way process which involves the sharing of information, ideas and power.

## In 2017/18 we:

- Conducted a full consultation exercise on the annual rent increase using a variety of media. We received 44 replies.
- Issued two newsletters, sent out updates on Universal Credit and issued adhoc information flyers.
- Increased the use of social media through SurveyMonkey, email contacts and SMS messaging.
- Saw follow-on focus groups from the Customer Satisfaction Survey, from which emerged a Tenant Scrutiny Group. This Group has met regularly throughout the year and assisted staff to review the void standard.
- Supported a range of community initiatives including donations to local charity groups and projects with organisations such as Centrestage.

## MONEY MANAGEMENT

Our Money Management team monitors and manages rent and other payments. It includes the Money Advice Service which offers free, confidential advice on a range of financial related issues. Rental payment is our main source of income and ensures the financial viability of Atrium and our ongoing ability to invest in services, properties and communities.

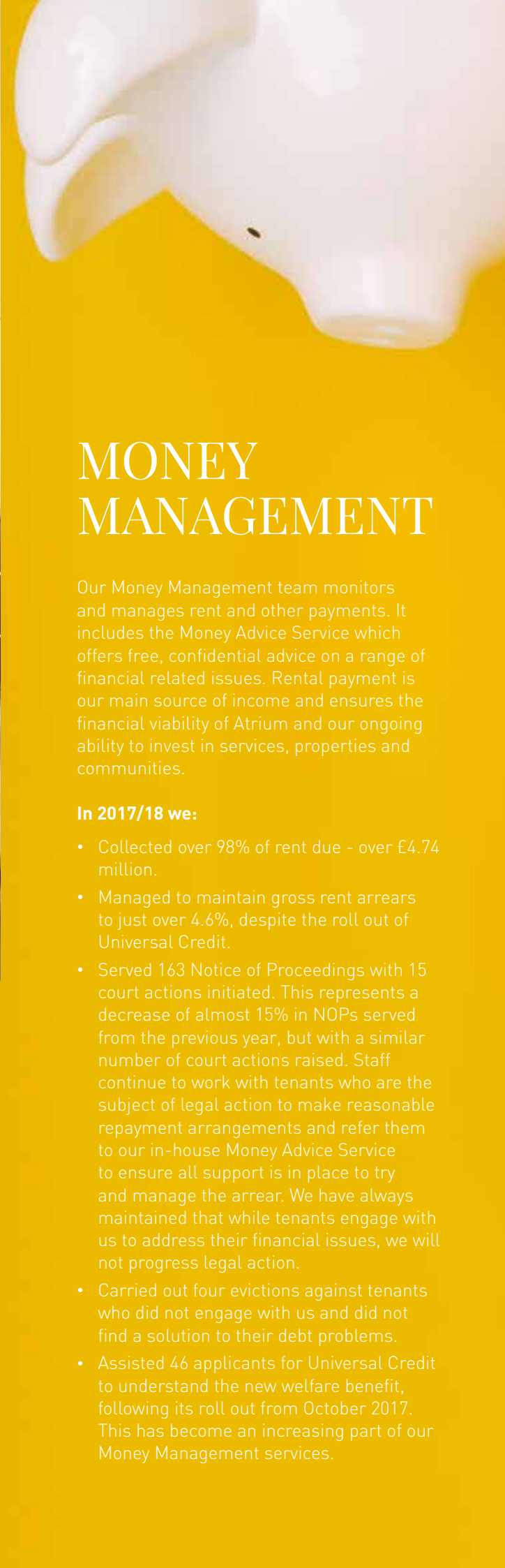
## In 2017/18 we:

- Collected over 98% of rent due - over £4.74 million.
- Managed to maintain gross rent arrears to just over 4.6%, despite the roll out of Universal Credit.
- Served 163 Notice of Proceedings with 15 court actions initiated. This represents a decrease of almost 15% in NOPs served from the previous year, but with a similar number of court actions raised. Staff continue to work with tenants who are the subject of legal action to make reasonable repayment arrangements and refer them to our in-house Money Advice Service to ensure all support is in place to try and manage the arrear. We have always maintained that while tenants engage with us to address their financial issues, we will not progress legal action.
- Carried out four evictions against tenants who did not engage with us and did not find a solution to their debt problems.
- Assisted 46 applicants for Universal Credit to understand the new welfare benefit, following its roll out from October 2017. This has become an increasing part of our Money Management services.

