



## MID ARGYLL & KINTYRE AREA COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011 at 11.00am

The White Hart Hotel, Campbeltown

### Attendees

Sandra MacKenzie, Tenant (SMack)

Colin Davidson, Independent (CD)

John Muir, Tenant (JM)

Valerie St Helene, Tenant (VSH)

### Staff in Attendance

Sarah Campbell, Local Manager – Housing Services (SC)

Jenna Shaw, Admin Officer (JS)

		Action
1.	<b>Apologies</b> Lochiel Cushnie, Linda Haig, Sandra Johnston, Yvonne Litster & Councillor Donnie MacMillan  SMack welcomed all members to the meeting.	
2.	<b>Minutes of Previous Meetings – 6<sup>th</sup> July 2011</b> The minutes from 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2011, were agreed as an accurate record. These were proposed by Colin Davidson and seconded by Valerie St Helene.	
3.	<b>Matters Arising</b> Page 7, 13.2 Brodie Crescent, Lochgilphead – JM enquired if photographs had been obtained of the pathway at the above address. SC advised this project had now been included in the related asset programme, therefore, it will no longer be paid through the estate management action plan. CD requested that the concerns raised at the last meeting were highlighted to the relevant committee that would progress this project. SC provided members with a brief summary of the type of work included in the related asset programme.  SMack advised the meeting dates for 2012 has been created and will be issued to members with the minutes of today's meeting. Any issues should be highlighted at November's meeting.	SC

4.	<p><b>Conflicts of Interest to Declare</b></p> <p>Members were asked to declare any personal or commercial interest in any business being conducted at the meeting. Members confirmed there were no conflicts of interest to declare.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <p>SMacK advised members of the correspondence received since the previous meeting:</p> <p><b>5.1 Mid Argyll Agricultural Society</b></p> <p>Letter from Iain Salmon, dated 27<sup>th</sup> July 2011.</p> <p>On behalf of the President and Committee, I would like to thank you for sponsoring the Mid Argyll Show.</p> <p><b>5.2 Kintyre Agricultural Society</b></p> <p>Letter from John Armour, Secretary, dated 18<sup>th</sup> August 2011</p> <p>I write on behalf of the above Society to thank ACHA for their kindness in helping with sponsorship of our Agricultural show.</p> <p>I hope you had an enjoyable and successful day, we were very lucky with the weather on show day with large crowds all day leading to record takings at the gate. Your sponsorship is greatly valued in helping make the show a success</p> <p>Thanks once again for your help in sponsoring our show and hope we can call on you again next year.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Chair's Report – Board of Management Meeting – 9<sup>th</sup> June 2011</b></p> <p>SMacK provided an update from the Board of Management meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2011.</p> <p>The Chief executive gave a presentation which covered the following points:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There will be a Housing Summit on 26th august which will be attended by Housing Minister, Keith Brown, Mike Russell MSP along with a number of other relevant dignitaries from the Council and ACHA. Key objective for the day is to agree on a strategy to tackle housing need in Argyll &amp; Bute.</li> <li>• Alastair has attended a number of Council Area Committees and has provided Councillors briefings on the work of ACHA.</li> <li>• The refurbished properties at Millknowe, Campbeltown were opened on 29<sup>th</sup> July. ACHA will be working in partnership with Blue Triangle who have been let 4 properties at Millknowe for the purpose of providing support to young people.</li> <li>• “All Pay” payment cards have been launched.</li> <li>• The Scottish Government have confirmed the Association's grant funding for the coming year.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scottish Federation of Housing Associations has expressed concern to the Government regarding regulation and cost to landlords in implementing the Social Housing Charter.</li> <li>• Scottish Government has launched its consultation of Aids and Adaptations</li> </ul> <p>Other issues from the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The area committee chairs attended a meeting with staff from Scottish Borders Housing Assoc in July to discuss how they organise committees etc. Committee members found the meeting, in general, quite interesting. It was noted that geographically Scottish Borders were very different from our area and what works there will necessarily work for us.</li> <li>• The audit of ACHA's final accounts for 2010/11 was presented to the Board. It was noted that The Strathclyde Pension Fund was actually in surplus for the period - although this does not necessarily mean that the previous deficit has been eroded. There were no significant concerns with the details of the accounts and Nick Pollard commented that he felt that the audit process had improved from previous years.</li> <li>• Linda Haig presented her monthly Investment update and advised that it is likely that contact for Oban, Lorn and Isles will have to be retendered. Linda also reported that there have been a number of discussions with the Council regarding their right to use Repair Orders against owners who are holding up major repairs works. It is hoped that this will assist ACHA in progressing some areas of some major work. Linda confirmed that it is always ACHA's preference to work with owners on such matters rather than enforce any action against them.</li> <li>• A report regarding progress on possible office accommodation, in a number of areas, was presented. Office accommodation options have been considered for six locations. The following was recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Campbeltown – explore development with Kintyre Cultural Forum – approved</li> <li>• Helensburgh – develop detailed business case for conversion of Stuckleckie Road as office – approved</li> <li>• Dunoon – remain in existing office – approved</li> <li>• Mid Argyll – negotiate for more space with Council – approved</li> <li>• Bute – acquire hall and convert to office – approved</li> </ul> All options are dependent on suitable funding being available. </li> <li>• Date of next meeting – 8<sup>th</sup> September 2011</li> </ul>	
7.	<p><b>Regional Manager's Report</b></p> <p><b>Investment Programme</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Kitchen &amp; Bathrooms (Connaught/Lovell)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid Argyll – Still awaiting the start of Year 5 of the</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

