

## Annual Highlights 2015–2016

A year at Loretto Housing



# Message from Loretto Housing's Chair

Douglas Robin looks back over  
the year's highlights.

The bottom half of the page is decorated with large, overlapping blue geometric shapes. A large blue triangle points upwards from the bottom left towards the center. Another large blue triangle points downwards from the top right towards the center. These two triangles meet at a point in the middle of the page, creating a white 'V' shape in the background.



**Douglas Robin**  
Chair of Loretto Housing

It has been another year of exciting developments at Loretto Housing with more new homes and further improvements to services.

We introduced new online services for customers, enabling them to do much more when and where it suits them and launched a new way of letting that is fairer, more open and easier to use.

We continued our mission to improve our communities, and widen the choice of housing available to people, with work starting on new developments from Falkirk through to Cardonald in Glasgow. Our investment in existing homes continued with £1.3million of improvements.

Above all, it was the year in which we worked with our sister organisations in Wheatley to develop a five-year Group strategy - Investing in Our Futures.

Investing in Our Futures spells out Wheatley Group's vision and aims between now and 2020. For Loretto, this is an important milestone because it means we now have clear and ambitious plans for the future.

Over the next five years Loretto will invest £46million building more than 450 new affordable homes. We'll invest £8m in improving existing homes. And we will also continue to expand services – including improved online services and more services for tenants with care needs – all while keeping rents affordable.

Tenants have been involved throughout the year, in a range of ways, in shaping our services and, after listening to their feedback, we developed a local plan which spells out what Investing in Our Futures means for our communities. To read more about this, visit our website at [www.lorettoha.co.uk](http://www.lorettoha.co.uk)

Here are some of our highlights for 2015-16.

# £1.3m

invested in improving  
our homes

## New homes

We completed 47 new homes across our communities and started work on 104 more.

We have a further 167 homes in development.

Among the new developments were 26 new energy-efficient homes at Falkirk.

The modern homes, which have high levels of insulation and solar panels, are designed to cut tenants' fuel bills.

Built on the site of a former farm steading at Bissett Court, Hallglen, the houses range in size from one to five bedrooms. They include eight amenity flats designed to suit older people and four houses for large families.

The development enjoys open country views with easy access to the Union Canal and the nearby children's play park.

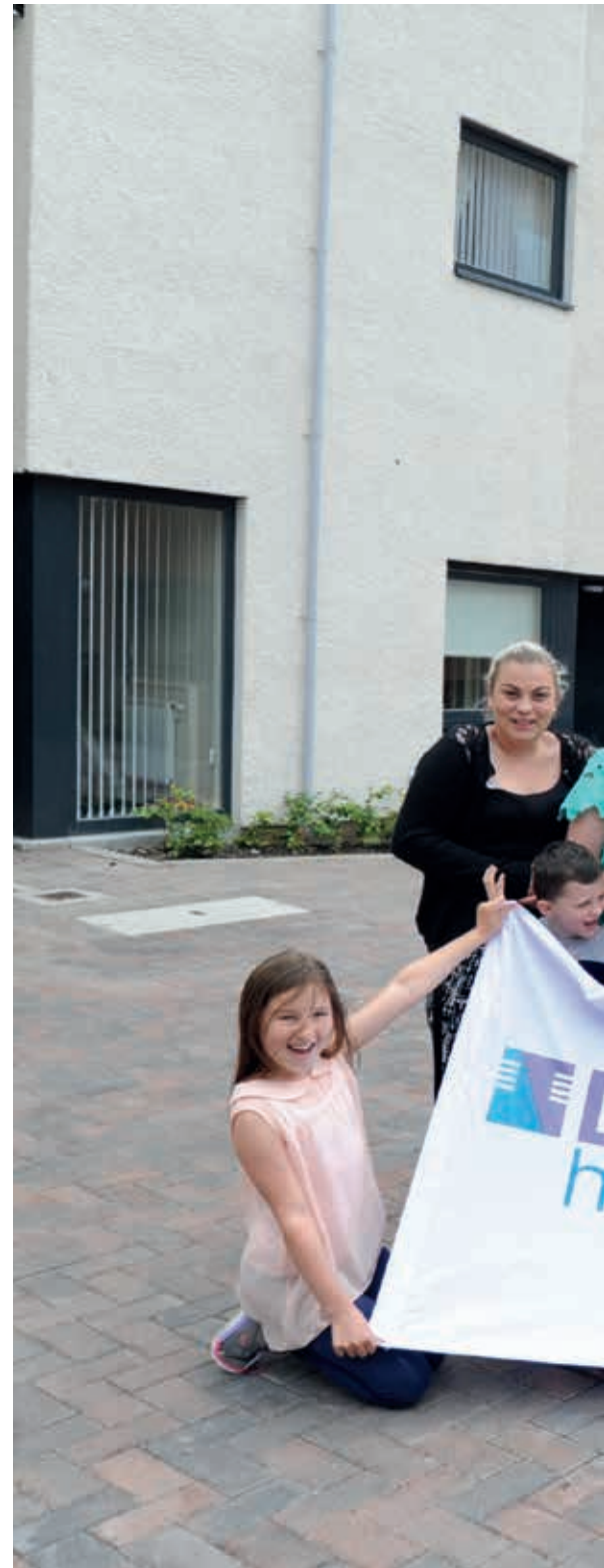
Loretto tenant Lee Feeney, 36, moved into her three-storey, five-bedroom house in Bissett Court a few weeks ago with her three daughters, three sons and dog Violet. She said: "I really love my new house. The space is amazing, considering that we've come from a three-bedroom house in West Lothian. The kids are very happy now they have their own rooms, especially since they are getting older."