## Operations Review

The Operations Team provides a housing management service to tenants to make sure estates are safe, clean and happy places to live in. We want our tenants to be proud of where they live and our Operations Team plays a vital role in creating great homes and neighbourhoods within our stock.

Handling the core part of our business, the Operations Team is typically the first point of contact for our customers, dealing with Atrium's day to day front line operations. This includes rent and arrears, money advice, the allocation of empty properties, addressing neighbour issues, and conducting garden and landscape maintenance inspections.





## MONEY ADVICE

Our Money Advice Team supports customers who are struggling to pay their rent. The team offers free, impartial and confidential advice on a range of issues relating to budgeting, money and debt management, as well as problems with rent arrears. Welfare Reform continued to be the largest challenge for the service in 2017/18 with further tenants moving to Universal Credit, and many seeing a reduction in their income as a result of the reforms.

### In 2017/18 we:

- Helped 219 tenants, with an ongoing case load of 86 at year end.
- Supported tenants to claim more than £947,183.43 in ongoing benefits.
- Accessed £27,247.33 of Discretionary Housing Payments.
- Secured over £87,097.98 in lump sum payments.
- Assisted tenants in receiving over £13,094.03 in backdated benefits.

## Case Study

Our Money Advice Team received a call from East Ayrshire Council Universal Credit project in December 2017 advising the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) had informed them one of our tenants may need help to make a claim for Universal Credit (UC).

Miss L lived with her partner in an Atrium property and received several benefits. However, when Miss L was admitted to hospital, DWP stated she was no longer able to actively seek employment and cancelled her claim for Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA) within two days of her admission.

### Our Money Advice Team supported Miss L and her partner in several ways:

- Firstly, they met with Miss L and her partner at the hospital and helped them make a joint UC claim online. The team also helped the couple to submit Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) and Council Tax Reduction (CTR) applications to East Ayrshire Council.
- The team then applied to the Scottish Welfare Fund for a crisis payment and issued a food bank voucher to help the couple over the festive period.
- After five weeks without benefits, the couple received their first UC payment. Once deductions had been taken for rent, arrears, repayment of advanced payment, etc, the couple were left with under £100 to pay all household bills for a month. Our Money Advice Team provided further support by issuing the couple with regular food bank vouchers.
- Following Miss L's discharge from hospital, the team helped by applying for further benefits which were subsequently awarded, increasing the household income by over £1,000 a month.

## ESTATE MANAGEMENT & ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

While our main aim is to provide good quality homes with affordable rents, we know that residents' enjoyment can be affected by factors other than amenities. We aim to do everything we can to ensure tenants enjoy a peaceful, clean and tidy environment. This can be achieved by having a proactive and strategic approach to the management of our properties, estates and neighbourhoods.

### In 2017/18 we:

- Dealt with 103 complaints of anti-social behaviour, a slight increase from the previous year. The majority of complaints were for minor breaches of tenancy, simply requiring staff to speak to parties involved.
- Resolved over 99% of cases within prescribed timescales.
- Issued notices and recovered six properties that were identified as abandoned.
- Carried out regular estate inspections to ensure a high standard of grounds maintenance and cleanliness.
- Completed the annual Garden Competition, recognising gardens across our estates that had achieved a high standard of care.
- Completed weekly checks of all communal areas within flatted blocks to make sure they were being maintained and identified areas for improvements.
- Carried out successful joint operations with East Ayrshire Council to enforce measures against fly tipping, abandoned vehicles and other environmental hazards.
- Created an entrance feature to the Shortlees estate, following a successful funding application to the Big Lottery Our Place programme.

