



Key Annual Review 2026

This year's Annual Review marks 30 years of The Advisory Group (TAG). For this reason, we're taking a bit of a departure from our usual report format to celebrate our partnership.

Foreword

TAG's 30-year anniversary marks three decades of the voices and influence of people we support being at the very heart of everything we do. What, back in 1996, began as a commitment to listening to people supported by Key, has grown into an enduring partnership which promotes genuine participation and co-production in action.

A defining moment in this shared journey was supporting TAG to become an independent charity in 2012. This was a significant and deliberate step to strengthen TAG's independence, thus amplifying the voices of people we support and extending TAG's reach beyond Key. It ensured we live our belief that influence is strongest when it is authentic, empowered and heard on its own terms.

This influence has been felt across everything we do; from how we deliver individual support to how we engage with, and influence, national policy. It helps us to ensure our work is grounded in rights, inclusion and people's everyday experiences.

We are particularly proud that TAG's influence is embedded in our governance. Having people with learning disabilities contributing at board level is still uncommon within our sector and is something we are committed to sustaining and strengthening. Their insight helps us to remain accountable, to continuously improve, and ensure the voices of the people we support influence everything we do.

As Chair, the leadership shown by TAG members never fails to inspire me. Their contribution is a powerful reminder of why investing in participation, strengthening quality, and making decisions alongside people are central priorities within our 2025–2028 Strategic Plan. TAG's legacy is not only reflected in its remarkable history, but in the expectations it sets for our future.



Sheenagh Simpson
Key's Chair

While we look back on 30 years of TAG in this year's annual review, as TAG Chair I can tell you we packed a lot into this past one!

Our 15 TAG branches worked together on several issues. This included a high-profile banking campaign to highlight the barriers faced by our members through branch closures and an increased reliance on digital banking. We visited banking hubs across the country to check how accessible and inclusive they are and are working with the banking regulator on our concerns. And, Glasgow MP, Martin Rhodes, supported us to raise the issue in the Houses of Parliament. Our campaign is already making an impact, although we still have a long way to go to ensure everyone has access to inclusive banking.

We got ready for May's Scottish Parliamentary elections, by holding workshops across Scotland to write our very first TAG manifesto. This captured TAG members' expectations of our political leaders, what policy changes are needed and disabled people's priorities in 2026. Every election candidate got the manifesto and nearly all the political parties engaged with us on it, with some candidates attending regional TAG meetings to find out more. We wrapped up this work with a very successful Hustings event in Inverness.



Wendy Hall
Chair of National TAG

We continued to support Key to deliver its strategic plan by assisting with the review of support planning processes and new worker induction training. We held our annual joint strategy meeting with Key's Board, with a particular focus on new worker recruitment, involvement in staff interview and selection, and participation in worker appraisal and supervision. These activities helped ensure that our voices and experiences continued to shape important decisions across the organisation.

Our Glasgow Community Development work continued with over 200 young people signed up for Game Changers Xtra Time, funded by the Big Lottery. This supports young people to plan their transition from school and creates sustainable pathways for them to establish links with wider community resources. The successful Easter programme saw participants get involved in activities such as rock climbing, and DJ and radio show production. We are also working closely with Key's Glasgow day services, where we facilitated a review with the people who use the service, their workers and managers. From this, we're helping them to create new and exciting day opportunities.

After another busy year, we look forward to the future as TAG continues to play its role in ensuring the voices of disabled people are heard, not only in Key, but across Scotland and beyond.

Our review highlights just some of the many ways TAG members have been making a difference, through political engagement, quality assurance, co-training, and policy development.

It is a privilege to reflect upon the past year in the context of 30 years of TAG; a partnership that has fundamentally shaped who we are as an organisation. From its beginnings in local tenant forums to becoming a nationally recognised independent organisation, TAG's journey reflects Key's enduring commitment to participation, rights and inclusion.

TAG's network of regional branches plays a vital role in making this commitment real, creating space for people supported by Key to share their experiences, influence local and national priorities, and keep us accountable. This year, TAG have focused on Key's workforce matters, reviewing induction materials to clearly define what good support looks like, co-producing a participation and inclusion audit to ensure everyone has opportunities to be involved, and supporting campaigns for fair pay for the social care workforce.



Andrea Wood
Key's Chief Executive

Their involvement in every aspect of our work ensures that the people we support are active partners in shaping the things we do, enabling people to have more choice, more control and more influence over how we deliver our strategic ambitions.