	<p>programme, but we believe this to be imminent. All staff are keen to get work started.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kintyre – As Above</li> <li>• <b>Windows &amp; Doors (Sidey)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid Argyll – Survey's for the Year 5 Programme is currently underway. MacLeod's are completing works from year 4.</li> <li>• Kintyre – As Above</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Heating &amp; Rewiring - British Gas (New Heating) Ltd</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid Argyll &amp; Kintyre – Like other investment work, this has been a slow start with no installs at present. However, we believe we will soon be in a position to start installs in the area.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Roof &amp; Roughcast</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid Argyll – Lochnell Street, Lochgilphead is progressing well. Work is due to be completed in the next few weeks.</li> <li>• Kintyre – No work at present</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Regeneration Programme</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Park Square Launch</b> On 8<sup>th</sup> July 2011, Michael Russell MSP for Argyll and Bute and Councillor Dick Walsh, the Leader of Argyll and Bute Council, launched a £5.2million regeneration project at Park Square in Campbeltown.</li> </ul> <p>Argyll and Bute Council Leader Dick Walsh said, "This is a wonderful development. These 32 new houses along with the 54 completed last year provides affordable housing to encourage young families to stay in the area as well as an incentive for people to move to Campbeltown. The council is investing heavily in Argyll and Bute through our CHORD project and I am delighted that we have been a part of this ACHA development which continues Campbeltown's regeneration."</p> <p>The contract has been awarded to MacLeod Construction Ltd for the 32 units and a site start will be underway shortly with the target completion date February 2013. Revised approval has now been obtained from Scottish Water for the site drainage works to include for the new Council road and all-weather pitch contracts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Millknowe Terrace Open Day</b> On Friday 29<sup>th</sup> July, Mike MacKenzie, the Highlands and Islands List MSP in the Scottish Parliament, officially opened the fully refurbished tenements at Millknowe on the entrance to Campbeltown.</li> </ul> <p>The properties which were built in the early 1900s were the first affordable homes built in the town to relieve a housing shortage</p>	
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for artisan workers. By 2009, the buildings had reached the end of their current life and were badly in need of refurbishment. ACHA embarked on a full refurbishment which stripped the properties back to the walls and resulted in a total re-design and a change from 21 properties to 16 through amalgamations. The new properties are a mixture of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom flats and houses. The block is terraced and has 6 closes and 2 open archways. The new design includes solar panels to provide heating for hot water and enhanced insulation measures have been undertaken to the external walls and roof space, including the use of sheep's wool. 4 of the properties have been let to Blue Triangle to provide support for young, single homeless clients. One of the properties will be used as an office by Blue Triangle.