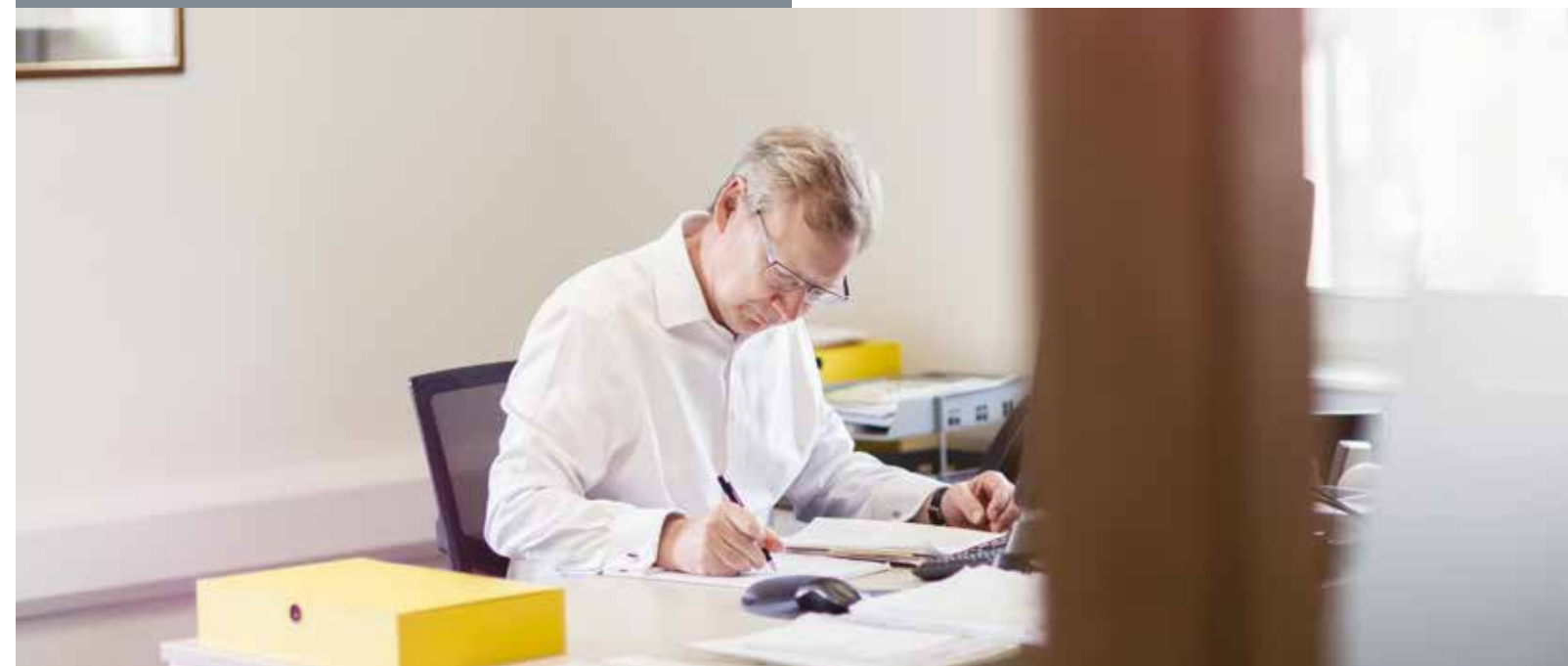
## ALLOCATIONS & VOIDS

# 11.

We aim to provide good quality, affordable rented accommodation to those in greatest housing need. We work hard to make sure accommodation is repaired to an acceptable standard for new tenants in a reasonable period of time.

### In 2017/18 we:

- Re-let 99 properties.
- Let 43 new build units and 4 acquisitions for the first time.
- Made 197 formal offers of housing, carrying out verification visits and accompanied viewings as part of this process.
- Allocated 34% to applicants on the Waiting list, 13% to the Transfer list, 36% to the Homeless list and the remaining 17% to the Strategic Needs list and the Outwith The District list. We were delighted to make such a significant contribution to reducing the number of homeless households within East Ayrshire, exceeding our target of lets to applicants on this list by 11%.
- Helped process a share of 2,742 new housing applications, bringing the total number of housing applicants on SEARCH, East Ayrshire's Common Housing Register, to 3,870.
- Had only 15 void properties at 31 March 2018, a slight increase from the previous year.
- Terminated and repaired 101 properties during the year, representing under 9% turnover of our stock. This was consistent with previous years.
- Took an average of 35 days to re-let our properties. This represents a significant decrease from 50 days the previous year, due to measures introduced in both administration and working practices which have significantly improved performance in this area.