At a time of increasing financial challenge, we know that meaningful participation does not happen by accident, it requires sustained commitment, investment and the right structures to support it. We are fortunate to have a Board that actively adopts this approach and consistently prioritises participation even in challenging times.

We are equally clear that genuine participation relies on the skill, values and dedication of our staff, who play a critical role every day in enabling people to express their views, build confidence and be heard. We extend our sincere thanks to the team who support TAG, and to all our staff who are committed to ensuring people are empowered to use their voices to shape their lives, influence decisions, and drive change.

As we look to the future, our responsibilities are clear: continue to listen; support meaningful involvement; and ensure that the experiences of people we support drive everything we do.

Although TAG is now an independent charity, the stories of Key and TAG remain closely intertwined. It has, therefore, been humbling to pause and take stock of TAG's remarkable journey and what this has meant for Key as an organisation and the people we support.

Over the past three decades, TAG has grown from a small group of people determined to have their voices heard into a respected organisation that promotes citizenship, champions rights and challenges discrimination.

In doing so, it has helped shape not only the way Key works, but also our understanding of what genuine co-production and meaningful involvement can achieve.



Harriet, from Annan TAG, with Lynn, the Annan TAG Supporter

Clyde Coast TAG representative, John with support worker, Richard



Key was committed to ensuring that the people we support could live their very best lives. In those early days, with people moving out of institutional care, Key's housing opened doors not only to a new home, but to a new life full of choices and opportunities.

First ever TAG group photo, 1996



From the very beginning...

Life in long-stay hospitals revolved around routines and restrictions, so adapting to a life where you decided what you did and when you did it, was daunting for many people. To foster a network of mutual support, Key set up local forums which brought people together informally, to explore this new way of living.

Inspired by the success of these, Key developed a more formal structure whereby tenants, with the right support, could influence the running and development of the organisation. This mirrored the growing tenant participation movement within mainstream housing associations and our belief that people with learning disabilities should have the same opportunities to have their voices heard and shape the services they received.

As a first step towards this, we invited 14 tenants from across Scotland to meet in Glasgow and explore the idea, and so, TAG was born.

Interest grew quickly, leading to 6 regional groups being established across the country. Central to this was National TAG, which provided a space for those regional groups to share their suggestions and ideas. They reviewed policies, talked about what mattered most to people and helped the people we supported to navigate the rapidly changing world of social care.

Thirty years on, the principles that inspired those first meetings remain unchanged; listening to people, valuing lived experience and ensuring that people have a genuine say in decisions that affect their lives.

National TAG discussing plans for a new recruitment campaign



The social care changes which had emerged in the late 1990s, intensified into the 2000s. As a result, it was a decade during which TAG became ever more influential on issues affecting people with learning disabilities.

Tenancy Agreement filming, early 2000s



TAG goes from strength to strength

The introduction of Transitional Housing Benefit in 2000, brought further opportunities. It signalled the separation of housing and support funding, and enabled people to have more individualised, person-centred support and take on individual tenancies, rather than living in group and communal settings. People also enjoyed greater financial security and independence.

People having more money in their pockets, meant increased resources to live the lives they chose. TAG worked closely with Key to provide information and training to ensure people better understood their options and rights, including how they could be involved in interviewing new staff.

Grant funding enabled us to employ a new participation and inclusion team, who worked alongside TAG members to support people to share their ideas, and train people with learning disabilities to become co-trainers.

The early 2000s heralded the largest review of national learning disability policy in a generation. Following this, 'The same as you?' was published, making ambitious and wide-ranging proposals for modernising support for people with learning disabilities to ensure everyone could expect and enjoy a good quality of life.

For organisations such as Key and TAG, the report reinforced the importance of listening to people, valuing lived experience and ensuring that people with learning disabilities were active participants in shaping the support and services they received.

TAG played a hugely inspirational role in ensuring the voices of people with lived experience were at the centre of this new national policy. Their members sat in the new Scottish Parliament chamber to launch the groundbreaking policy and spoke about the rights of disabled people and their expectations for Scotland; the first time they had ever done this on a national stage.

A crucial recommendation of 'The same as you?' was the establishment of the Scottish Consortium for Learning Disability (SCLD). As partners in SCLD, together with TAG, we ensured that people with lived experience were represented on SCLD's board, further demonstrating our belief that, and commitment to, people with learning disabilities should be central to making decisions – about their lives.