The £3.2m development was built with £1.6m grant support from the Scottish Government.

## Investment work

We invested almost £1.3million in improving our homes. The work included new kitchens, boilers and bathrooms.

Hundreds of tenants from Grangemouth to Lanark are enjoying the improvements and benefiting from lower gas and electricity bills too.







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### Fuel advice slashes bills

Tenants across our communities saved £5,169 in the past year thanks to our fuel advice service.

Free expert advice from our fuel advisors helps tenants cut their bills and access the cheapest tariffs.

Between 1 April 2015 and 31 March this year, our fuel advisors carried out 38 visits to Loretto tenants at home.

They helped people:

- reduce payments
- get on a lower tariff
- apply for a Warm Homes Discount payment, and
- reduce debt.

### Customers have a say

Tenants are at the heart of what we do and we want to give them real influence in local decisions.

Over the year we held a number of events for tenants including one in Glasgow where customers from across Wheatley Group learned about our scrutiny panel and tenant-led inspection teams.

The scrutiny panel looks in detail at how Loretto performs – for example in environmental services – and reports back to Loretto management. Inspection teams look at services from a tenant's perspective and report back on what works well and not so well. We are continuing to work with our sister organisations in Wheatley to engage more people from our communities in local decision-making. This will include new groups at our developments in Yoker and Springburn.

### Loretto goes to Hollywood

A touch of Hollywood glamour came to Loretto when tenants, staff and the people we work for got together for this year's AGM.

More than 100 people gathered at the People's Palace and Winter Gardens in Glasgow for the yearly event.

And, after the official proceedings were over, everyone got down to the more serious business of having fun, with a feast of singing, poetry, comedy and dancing.

Every tenant can become a member of Loretto and help plan the AGM. They can join Loretto for just £1 – and becoming a member means they can vote on the Board and the Chair and help determine Loretto's priorities for the year ahead.



# 70

tenants have signed up  
for our new improved  
online services

### Online services

More than 70 tenants signed up for our new improved online services which went live in summer 2015.

Tenants can now see their account, with details of all their payments and charges, as well as pay their rent or other bills, book a repair or request other services.

The online services are part of our drive to give people more choice about how they get in touch and transact with us.

Up to April 2016, tenants who registered had made a total of £59,000 of payments to their accounts using the new online services.

### Customer service excellence

Our focus on customer service excellence was again recognised this year when Wheatley was awarded accreditation to a prestigious UK scheme.

Wheatley gained Customer Service Excellence (CSE) accreditation - the

national standard for excellence in customer service in public sector organisations - with one of the best ratings in the scheme's history.

CSE accreditation is overseen by the UK Government's Cabinet Office and recognises how organisations serve the people they work for.

Loretto Housing was part of the assessment which saw Wheatley awarded 16 ratings of Compliance Plus and 34 ratings of Full Compliance. It is understood that only one other organisation has achieved a higher number of Compliance Plus ratings in the history of the Standard.

### New way of letting

Our new way of letting homes, introduced in April last year, is fairer, more open and easier to use.

Instead of the old housing list, people who want to rent a home with Loretto are now placed in a priority group based on their housing need and circumstances.

People need to register with us before they get a registration number and applicant group. They can then note an interest on the available properties we advertise each week on our Homefinder <https://home-finder.org.uk> website.

Home Finder also includes homes from Loretto's partner organisations – GHA, Cube, West Lothian Housing Partnership and Lowther Homes – so people have more choice than before.









### Improving performance

We achieved good business performance over the year, maintaining positive results in many of the areas where we were already doing well and improving in others.

Some of our performance highlights include:

- satisfaction among tenants who feel their rent provides value for money increased from 68% to 80%
- repairs completed right first time increased from 84% to 95%
- anti-social behaviour cases resolved within timescale rose from 66% to 93%
- medical adaptations timescales are down from 69 to 40 days
- average time to re-let properties has reduced from 35 days to meet the target of 19 days.

The number of properties meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard has been maintained at 99.7%. This is the maximum Loretto can achieve based on its stock and regulatory exemptions.

### New repairs service

The improvements in our repairs performance came after we introduced a new repairs service and a new contractor – City Building – in April 2016.

The new service means customers can book an appointment for a repair at a time and day that suits them – and not have to sit and wait for long periods for a tradesperson to turn up. We also improved the way we monitored the quality of work.

### Jobs and training

Across our parent organisation Wheatley Group, we created a total of 564 jobs and training places for people in our communities over the year.

One training place went to a tenant from Loretto.

We create jobs and training through employability schemes, Modern Apprenticeships and through clauses in our new-build and investment contracts which require contractors to provide employment opportunities for local people.

We also create opportunities through our Wheatley Pledge scheme, which incentivises contractors and suppliers to do more for our communities.

# 95%

repairs completed right first time

### Handyperson service a hit

Tenants are loving getting a helping hand with odd jobs around the home.

Our Handyperson service is there to help tenants who are over 60 or disabled with small jobs around the home.

It proved a big hit this year with 84 people using the service between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016 and 337 jobs carried out.

Jobs ranged from hanging curtains to plumbing in washing machines and assembling flat-pack furniture.

337

Handyperson jobs  
carried out









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