# Repairs Service

Atrium is fully committed to looking after its current stock. We recognise that for the majority of tenants, repairs is a top priority and is the service most of our customers access on a regular basis. We are committed to taking good care of our properties so our tenants can live in a safe, comfortable environment - and to make sure we protect our assets and investment. We aim to provide value for money in everything we do, and this is particularly true when it comes to looking after our tenants' homes.

## GAS SERVICING

Atrium had 1,170 properties with gas installations that require to have an annual landlord safety check carried out. One hundred per cent of these properties had their Certificate (CP12) renewed before their anniversary date, fulfilling our statutory obligation.

## MEDICAL ADAPTATIONS

We believe it is important to help people who have support needs to live independent lives and be able to stay within their current property. With funding of £75,000 from the Scottish Government, we were able to undertake a range of medical adaptations for the year. While funding was reduced from the previous year, we still completed:

- 15 wet floor showers
- 13 handrails
- 23 grabrails
- 8 bannisters

This allowed people to remain within their existing home, by adapting it to their needs.

We are committed to taking good care of our properties so our tenants can live in a safe, comfortable environment

## REACTIVE REPAIRS

We aim to offer a prompt, high quality service to make sure our properties are always well looked after and meet the needs and expectations of our tenants.

### In 2017/18 we:

- Recorded and processed 3,640 one-off repair requests (approximately 70 per week), a 10% increase from the previous year:
  - 509 were emergency repairs (twice as many as last year). On average these took 2.07 hours to complete from the time reported (against 2.04 hours last year).
  - 3,313 were non-emergency repairs, completed in an average of 4.32 days (against 3.41 days last year).
  - on average, each property within the stock had 3.15 repairs carried out over the year, a small increase from the previous year.
- Completed 92.94% of all repairs right first time.
- Kept over 92% of repairs appointments.



# Asset Management & Investment Activity

## REMODELLING & NEW BUILD ACTIVITY

### Earlston and Blacksyke Avenue Regeneration Proposals, Shortlees

The new build development at Earlston and Blacksyke Avenue was successfully completed on 30 March 2018. This project provided an additional 43 affordable homes within the Shortlees area, in a mix of older and ambulant disabled bungalows, amenity flats and housing to meet general needs.

In addition to the provision of new housing, the project delivered significant community benefits to the local area, with seven work placements completed on site, three of which progressed into apprenticeship positions with McTaggart Construction. The project also created a further eight jobs (three new entrant positions and five additional ones).

McTaggart Construction also co-ordinated events at Shortlees Primary School, such as the Science Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM) learning with pupils, helping demonstrate the link between what is taught in the classroom and the wider world. Children from the nursery and the primary school were given a full tour of the site.

Further involvement and support from McTaggart Construction included funding a flagpole for Shortlees Primary School, donating £1,100 to the 2018/19 “walking train” and contributing to various other community events such as clean-ups.

### Russell Court, New Farm Loch

The development at Russell Court to convert three empty and hard to let maisonettes into 6 x 1 bedroom flats, completed on 18 July 2017. This refurbishment project, undertaken by Keepmoat Regeneration (now ENGIE), has provided a much needed house type in the area and made a significant improvement to the local environment.



## FUTURE YEARS’ ACTIVITY

### Asset Management Strategy

Our revised Business Plan (2018-23), approved by the Board in March 2018, is now based on an Asset Management Investment Strategy which anticipates investment of around £22 million on our housing stock over the course of the next five to seven years. Our objective is to ensure that every property we own meets our “Fit for 21st Century Living” standard.

The standard has been developed over the past year following a detailed review of stock condition and taking into account tenant views expressed in our most recent Customer Satisfaction

Survey. The standard has been reviewed by our Tenant Scrutiny Group and will be the subject of broader consultation as we progress.

There is scope for some flexibility of investment plans area by area, and as we roll out the programme we will be conducting more detailed inspection and consultation processes to fine-tune investment requirement in individual properties. We consider the Fit for 21st Century Living standard and the programme of work needed to deliver it to be the most ambitious investment and improvement programme we have undertaken to date.