Leam and Wendy preparing a conference presentation, early 2000s



This growing ambition laid the foundations for the next stage of TAG's journey, one that would see it evolve from a participation group within Key into an independent organisation with its own voice, purpose and reach.

Hugh's Huge Cycle arrives in Thurso, 2012



Growing ambitions, increased independence

As TAG's experience, confidence, and membership grew, so did its ambitions. Members recognised that there was still much to do to make communities more accessible, inclusive and responsive to the needs of people with learning disabilities. TAG's appetite to develop campaigns and initiatives needed funding and resources to enable it to achieve its goals and turn ideas in to action. Key fully supported TAG's vision, however, social care financial constraints limited what we could do practically. This growing ambition laid the foundations for the next stage of TAG's journey, one that would see it evolve from a participation group within Key into an independent organisation with its own voice, purpose and reach.

In 2012 TAG became an independent registered charity and a new chapter began. The charity launched with a bang! Hugh Crossey, a local manager in Key and long-time supporter of TAG, cycled round every Key service in Scotland. TAG members and friends joined him on the way, and every local community held events to mark the start of TAG's new venture. He raised £20,000 and immediately the work of this new charity, run by disabled people, for disabled people, began.

This transition marked a significant milestone and established a new relationship between TAG and Key. A formal service level agreement defined how TAG would support Key's work. It, as a person-led, self-advocacy charity, would provide ongoing independent consultation, participation and facilitation as well as a valuable resource for everyone supported by Key.

In return, Key continued to fund TAG's core structure, as well as providing venues and support for bi-monthly meetings.

It represented more than a change in legal status, it signalled a shared commitment to ensuring that people with learning disabilities could influence services, shape priorities and advocate for change on their own terms.

Becoming a charity created many new opportunities for TAG. With its own identity, and a clear vision for the future, TAG quickly developed funding expertise to turn their ideas into reality. The first major award was from Key Trust which enabled TAG to appoint its first three community development workers in Inverclyde, Dunbartonshire and Easter Ross. SDS funding from the Scottish Government meant they could expand this work into Renfrewshire, Stirling and Clackmannanshire.

Another significant development was that TAG's work was no longer limited to people supported by Key. Instead, it reached out to any disabled people living in those communities; extending opportunities for participation, inclusion and self-advocacy. These grants created countless opportunities for hundreds of people, ranging from education to sport, to drama and sailing. Sustainability was always a cornerstone of TAG's approach. The goal was not simply to deliver short-term projects, but to create lasting opportunities, resources, and connections that would continue to benefit people long after the funding had come to an end.

Most recently, thanks to Big Lottery funding, TAG has been running its Game Changers programme in Glasgow. This aims to promote young disabled people's engagement with, and advancement in, sports.

The Game Changers enjoying some water sports action



Game changing opportunities

Last year saw the project expand its work in secondary schools to support young people making the transition from school to adult life. Through one-to-one support and planning, each young person was encouraged to explore their interests, identify their goals and map out the pathways available to them after leaving school. By helping young people understand their options and make informed choices about their future, Game Changers is supporting the next generation of disabled people to lead active, connected and fulfilling lives, both in sport and beyond.

MacKenzie, a young woman participating in Game Changers, said this about her experience:

“TAG is amazing! Being a Game Changer has allowed me to get involved in new opportunities and to do different things which I couldn’t have done without them”.

The outcomes for those taking part in Game Changers are remarkable. Jamie is just one of the young people who has benefited from Game Changers, his mum, Mary Jane, describes how it has impacted him:

“Since joining TAG and being made a Community Champion, my son, Jamie, has learned how to take part in a team and is helping others less able than him, making everyone feel involved and valued. Jamie has thrived with Neil, Jade and Clare. In these past few months, Jamie has learned to become more independent and happier within himself. Feeling important being a Champion, he has gained confidence. Before joining, Jamie was withdrawn and very dependent on social care support staff to get his needs met. Being a Community Champion and joining TAG has been a life-changing experience for my son.”

Since 2012, TAG has secured over £1 million in funding to create opportunities for disabled people across Scotland. This achievement reflects its vision, determination and leadership.