## **Housing Management & Maintenance**

### **Garden In Bloom Competition**

- **Mid Argyll** – Mrs Ann Graham, Jubilee Terrace, Lochgilphead was this year's winner of our garden competition. Mrs Graham received £50 of vouchers for a local garden centre. Runners up were as follows:
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> place – Mrs McIver, 6 Union Place, Lochgilphead who received £30 worth of vouchers and;
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> place was – Mr & Mrs McLeod, 8 Poltalloch Street, Lochgilphead who received £20 worth of vouchers
- **Kintyre** – Mrs MacPhail, 34D Albyn Avenue, Campbeltown was this year's winner of our garden competition in Kintyre. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> year she has won the competition so congratulations once again to her. Runners up were as follows:
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> place – Mrs Gray, 5 Front Row, Drumlemble who won £30 worth of vouchers and;
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> place – Ms Lay, 17 Dalintober, Campbeltown, who won £20 worth of vouchers.

Discussions regarding the Garden in Bloom competition for next year will be discussed at the November Area Committee meeting.

VSH asked if the competition was only for ACHA tenants which SC confirmed it was.

- **Allotment Design**

As discussed at the last meeting, the designs for the allotments at New Parliament Place were judged and the results were as follows:

- Nicole Sheilds & Lisa McKellar (Primary 2)
- Eilidh Anderson (Primary 7)
- Hannah McPhee (Primary 4)

The sign is currently on order and the pupils will be presented with their book vouchers shortly. It was commented on the fantastic

contribution from all pupils.

- **Press Releases**

Some examples of published press articles for Mid Argyll & Kintyre since the last meeting include:

- An article following the open day at Millknowe Terrace held on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2011. Mike MacKenzie said, "it is part of a new era for Campbeltown".
- An article following the open day at Park Square on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2011 to launch the £5.2 million regeneration project. Michael Russell MSP and Councillor Dick Walsh performed the ceremony.
- Following the introduction of the AllPay service, tenants are now able to pay their rent or insurance at any retail displaying the Paypoint symbol.
- Following an EMAP approval to award a trophy and prize money to the Ardrishaig Horticultural Society, Yvonne Litster was asked along to their prize giving last Friday (19<sup>th</sup> August) to present the ACHA trophy, awarded to the best exhibition in the open class.

- **Estate Management Policy** – Area Committees were asked for their views on the draft Estate Management Policy. The consultation period ended on 12<sup>th</sup> August and the group are currently reviewing all the comments received. Members were thanked for the valuable comments provided.
- **Anti Social Policy** – This policy is now due to be presented to the Policy Sub Committee for approval.
- **Gypsy Traveller Strategy** – Consultation with the travelling community is almost underway. Area staff will be consulting with the travelling community by visiting our 3 travelling person's sites to seek their views.
- **Relief Land, Inveraray** – a meeting is being organised at the end of this month with the owners at Relief Land, Inveraray. ACHA have 7 properties and 10 are owned.

Since the refurbishment was carried out, some ACHA tenants are experiencing dampness within their property. To carry out any works to the building will require consent from the owners. An independent report was commissioned to establish the scale of the works that will be required. The consultants will present the report at the meeting. It is hoped the meeting will be productive and owners will agree to participate in the works that are required.

CD enquired if we are aware of how the damp is entering the properties. SC advised this has been as a result of problems with the render and the roof.