### New Build

Our Business Plan also includes provision for up to 70 new homes, with the potential for a further 29 new properties. The new homes would be built in several phases over the life of the Plan, with work due to start on the first 28 homes by the end of March 2019.

The first phase requires the demolition of eight Atholl Steel cottage flats, and we have been liaising with the tenants of these properties for some time

to ensure their housing needs are met. We anticipate all eight households will be in alternative accommodation by autumn 2018. Demolition of the units will follow over the winter period, permitting a timeous site start on the new properties.

We are working with East Ayrshire Council to have the second and possible third phases included in their Strategic Housing Investment Programme when it is renewed in December 2018.

### Sunnyside Square, West – Shortlees

We have advanced plans to build a further 27 new units at Sunnyside Square, West. This includes the demolition of eight Atholl Steel properties which sit on Knockmarloch Drive, and we liaised closely with the tenants of these properties throughout the year as our plans developed.

This has been one of our more

complicated projects, as it affects existing tenants whose housing needs had to be carefully considered and addressed. Complications with the site itself also had to be resolved, along with associated costs. However, we were able to present detailed proposals to Board in March for their consideration and approval, and over the course of 2018 will move the project forward to an anticipated site start in 2019.

## MAJOR REPAIRS AND IMPROVEMENTS

### Planned Investment 2017/18

The 3-year Major Repairs Programme with CCG concluded within this year with the final installations to some void properties and external doors. Where other works were required throughout the year, best value was obtained by obtaining quotes from a range of local contractors resulting in component replacements from APS, DM Roofing, ECG, A1 Glass, City Technical, DCR Plumbing, AL Plumbing, Milligan Electrical and Fortress Security.

The table below shows the number of units where activity was completed.

Scope of Works	No of Units
Roofs	5
Gutters and Fascias	6
External Doors	6
Windows	2
Boilers	8
Heating Systems	1
Bathrooms	10
Kitchens	6
Electrical Rewires	5
External Wall Insulation	8
Internal Wall Insulation	1
Wet Floor Showers (Medical Adaptations)	15

Overall we spent over £171,237 on these works in 2017/18.



## Cyclical Maintenance

- During the year, Murchland Construction completed gutter cleaning at 478 units. Fortress Security carried out electrical testing at 184 units.
- The core cyclical activity of gas servicing and landscape maintenance proceeded as scheduled, undertaken by City Technical Services and Euro Environmental Group Ltd (EEG) respectively.

## Atrium Initiatives – Services Activity

- **Development Agent Services** - our subsidiary Atrium Initiatives continued to provide development services to Barrhead Housing Association, with the viability assessment of a key site at High Street Kirkstyle Lane, Neilston and on a further two sites in Walton Street, Barrhead.
- **Meikle Court External Upgrade, including External Wall Installation** - this project was procured through the Scottish Procurement Alliance (SPA) and began on site in January 2018, completing in May 2018. The cost is being met in part through the Scottish Government's Home Energy Efficiency Programme Scotland (HEEPS) and the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding. The works were co-ordinated by the factor, Choice Places, in partnership with the Energy Agency, who provided Client Agent Services for the project. The works provide a significant improvement to the energy efficiency and aesthetic of the building.
- **Re-Roofing and Roof Repairs Contract** - this contract was competitively tendered, with DM Roofing winning the contract to deliver new roofs for two factored blocks at Thomson Terrace and Leslie Place. The contract also included significant repair works to homes in Loreny Drive and Knockmarloch Drive. The contract value was approximately £72,000, with works beginning on site in September 2017 and completing in November 2017.
- **Roads Resurfacing Contract, New Farm Loch** - following a process of consultation, Atrium Initiatives competitively tendered the proposed works in March 2018. Hillhouse Quarry won the contract, with a contract acceptance agreed for the works to commence in May 2018.

## ATRIUM PROPERTY SERVICES

We have seen a number of positive outcomes in the past 12 months, including improved performance in key operational areas, reduced costs and a more proactive service delivery model.

Atrium Property Services (APS) completed 99.45% of repairs within timescale this year and are committed to improving our customer service activities.

During the year we continued with our proactive Property Inspect & Repair Programme, also known as Property MOTs, and conducted 126 MOTs throughout this period.