Water sports have been a big hit with the Game Changers



Jamie, Game Changers Champion

TAG offered support to other provider organisations in developing their own participation networks and spread the message of inclusion at conferences whenever the opportunity arose.

The group are presented with a copy of their Early Day Motion by Martin Rhodes MP



The Banking Committee visit a local banking hub



Campaigning for an inclusive Scotland

TAG has always been motivated by a desire to build a more inclusive society for disabled people in Scotland. And they very quickly decided to tackle the discrimination faced by people supported by Key, and other disabled people.

In the early days, this included working alongside people supported by Key to design and deliver disability awareness workshops to primary schools. They made videos that celebrated the talents, achievements and contributions of disabled people, challenging negative stereotypes, and helping to reshape perceptions. Their message was clear; disabled people are valued, active citizens with much to contribute to their communities.

TAG fully embraced the increased opportunities to engage directly with politicians which the Scottish Parliament offered. They played an important role in establishing both the cross-organisational political campaigning group, the Learning Disability Alliance Scotland, and the Scottish Parliament's Cross-Party Group on Learning Disability. This gave people supported by Key a voice at every level, influencing policy, raising awareness and helping to drive positive change.

TAG offered support to other provider organisations in developing their own participation networks and spread the message of inclusion at conferences whenever the opportunity arose. They also hosted Hustings events before elections, sourced easy read materials from political parties, so that disabled people could fully understand their options, and worked with Outside the Box to create a training pack outlining the different voting systems used at council, Holyrood and Westminster elections. TAG knew that knowledge was power.

This legacy of political engagement endures through TAG's recently launched banking campaign. Since the end of the pandemic, there has been an increasing reliance on digital banking, and many banks have closed their local branches, all of which disproportionately impacts disabled people. TAG members' experiences starkly demonstrated the issues disabled, and digitally excluded, people face when trying to access their own money. They knew that they had to do something to raise this with the banking authorities.

Getting the banks to engage was the first hurdle. By enlisting the help of Glasgow MP Martin Rhodes, who raised the issue in the House of Commons, the banks started paying attention. He sponsored the following Early Day Motion as a way of highlighting the issue:

"That this House commends the work of The Advisory Group's Glasgow Banking Steering Committee in highlighting the significant challenges faced by communities in accessing essential banking services, including financial discrimination...(it) recognises the dedication and tireless efforts...in advocating for fairer, more inclusive banking provisions that serve the needs of all members of society."

EDM 984 House of Commons

Clare from the Banking Committee told us.

"The banks were closing their branches. Some people don't know how, or have the means, to use the internet. This meant they found it difficult to access their bank accounts. We thought this was unfair. We are human beings and have the same rights as everyone else. We hope that the banks listen to us and take on board our suggestions."

More than 25 years on, the principles behind that first course remain as relevant as ever, that the best support is shaped by listening to the people who experience it, and the most meaningful learning often comes from those with lived experience.

Ryan, one of our newest co-trainers



Person-centred support starts with the person

Back in 1998, one of the first things we tasked TAG with was what messages all workers should receive as they embark upon their social care career. TAG rose to the challenge and worked closely with our training team to produce a course developed around the perspective of someone who receives support. It was groundbreaking.

We knew that the people Key support were the best people to deliver this training, which led to establishing a team of the first co-trainers in Scotland. Their contribution brought the training to life, and participants consistently told us that hearing directly from people who received support was the most impactful part of the course. Ever since then, we have continued to include co-trainers in our courses, and in 2006 co-trainers became a paid role in the organisation.

More than 25 years on, the principles behind that first course remain as relevant as ever, that the best support is shaped by listening to the people who experience it, and the most meaningful learning often comes from those with lived experience.

Ryan, who is 25, is one of our newest co-trainers. He has been supported by us for around 4 years now and gets support with most aspects of daily life. He lives in his own tenancy in Ayrshire and uses a communication aid.

Over the past few years, Ryan's confidence has grown immensely, and he knows exactly what he wants from his support. This was something Monica, the Staff Development Officer for Ryan's area, noticed and asked him if he'd be willing to think about sharing his experience as a co-trainer.

Thankfully, he agreed! Following this, Monica, Ryan and one of his support workers, Ann, worked in partnership to develop ideas for his presentation. Together they looked at which of the SSSC (Scottish Social Services Council) Codes of Practice Ryan felt was most relevant to him and why. Ryan then chose the photos and stories from his life that he was happy to share with training participants and with support pulled this together into a presentation.

