

Welcome to the 3rd Edition of your Newsletter



This newsletter will give you results of our recently completed survey and an update on progress that's being made with feedback from you. It includes:-

- ◆ Breaking news
- ◆ Prize draw—£50 of high street vouchers
- ◆ Your part in keeping residents safe
- ◆ General reminders about the service
- ◆ Feedback on the consultation
- ◆ Bin and Gone!
- ◆ Block inspection update
- ◆ Progress on major work
- ◆ Your contact details

PRIZE DRAW: £50 High Street Vouchers

See page 2 for details



We've listened to what you said and, as a result.....

ACHA's Board of Management have approved the removal of the administration charge on the cost of routine repairs. We are only able to do this by applying a small increase to the property management fee of £5.00 per year (£1.25 per quarter). This means you are saving on the admin charge (5%) and on the cost of VAT (20% on the admin) – the invoice would only include your share of the repair. Larger works of a higher value (£10,000 net per block) would still have an administration and VAT charge added, this is because of the more complex nature, additional correspondence and discussions, responsibility and management of the work.

We cannot make the changes until we get feedback from you and will be carrying out a consultation exercise in the near future. Please keep an eye on our website www.acha.co.uk for the consultation to give us your views. If you don't want to miss the consultation, please contact the Customer Service Centre who will keep a record of your details.



Prize Draw—£50 High Street Vouchers

It's true that nobody likes getting bills. It's also true that everybody likes to get a little something for free. So how can we make everybody happy?

Set up a direct debit!

Occasionally we need to remind customers to pay their invoices and property management fees. This puts a strain on resources and may affect the service we give other customers who pay regularly. In extreme cases we may need to follow up unpaid invoices and this can result in increased costs for legal action and Notices being served on properties. When everyone's lives are so busy it is sometimes easy to forget so setting up a direct debit is the best way to ensure you remember to pay and avoids the need for us to chase you for money.

As an incentive for our customers, anyone who has an existing direct debit and those who set one up before 31st August 2017 will be entered into a free draw for £50 of high street vouchers. The winner will be drawn at ACHA's AGM on 21st September 2017.

We don't notify customers of individual repairs which cost less than £100 per property.

0800 028 2755

to report repairs, be directed your local area office, set up your direct debit or for any other queries.



Your part in keeping all residents safe



Please remember that your factoring service covers common repairs and maintenance to the building. It is still your responsibility to keep your property tidy, this includes the landing, stairs, bin area and garden.

If you leave goods outside your property these must be disposed of as soon as possible as they could become a Fire and Health & Safety risk.

ACHA are not responsible for removing items that have been left inside closes or any parts of the shared property or ground, this is the owners responsibility. This means you are also responsible for your tenants if you are a private landlord.

If you require anything to be uplifted and disposed of please call Argyll & Bute Council on 01546 605522 as ask for a Special Uplift.



We would welcome any suggestions or ideas you have to improve the factoring service. Just call or email your local office with any comments.



Feedback on the consultation



75% of owners who responded to the Survey were very or fairly satisfied with services provided by ACHA – this has increased by a total of 29% over the last three surveys. Thank you, the feedback you give us helps us to improve the service.

We wanted to know whether communication had improved, this was important because the last two surveys indicated this to be something which concerned owners.

Repair Log Sheets:



52% of customers felt repair log sheets improved communication. 16% did not respond or did not have a common close, and 32% did not feel they improved communication.

Action: In some areas the log sheets seems to work well, in other areas they are removed or the layout of blocks makes it difficult to put these in suitable locations. We are looking into blocks where these work well and carrying out investigations as to what other communications methods could be used.

Contacting staff at your local office:



77% of customers found it easy to speak to the correct person and 87% found staff helpful. A small number, 10% felt it difficult to speak to the correct person and 7% found staff unhelpful.

Action: The levels of satisfaction show that people like dealing with staff locally and we aim to continue improving local knowledge and information by making sure staff have ongoing training to deal with your questions promptly and efficiently.



74% of customers thought their query was answered in a reasonable time. At the time of the Survey 7% had outstanding queries and 16% felt responses were too long.

Action: We're looking at individual comments to see what could be causing delays and identify if this is related to the type of queries, are they complex, technical or routine. This feedback will allow us to review how response times can be improved.

Some positive feedback shows what you think works well:-

- ◇ Good value for money
- ◇ Efficient: new roof very well handled.
- ◇ They attended to the repair straight away
- ◇ No issues, good detail on invoices
- ◇ Any concerns dealt with very quickly
- ◇ Very happy, everything is working



Bin and gone!

From time to time, customers contact us about difficulties with the collection of their rubbish.

The collection of refuse is the responsibility of Argyll & Bute Council, not ACHA, but the council do offer a system of 'assisted uplifts' for those who struggle with heavy wheelie bins.

The service costs £61.50 annually and covers a 10-minute slot for the bins to be collected and emptied.

Should this take longer, an additional cost may be incurred. As the uplifts are not part of the regular collection routes, it may take up to 10 days for your rubbish to be lifted.

If you wish to make use of this service, you can call Argyll & Bute Council on 01546 605514

0800 028 2755

Contact the Customer Service Centre to set up direct debit payments, make a payment, query balances or be directed to a member of staff.



Update on block inspections

As part of our ongoing commitment, visual inspections are being carried out to common parts of the blocks to assess the condition and give an indication of when anticipated work could be required. This should help you plan for any future work and major expenses relating to the common parts of your property.

Our original intention was to carry out inspections on an annual basis. At the time of inspections, it was identified that it may be more beneficial to owners to programme cyclical works and re-inspect the block on a 3-year cycle. Our staff will continue to inspect properties if work is identified, reported or to carry out routine inspections.

When costs are being obtained owners will be consulted or notified in terms of your Factoring Agreement or Deed of Conditions – based on the total cost of work.

Once you receive your letter this will include a proposed maintenance plan, please return this as it will enable us to programme in works to tie in with ongoing cyclical programmes of

Progress on major work

May 2016 saw the completion of the re-roofing, and installation of external wall insulation at two blocks in Ulva Road, Oban.



This major common work was only possible due to the participation of all the owners within the two blocks.



A Private Sector Housing Grant was secured from Argyll & Bute Council and a Home Energy Efficiency Programme for Scotland – Area Based Scheme (HEEPS-ABS) Grant was awarded for the energy efficiency measure of installing the external wall insulation.



Have your contact details changed?

We would be grateful if you could keep us up to date with your current contact details. This is to ensure that we hold up to date records for correspondence or if we need to contact you about the block.

To check or update information please contact the Customer Service Centre on:-

0800 028 2755

Or email the following information to your local office:-

Bute

housing.bute@acha.co.uk

Helensburgh & Lomond

housing.lomond@acha.co.uk

Mid Argyll

housing.midargyll@acha.co.uk

Cowal

housing.cowal@acha.co.uk

Islay

housing.islay@acha.co.uk

Oban, Lorn & Isles

housing.lorn@acha.co.uk

Kintyre

housing.kintyre@acha.co.uk

If you would like this newsletter in larger print, in an alternative language, on audio CD or in an electronic format or you would like someone to read it or explain any of it please contact any ACHA office who can arrange this for you.