8.	<p><b>Chairs Working Group meeting – Update</b></p> <p>SMack advised members a meeting was held on 18<sup>th</sup> July with the Chairs of the Area Committees and the Chair of the Board of Management to discuss the advantages/disadvantages and the future of Area Committees.</p> <p>Invited to the meeting was Catherine Beattie from Scottish Borders Housing Association (SBHA). Her organisation previously operated similarly to ACHA, in that they had 2 Area Committees and a Board of Management. They changed their structure and no longer have Area Committees. They now operate with a Board of Management and the following Committees: Health &amp; Safety Committee, Housing Committee, Audit &amp; Compliance Committee and Technical Committee. They also have a Committee called SBHA Plus which has been set up due to their Charitable Status. Previous Area Committee members are involved in one of the abovementioned committees.</p> <p>SMack commented that unfortunately, we did not gain much insight into the benefits of changing to this structure, however, we were given an interesting presentation on how SBHA deliver their services.</p> <p>A further meeting has been arranged for 15<sup>th</sup> November and a representative from Dumfries &amp; Galloway will be attending to give a presentation on why they operate their governance structure with Area Committees.</p> <p>CD enquired if ACHA felt the need to change the current governance structure. CD commented that the Area Committees were an excellent arrangement as it gives local people the opportunity to become involved and express their views.</p>	
9.	<p><b>Review of Key Performance Indicators</b></p> <p>The exception report up to the end of July 2011, detailing the performance for Housing &amp; Neighbourhood Services was circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>SC provided an overview of the performance for the Mid Argyll &amp; Kintyre areas during July:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Void times – Not Low Demand: target 31 days</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid Argyll – 13 days</li> <li>• Kintyre – 75 days. SC advised this was outwith target but as a result of one property being void for over a year due to major improvement works due to dampness. We have since been advised this void will be removed from the standard void times and will be re-categorised</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Emergency Repairs on Target</b></li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid Argyll – 95.7%</li> <li>• Kintyre – 100%</li> <li>• <b>Urgent Repairs on Target</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid Argyll – 100%</li> <li>• Kintyre – 93.3%</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Routine Repairs on Target</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid Argyll – 100%</li> <li>• Kintyre – 100%</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Repairs Satisfaction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid Argyll – 98.8%</li> <li>• Kintyre – 97.9%</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Rent Arrears Percentage: target 2.5%</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid Argyll – 2.32%</li> <li>• Kintyre – 1.73%</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Allocation to Homeless Applicants: target 50%</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid Argyll – 13%</li> <li>• Kintyre – 25%</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Allocation to Waiting List Applicants: target 25%</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid Argyll – 63%</li> <li>• Kintyre – 33%</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Allocation to Transfer List Applicants: target 25%</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid Argyll – 25%</li> <li>• Kintyre – 42%</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>VSH questioned if there was a high volume of homeless applicants in the Kintyre area. SC advised we are limited to homeless applicants within the Kintyre area, therefore, we struggle to achieve the 50% target. SC advised the only properties left empty for long periods of time are those classified as low demand.</p> <p>SMack requested clarification on 'Clarity' as reported on page 3, '3.4 Clarity went live on the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2011'. SC advised 'Clarity' is the name of the telephone system that is used by the Customer Service Centre and area teams.</p> <p>At the previous meeting, members were advised that some targets/objectives are not met on a monthly basis as the target is calculated as an annualised target. It was suggested the report is amended to reflect those that are categorised as annual target. JS enquired if the new format was sufficient to which all members agreed this satisfied their requirements.</p>	
<b>10.</b>	<b>Tenants Panel Minutes 14<sup>th</sup> June 2011 &amp; 19<sup>th</sup> July 2011</b> The minutes from the Tenants Panel meeting held on 14 <sup>th</sup> June & 19 <sup>th</sup> July 2011, were circulated prior to the meeting. No issues raised.	
<b>11.</b>	<b>Health &amp; Safety Committee Minutes – 18<sup>th</sup> May 2011</b> The minutes from the Health & Safety Committee meeting held on 18 <sup>th</sup> May 2011, were circulated prior to the meeting. JM asked if the steps and ramp at Dolphin Hall had been repaired. SC to clarify for the next	SC

