



Gypsy/Travellers Newsletter

Bow Tent

Pictured are local Gypsy/Traveller Kathy McGuigan & grand-daughter Paige Hutchinson. Kathy & her family grew up in a Bow Tent, inside the Tent was a stove, where all the cooking was done, this also kept the tent warm. In the photo Kathy & Paige are preparing the vegetables for dinner and clearing up around the Tent



These Tents were often pitched along Loch Fyne.

The photo was taken at Auchindrain Trust, Furnace, where the tent is on display. It is used for small School events. A new Tent is built there every Summer.



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New Play Parks

After tenant consultation, the Association has installed a new play park in each Gypsy/Traveller site, Duncholgan & Bayview. Both sites were completed in April 2019 which included a bench, swing set, sea-saw and a multi-play unit with a slide.



Duncholgan
Before

Bayview
Before



Duncholgan After



Bayview After



ACHA's Christmas and New Year office opening hours

This year our offices will be closed :

- from 2pm on Tuesday 24 December and will re-open at 9am on Monday 30 December 2019.
- from 2pm on Tuesday 31 December and re-open at 9am on Friday 3 January 2020.

Seasons greetings and best wishes for a peaceful and prosperous New Year from ACHA's Board of Management and Staff



Safety Advice

Carbon monoxide

Heating and cooking appliances can cause carbon monoxide poisoning if they are poorly installed, incorrectly used, inadequately ventilated or if they are not regularly or properly maintained

Consider fitting a carbon monoxide detector and ensure that the caravan is well ventilated. Gas cylinders should be kept outside. Never store petrol, diesel or gas containers under your caravan. Empty cylinders should also be stored in a secured location such as the propane storage cages provide by Argyll Community Housing Association.

Fire Safety

Inside the caravan:

- If you smoke, use metal ashtrays – and never smoke in bed.
- Turn off all appliances before you leave the caravan or go to bed.

If there's a fire in your caravan:

- Get everyone out straight away.
- Call the fire and rescue service and give your location with a map reference if possible.



How Did We Do—Please tell us

ACHA have a clear commitment to continuous improvement at our Gypsy/Traveller site so we are pleased to report the satisfaction rates from this year's Gypsy/Traveller survey.

We carried out the survey in February this year and although circumstances meant we had fewer participants, our satisfaction rates were maintained or improved over last year. Overall satisfaction for managing our sites remained the same as 2018 – 100%. We are also happy to report 100% satisfaction rates with the value for money your pitches represent. The rates we charge per pitch are amongst the lowest in Scotland and with the improvements we have already carried out and further planned im-



provements in line with new government standards, our sites will represent even better value.

Other highlights include satisfaction with the newsletter, frequency of our visits to your sites and ways you can pay your rent. All of these were at 100%. 5 out of 6 tenants who responded were satisfied with the repairs service we provide and no adverse comments were received.

'Housing to 2040' Consultation

A new consultation has been launched and the government want to hear your views. The consultation addresses the Scottish Government's draft vision and principles for our homes and communities in 2040, and your suggestions are needed for proposals in order to deliver the housing to 2040 vision. The Scottish Government's ambition is that everyone in Scotland should live in high quality, energy efficient homes that are affordable and that meet their needs. Part of the exercise will specifically address the needs of Gypsy/ Travellers and the Scottish Government have asked ACHA to make you aware that you are invited to contribute.

More information can be found at <https://consult.gov.scot/housing-services-policy-unit/housing-to-2040>.

Welfare Rights Team

This has been another busy year for our Welfare Rights Team, working to ensure that you are able to access the benefits you are entitled to; supporting you with both the application process and to appeal if you feel you have been treated unfairly.

A significant challenge and cause of stress for our tenants over the last year has been the roll out of Universal Credit. It is replacing 'legacy benefits'; Housing Benefit, Income Based Job Seekers Allowance, Income Related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit. The roll-out of Universal Credit for new claims in Scotland commenced in September 2018. People still receiving one or more of the legacy benefits listed above will be switched to Universal Credit by the end of 2023.

As you may know; a number of benefits are being devolved to Scotland and will be managed by Social Security Scotland. So far this includes; Carer's Allowance Supplement, Funeral Payments, Young Carer Grants and Best Start Grants. Some of you may have met

Colette Bryson the Local Delivery Relationship Lead for Social Security Scotland when she visited Duncholgan with our Welfare Rights Officer Fiona Evamy. Local Advisors have been recruited by Social Security Scotland;



their focus will be specifically on the benefits that have been devolved to Scotland.

As with everyone they work with, our Welfare Rights Officers have helped people from the Gypsy/Traveller community apply for both in and out of work benefits.

