



OBAN, LORN & THE ISLES AREA COMMITTEE

**Friday 1st July 2011
10am
Menzies House, Oban**

Present

Mr George Farquhar **Chair** (GF)
Mr Alister MacIntyre **Vice Chair** (AMI)
Mrs Lorraine Anne Drysdale (LD)
Mr Irvine Waugh (IW)
Councillor Roddy McCuish (RMC)
Iona MacPhail, Regional Manager (IMP)
Collette Benham – Director Human Resources & Corporate Services (CB)
Amanda MacKenzie – Area Administration Officer (AMK)

Estate Management Presentation

Prior to the meeting proper Karen Heath (KH) provided a presentation on ACHA's Estate Management policy and procedure Review. KH provided a background as to why the policy and procedure was reviewed, the staff members who made up the review group and the aim of the group.

KH advised that the old procedure adopted a "one size fits all" inspection regime and no account was taken of insurance risk in our inspected areas, which caused concern for our insurers. Additionally, there was a lack of detailed guidance for staff in the old manual.

The procedure manual has been expanded with detailed guidance available. The close & garden procedures have been consolidated into one and the old estate quarterly scoring system has been discontinued and replaced with an annual estate inspection. This inspection will determine the future inspection regime as areas will be risk assessed and categorised. These categories will in turn, determine the 3 levels of inspection – a high risk area such as tenements will denote a monthly inspection, medium risk areas such as 4 in a block will denote a quarterly inspection and low risk such as rural areas & islands, will be inspected twice a year,. Should there be any deterioration found in an area at a routine inspection, the area will be re-assessed & if necessary, changes made to the frequency of inspection. KH further advised that the introduction of a risk based inspection regime addresses the concerns

of our insurers and that consultation will be carried out to include staff, Tenant's Panel Members, Area Committees and a web survey.

KH advised that the current monthly inspections of areas will continue until 2012.

LAD advised current monthly inspections ensure the area is good – KH advised if area deteriorated as a result it would change to high risk and resume monthly inspections.

RMC discussed high, medium and low risk and asked if there is a danger that low's move to medium etc. KH advised this would be reviewed and if necessary the risk rating would be moved and inspection rates increased and advised that flexibility remains, could be changed to quarterly, monthly or even weekly if that was required.

LAD advised previously rubbish dumped at Appin, but since monthly inspections started, area has improved dramatically.

RMC advised that within Soroba, the visits encourage the residents to keep the area good – conscious that if this is being published, the reasoning should be explained fully, not just that inspections are being cut. KH advised Soroba will continue to remain monthly inspections due to the tenement buildings.

RMC asked how this procedure marries in with the factoring service. KH advised the Factoring staff are continuing to map out title deeds and ownership, which is a huge project which is being worked on daily for each area within Argyll.

KH advised that although rural areas may only be inspected 6 monthly, staff can be in the area for numerous other issues, rent arrears, allocations. RMC advised that although we know that, the public may not be aware. IMP advised this is a very fair point and something that will be taken into consideration. IMP advised that with staff wearing uniforms, there is always a high presence. It was agreed that it should be publicised that residents are keeping areas to a high standard.

IW advised within schemes the most common issue is gardening waste dumped into the nearest bit of wasteground. RMC advised that people can get free compost bins from the Council, this would hopefully reduce people dumping garden waste in burns etc. IMP advised that we can try to make sure our tenants are informed. KH asked if there was a specific area IW was referring to – IW advised there is a burn running behind Millpark area which is used frequently for garden rubbish.

IMP thanked KH for the presentation.