	meeting.	
<b>12.</b>	<p><b>Estate Management Action Plans</b> SC presented the following Estate Management Action Plans for approval:</p> <p><b>12.1 Shore Street, Campbeltown</b> – to carry out repair work to balcony railings at 19a, 19b, 21 &amp; 23 Shore Street, Campbeltown.</p> <p>VSH enquired if the work had any implications for private owners. CD highlighted the report explains the 4 properties that are served by these balcony railings are all owned by ACHA.</p> <p>CD expressed disappointment that the railings were not galvanised as this would have prevented the problem. CD thought it would have been less costly to have replaced the balcony railings than to repair. SC advised the area team had already explored various options; however, this was the cheapest decision.</p> <p>Risk Implications: Minor if accurately billed.</p> <p>Decision: Agreed.</p> <p><b>12.2 Victoria Terrace, Ardrishaig</b> – to either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) replace the grassed area on the south side of Victoria Terrace with low maintenance gravel and weed preventative membrane.</li> <li>b) add to the ground maintenance contract.</li> </ul> <p>Risk Implications: No risks expected.</p> <p>VSH asked if staff had discussed the issue with the surrounding private owners. SC advised no owner occupier or private tenant has right to this ground within their title.</p> <p>Decision: all members agreed the grass should be included in the grounds maintenance contract.</p>	
<b>13.</b>	<p><b>Tenants Handbook Consultation</b> Members were asked to provide any comments or views to Yvonne Litster, Dalriada House, Lochgilphead, no later than 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2011.</p>	
<b>14.</b>	<p><b>FISH – Welfare Rights Project – Update</b> The end of year report for 2010/11 and bi-monthly report were circulated prior to the meeting. SC provided an update of the FISH Welfare Rights Project:</p> <p>As detailed in the end of year report, since becoming operational the project has generated £1.534 million in benefit and tax credit income (£1.3 million of this for ACHA tenants).</p> <p>JM asked if ACHA received the money gained during the project. SC</p>	

	<p>clarified that the welfare rights service can ensure maximum housing benefit, challenge unfavourable decisions which will contribute for tenants to meet their rent commitments. All members commented on the significant benefits of the project.</p> <p>As illustrated in the bi-monthly report dated 30<sup>th</sup> August 2011, the total number of ACHA tenants engaging with the service to 1,112 with an overall gain of just over £1.5 million. Including partner associations, these figures rise to just over 1,300 tenants and a financial gain of £1.87 million.</p>	
<b>15.</b>	<p><b>Garden In Bloom – 2011 Winners</b> SMack advised this was previously discussed under agenda item 7.</p> <p>Discussions regarding the Garden in Bloom competition for next year will be discussed at the November Area Committee meeting.</p>	
<b>16.</b>	<p><b>Outcome of Naming of Park Square Development</b> SMack advised members the Board of Management agreed that the Park Square Development in Campbeltown will be called 'New Park Square'. This will now be submitted to the Council's Planning department for final approval.</p>	
<b>17.</b>	<p><b>Low Demand Strategy – Consultation</b> Members were asked to provide any comments or views to Yvonne Litster, Dalriada House, Lochgilphead, no later than 16<sup>th</sup> September 2011.</p> <p>JM enquired if the refusal reasons are recorded and monitored. SC confirmed that the reasons for refusals are obtained and recorded and that we have the ability to analyse the results if required.</p>	
<b>18.</b>	<p><b>A.O.C.B</b> At a Mid Argyll Partnership meeting a discussion took place in regards to house fires. CD questioned what would happen if there are joint properties and a fire occurs in the ACHA property which as a result causes damage to the private owners' property. CD believes ACHA's view on this is that the private owner would have to claim this through their own insurance. CD felt this was unfair as this would increase their premiums. SMack agreed to raise this matter at the next Board of Management meeting.</p>	SMack
<b>19.</b>	<p><b>Date and Time of Next Meeting</b> The Mid Argyll &amp; Kintyre Area Committee will be held on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011 at 11.00am in the Mid Argyll area. Venue to be confirmed.</p>	