Ryan recently co-trained on his first 'Introduction to Practice' course and had this to say:

"I really enjoyed it. I was a bit nervous, but Ann and I chatted in the morning and that helped me get rid of some of the nerves. I like to help people and being a co-trainer means I can help workers as they start their new jobs. It helps other people we support by making sure their workers know how important it is to know that everyone is different and to listen to the people they are supporting."



Ryan, with Ann,
delivering his first
training course

The relationship between TAG and Key is unique, with each organisation playing an important role in supporting and strengthening the work of the other. We are both at the very heart of each other's work, with TAG continuing to advise us on developing our policies, strategic direction, and priorities.

James, Andrea, and Board Member, John Paterson at the Joint TAG and Board strategy session.



An enduring partnership which supports everything we do

Our commitment to working together has remained a constant throughout TAG's 30-year history. The relationship between TAG and Key is unique, with each organisation playing an important role in supporting and strengthening the work of the other. We are both at the very heart of each other's work, with TAG continuing to advise us on developing our policies, strategic direction, and priorities.

National TAG meets every year with our Board for the joint strategy meeting, and since 2006, TAG's current and former Chairs have also held positions on our Board, helping to ensure that the perspectives of people we support are at the centre of our governance and decision-making. We asked James Cox from Glasgow to share his experience of being on Key's Board. He told us:

"This is my second time being a Board member for Key. I was one of the first TAG representatives between 2006-2009. I was also the first person who gets support to join Community Lifestyles' Directors.

I think it's really important that Key's Board get the opportunity to hear from the people who receive support, it gives them a much clearer picture on how Key works and lets them know first-hand the impact of the decisions they make.

I enjoy being a Board member and I feel that Key's Board really listen to what I have to say. I get the chance to talk about what support means to me. It has given me a lot of confidence, and I also like finding out what's going on across all of Key's services".

What TAG has achieved over the past 30 years is extraordinary. It is simply not possible to overstate the impact its strong voice, leadership and guiding influence has had across all of Key.

This is not the end of the story, though, as we celebrate TAG's many successes, we are equally excited about what lies ahead. With the same determination, courage and commitment that has characterised its first 30 years, TAG will continue to challenge barriers, create opportunities and ensure that the voices of disabled people are heard.

We look forward to continuing this journey together and to seeing what the next 30 years will bring.



Stuart (Annan TAG) and Glenn (Key staff member) at the Joint TAG and Key Board strategy session

At a time when institutional care was still regarded as the norm, Jack, Angus and their fellow founders dared to imagine something better.

They saw that forming a housing association could offer an alternative; enabling disabled people to have homes of their own and greater control over their lives.

Jack and Angus played a huge part in Key's life and will be much missed



Remembering Jack and Angus

We were deeply saddened to lose two of our founding members this year. Jack Crombie and Angus Turner were among the original group of families and professionals who met in the late 1970s, determined to deliver a different future for disabled people. One that was about ordinary lives in people's own communities, surrounded by their friends and loved ones.

At a time when institutional care was still regarded as the norm, Jack, Angus and their fellow founders dared to imagine something better. They saw that forming a housing association could offer an alternative; enabling disabled people to have homes of their own and greater control over their lives. They spent the next several years building an organisation that would provide housing to disabled people and were immensely proud when, in 1983, the first people moved into houses built by Key.

Throughout this time, and right into their 90s, Jack and Angus remained a constant in Key's life. In their contributions to our Board and review groups, they always advocated for the people we support and offered compassionate, thoughtful leadership in all they did. They worked tirelessly to ensure that we never lost sight of why we're here – to enable people to live their best lives at the heart of their local communities. It's no surprise that they both were huge supporters of TAG's work too, and they will be well-known by many of its members across Scotland.

They may have been too modest to acknowledge it, but Jack and Angus were pioneers. Their vision was years ahead of its time, and the impact of their work continues to be felt today. They changed countless lives and created opportunities that many people now take for granted.

They cared deeply about the people we support. It was immensely important to them that we walk beside the people we support, no matter what life had in store for them. And indeed, we are privileged to still support some of the people whose lives were transformed by their original vision.

We will remember Jack and Angus with enormous gratitude and fondness. Yes, they were pioneers, but more than that they were kind, warm and caring men, who also brought much humour to the relationships they enjoyed with colleagues and people we support.