We want to make sure that contacting our Welfare Rights Service is as easy as possible for you. Welfare Rights Officers Fiona Evamy and Corrina McLean will continue to attend each of our sites if you wish. Our Welfare Rights Team can be contacted; at your local ACHA office, by calling 0800 028 2755 or by email at Welfare-rights@acha.co.uk if you wish any advice or assistance.

Chief Executive's Blog

Firstly I'd like to extend an invite to you to attend our Annual Tenants and Members Conference which is being held in February in Inveraray. It's a great opportunity to meet other tenants from across Argyll and Bute and let ACHA know your thoughts on the service you receive and priorities for the future. Details of the Conference are in the newsletter and we can help you with transport to get there.

This year our Board of Management approved our Gypsy/Traveller Strategy and I would like to thank you all for the input you've given us on the document as it was being developed. Lastly, I'm pleased that this year, once again, our survey of satisfaction also told us that 100% of respondents were satisfied with ACHA's management of their site. We're proud to



be the only Registered Social Landlord that operates Gypsy/Traveller sites in Scotland and want to continue to improve. Very best wishes for the Festive Season.

"We're proud to be the only Registered Social Landlord that operates Gypsy/Traveller sites in Scotland."

ACHA Gypsy/Travellers Strategy

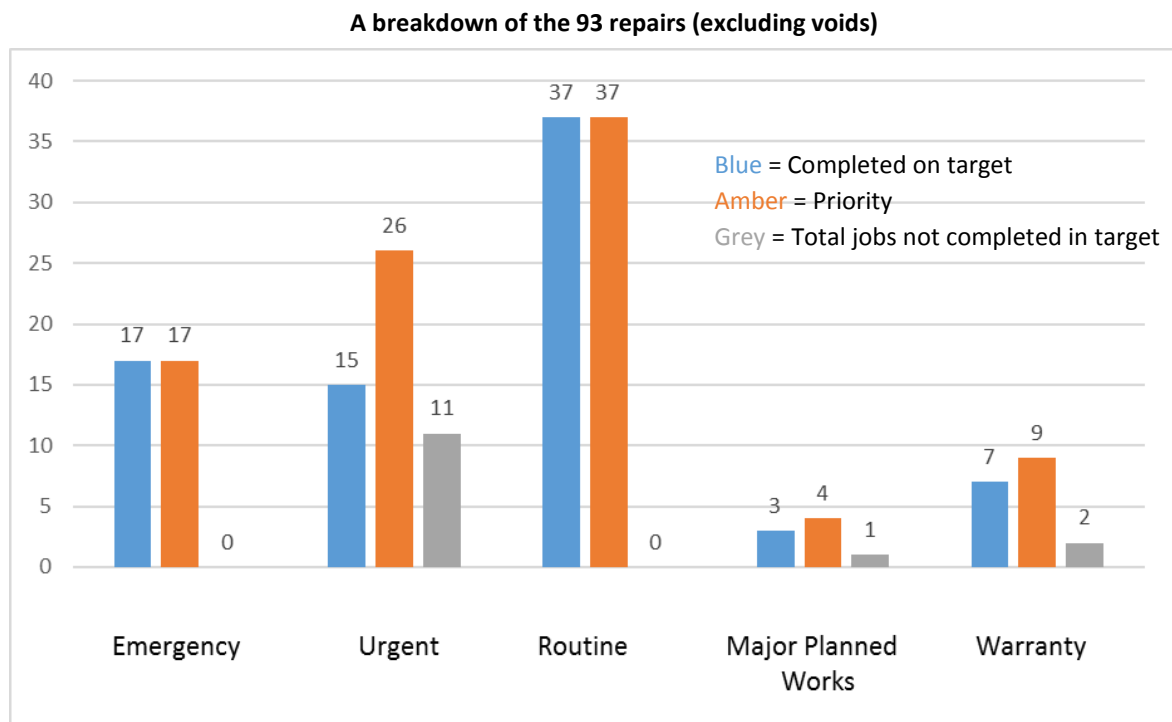
As your landlord, ACHA have a wide range of obligations to those of you using our Gypsy/Traveller sites. ACHA aims to improve, develop and manage quality and efficient services to Gypsy/Travellers. We also want to ensure that service users have multiple opportunities to participate in and influence the way services are delivered and that we meet internal and external performance standards.

Our Gypsy/Travellers Strategy sets out in detail our aims and objectives, including standards you can expect at our sites relating to energy efficiency, safety and security, repairs and maintenance, consultation and your core rights and responsibilities. The document has been produced in line with Scottish government guidelines and in consultation with other agencies who protect the rights of Gypsy Travellers in Scotland. We already meet all the required government standards and will continue working to exceed these in the future..