Our customers have been very positive about the services APS have been delivering:

**“Hi again, you're a great guy. After you're last visit I got the mould wiped down, extractor fan fixed, windows fixed and the outside of the building repaired.”**

– Mr B.

**“I wanted to call and compliment the joiner who attended my property today; I am delighted with the final result.”**

Mrs G

## Atrium Initiatives

Atrium Initiatives is the wholly owned subsidiary of Atrium Homes. Established in 2006, it provides services to Atrium Homes under the brands of Choice Places and Atrium Property Services.

## CHOICE PLACES

The factoring brand of Choice Places delivered some excellent outcomes for its customers in the course of 2017/18. As well as undertaking its usual role of maintaining non-adopted open areas within mixed tenure estates, it also delivered some high profile projects.

### Refurbishment works

Meikle Court, a mixed tenure block of flats in Nether Robertland, was the subject of a major makeover which included re-roofing, new close windows, an updated controlled entry system and a blanket of energy efficient external insulation, capped with new roughcast. The cost of the works

- in excess of £145k - was shared between all owners including Atrium Homes, supported by £35k of grant funding towards the external insulation.

### Re-roofing projects

Re-roofing works were undertaken at several mixed tenure blocks in Shortlees and New Farm Loch. Again, the cost of the works was shared between all owners in the blocks including Atrium Homes.

### Car-park resurfacing work

In May 2018, Choice Places commenced resurfacing works to communal car parking areas in New Farm Loch, with work being completed by June.

This was an extremely complicated project and the scale and cost of the works meant the income had to be gathered in from owners over the course of several years.

### Finances

We have to budget very carefully for the services delivered by Choice Places, to ensure there is sufficient income to meet ongoing expenses, planned works and any ad hoc works to factored properties.

In the course of 2017/18, factoring made a small profit of 5.4% which translates to £28k against a turnover for the cost centre of £524k. This profit is not distributed, but is gift aided to Atrium Homes to help keep overall costs down.



## ATRIUM PROPERTY SERVICES

APS employs five operatives who deliver void and responsive repairs services to Atrium Homes and its customers.

In the course of 2017/18, the team undertook nearly 1,500 responsive repairs, including emergencies and Right to Repair works. Just over 99% of these works were completed within the allocated timeframe.

In addition, the team undertook work to 124 void properties, including inspecting, scoping and specifying the extent of the repairs needed to relet the properties. Eighty of the voids (65%) were returned within the allocated timeframe, with the remainder delayed for various reasons. In overall terms, an average of 13 working days of APS time was needed to inspect and repair each void property.



# Community & Events

At Atrium we try to get involved in our local community as much as possible. During 2017/2018 we supported many events and initiatives, as well as making cash donations to clubs, groups and schools. Here are just some of our highlights.



### TACKLING FLY TIPPING

Organised by Atrium staff, several organisations along with local volunteers cleaned up a number of fly tipping sites in the New Farm Loch area. We held a similar event later in Shortlees.



### ROON THE TOON

Several staff dragged their weary bodies round Kilmarnock in this fantastic community event!

### GARDEN COMPETITION

We were overwhelmed once again by the tremendous effort many of our residents put into their gardens. Well done, everyone!



### EASTER COMPETITION

One lucky resident won a fabulous Easter basket for sharing our Facebook page!



### DONATIONS:

- Safari Park Day Trip
- Fans Bus for Shortlees Football Club
- Walking Bus for Shortlees Primary School

### CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES

Atrium staff got involved in a number of initiatives during the Christmas period. Santa went down a treat with the nursery kids, while our older residents enjoyed a Christmas gift from Atrium.

- Foodbank Donation
- Elderly tenant gift hampers delivered
- Santa visit to school
- Elves Christmas fund applications
- Christmas Jumper Day



### MCMILLAN COFFEE MORNING

Staff organised a coffee morning in support of Macmillan Cancer Support raising £230.



### SHORTLEES ENTRANCE FEATURE

Local kids from Shortlees Primary enthusiastically lent a hand with planting up the estate's new entrance feature.





**ATRIUM**  
HOMES

The Landlord of Choice

Atrium House  
14 Central Avenue  
Shortlees  
Kilmarnock  
KA1 4PS

[atrium-homes.co.uk](http://atrium-homes.co.uk)