We are immeasurably grateful for their passion, dedication and tenacity to create a better future for disabled people which has enriched the lives of thousands of people. They will be deeply missed but they leave behind an extraordinary legacy that will continue to inspire and shape our work for generations to come.

As they said during our 40th anniversary celebrations:

"We were fighting for an alternative to institutional life and that's what's changed, that's not the option anymore."

Our Board

We are incredibly grateful to our board members who dedicate themselves to supporting and guiding the organisation. As a group they bring together a huge amount of talent and experience and always ensure we never lose focus on why we're here.

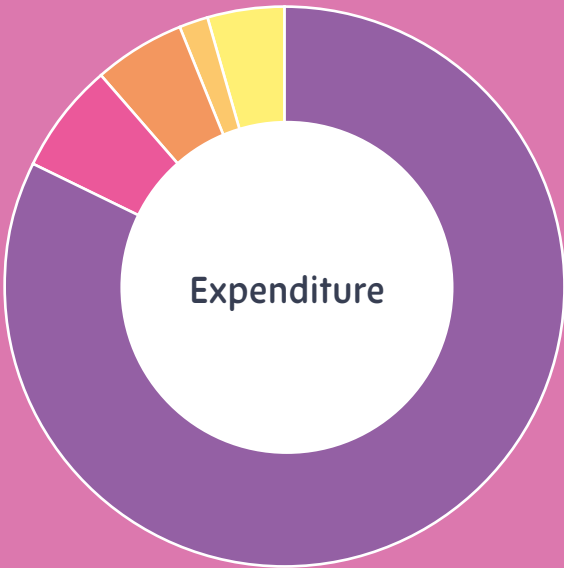
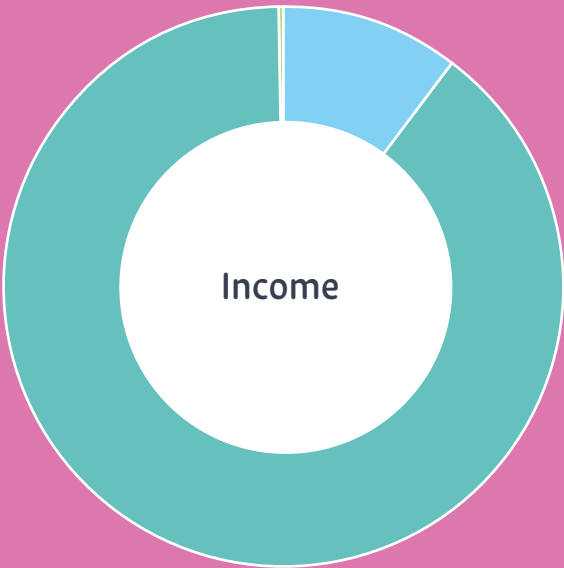
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|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Sheenagh Simpson
(Chairperson) | Jack Crombie |
| John Paterson | James Cox (TAG) |
| Ann McGuigan | Karen Jamieson |
| Brian Kemsley (TAG) | Liz Matheson |
| David Le Sage | Mary Parker |
| Daniel McCafferty | Paul Hush |
| David Meechan | Rebecca O'Donnell
(TAG) |
| Dee Fraser | Wendy Hall (TAG) |
| Gillian Anderson | |

Joint TAG and Key Board strategy session



Financials 2025/26

Due to governance changes we made last year, the income and expenditure figures reported below cover the Key Group.



Rental Income.....£8,158,043	8.31%	Support Service Salaries£80,340,829	83.5%
Support Services Funding..... £89,747,584	91.44%	Management Costs £5,770,588	6.0%
Other Income £242,074	0.25%	Other Support Costs £5,225,939	5.4%
		Repairs £2,318,837	2.4%
		Other Housing Costs £2,579,276	2.7%

Key is a society registered under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, company number 1938 R (S) and with the Scottish Housing Regulator, registration number 141.

Registered office: 70 Renton Street, Glasgow G4 0HT

Key and Key Housing are names used by Key Housing Association Limited, a charity registered in Scotland, charity number SC006652.

Over the past three decades, TAG has grown from a small group of people determined to have their voices heard into a respected organisation that promotes citizenship, champions rights and challenges discrimination.

Check out our website for more brilliant stories from across the areas we work.

You can also view our Annual Review on our website which offers a range of accessibility options.

www.key.org.uk



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