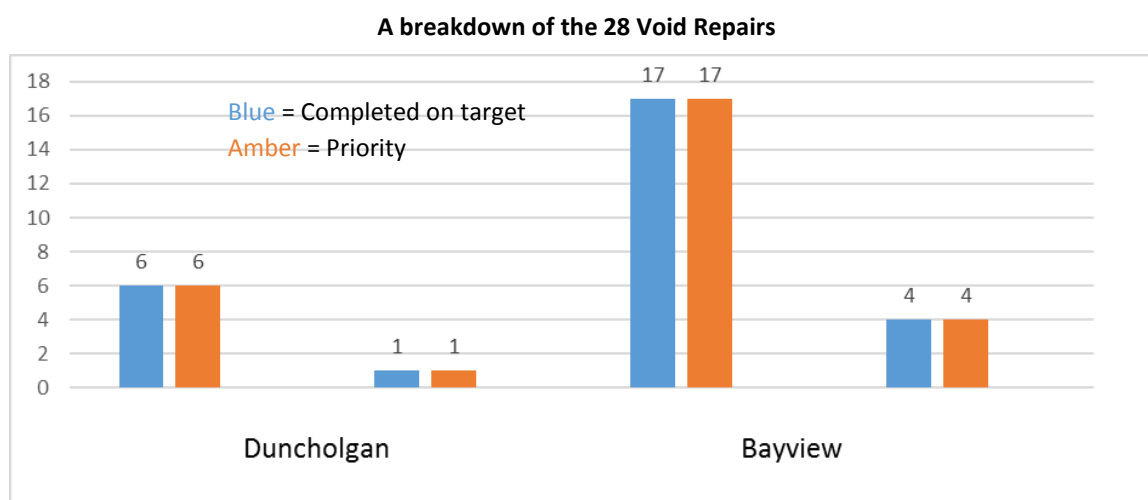
The document is available on our website at [www. <https://www.acha.co.uk/services-gypsy-traveller/>](https://www.acha.co.uk/services-gypsy-traveller/) or by requesting a copy at any of our local offices.

Repairs & Maintenance – How Did We Do?

The following graphs show the number of repairs carried out to our Gypsy/Traveller sites during 2018/2019. As you will see, repairs fall into 2 categories – those we carry out to occupied pitches and those to empty or void pitches. Further, the repairs fall into categories that show whether they were emergency, urgent, routine or planned maintenance works. There were also a small amount of repairs carried out under warranty, or guarantee.



We carried out a total of 121 repairs to the sites across all categories. Of these 107, or almost 90% were carried out within the time allowed.



If you have a repair that needs to be reported, call us on **0800 028 2755**.

Book Your Place for the 2020 ACHA Tenant & Member Conference!

Tenant & Member Conference
Saturday 8th
February  **ACHA** Inveraray
argyll community housing association

Visit www.acha.co.uk or contact your local
office for a booking form



We are holding ACHA's Tenant & Member Conference, on Saturday 8th February 2020 in Inveraray and would love to see you there!

Join our staff, together with governing body members and other tenants and members from across Argyll & Bute to discuss and share views and ideas on **how to improve performance, investing in your home and involving young people.** This is an opportunity for local people to have a real say and stake in the decisions that affect their homes and communities. Your compliments, suggestions and even complaints help ACHA improve and provide better services.

Spaces are limited, therefore if you would like to come along visit www.acha.co.uk to complete a booking form online or contact your local ACHA office.

Our Commitment

Argyll Community Housing Association is committed to providing equal opportunities across all services and to avoid discrimination. If you would like this report in larger print, an alternative language, on audio format or in paper or electronic format, or if you would like someone to read it or explain it to you please contact Corporate Services on 01546 605855, or email us at communications@acha.co.uk.

Argyll Community Housing Association

Our Mission Statement:

“To improve, develop and manage quality affordable homes across **Argyll and Bute** by working in partnership”

Argyll Community Housing Association

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Contact Us

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Cowal

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Helensburgh & Lomond

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Islay

11 Flora Street, Bowmore, PA43 7JX, telephone 01546 605890, e-mail: housing.islay@acha.co.uk

Kintyre

Old Quay Head, Campbeltown PA28 6ED, telephone 01546 605880, e-mail: housing.kintyre@acha.co.uk

Mid Argyll

Dalriada House, Lochgilphead PA31 8JL, telephone 01546 605800, e-mail: housing.midargyll@acha.co.uk

Oban, Lorn and Isles

Menzies House, Glenshellach Business Park, Oban PA34 4RY, telephone 01546 605930, e-mail: housing.lorn@acha.co.uk

Remember If you wish to report an emergency repair, please contact **0800 028 2755**.



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