1.	Apologies Ms Janet MacIntosh, Mrs Marri Malloy Members agreed that a letter should be sent to Mary MacLeod to see if she wishes to continue with the Area Committee.	Action AMK
2.	Minutes of Previous Meeting 9th May 2011 Were approved as an accurate record. Proposed AMI Seconded LAD Matters Arising – Supporting People cuts – refusal of rooftops for office space. RMC advised he believes this was the correct action with the current housing situation and asked if Rooftops have made any alternative arrangements. IMP advised they currently remain in their office. RMC advised he will go and see if he can help them – could look into option of sharing office accommodation with a similar organisation which could benefit both organisations particularly with the high rental charges within the town.	
3.	Notes of Interest in any Matters Arising by Area Committee Members No conflict of interest	
4.	Correspondence AMK advised there has been no correspondence.	
5.	Chairs Report Two Board meetings to report on: <u>Board update 12th may 2011.</u> Alastair Macgregor provided an update on the following:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scottish Parliamentary elections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SNP now have a majority government ○ Three MPS's from Argyll now in Parliament- Mike Russell, Mike Mackenzie (SNP) and Jamie McGrigor (conservative). ○ Jackie Baillie(Labour) also re elected for Dumbarton which covers Helensburgh & Lomond. Alastair has written to them all to request the opportunity to discuss housing issues. The SNP housing manifesto includes- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5,000 new Council homes over the next 5 yrs 	

- 6,000 new social rented houses per year
- Toughening of tenancy conditions on anti social behaviour
- Development of a national strategy for housing older people
- framework for renewable heating schemes for housing associations
- £30m levy on long term empty houses to assist council house construction
- Will continue to support Shelter's empty homes scheme
- No mention of further reform of Right to Buy despite this previously been hinted at.
- Introduction of a £50m warm homes fund for communities worst affected by fuel poverty.

Other issues

- Funding confirmation letters for Campbeltown and Dunoon new builds are still awaited.
- With respect to changes to aids and adaptations budgets, Alex Neil ,MSP , has indicated that he will look at this issue again.
- The Association's year end performance figures have now been completed
- Issue regarding British Gas has emerged and work ongoing to reach an acceptable resolution.
- The area chairs recently met with officers to discuss the future of Area Committees. A number of ideas were put forward to help make joining or being part of an area committee more attractive. It was also agreed that, in future, AC meetings could be quorate with 4 members attending rather than a majority of tenants attending. A further meeting is to take place to discuss the Scheme of Delegated Authority (SDA) to cross check if the AC are indeed working to the SDA and identify any further areas of development.
- Updates were provided on progress towards completion of the Scottish Housing Regulator improvement plan. 57 of 88 items for improvement are now complete.

Board update - 9th June 2011

The Chief executive provided a presentation which covered the following main points:-

- The front funding issues for the Campbeltown and Dunoon new builds have been resolved and work will commence on site shortly.
- The Scottish govt have changed their mind regarding Aids and adaptations funding (it was proposed that the first £1000 of costs would have to be paid by the Housing Assoc). A review group has been set up within Scottish Govt to look at this matter .however at the moment ACHA will still receive around £200,000 of funding for Aids and Adaptations.
- The Refurbishment of properties at Millknowe, Campbeltown is nearing completion and includes some supported accommodation for young people.
- Preparation for Charitable status and rule changes are ongoing.
- Site launch for 4 ACHA new build properties at lochgoilhead

	<p>scheduled for July.</p> <p>Other matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An amendment to the Scheme of Delegated Authority to allow Area Committees to meet a minimum of 4 times per year was approved. However at this time Area Committees will continue to meet 6 times- this change simply gives some flexibility in case meetings have to be cancelled – eg due to bad weather etc. • Linda Haig presented ACHA's Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Development Strategy which outlined the challenges ahead for ACHA and our tenants. In general ACHA will endeavour to improve energy efficiency in our tenants homes and ensure that new build properties are as energy efficient as possible. • The Scottish Govt has finally confirmed when grant will be available for the development of the sites at Ardenslate, Dunoon and Park Square, Campbeltown. This means that work can start on site around August. • The Board approved the recommendation to enter into discussions with the Kintyre Cultural Forum for the development of an Arts and Cultural Centre at our Park Square Development. • The Board approved letting 4 properties at Millknowe, Campbeltown to Blue triangle to provide support services for young people. • The Board agreed that we should not pursue the joint office accommodation proposal with Argyll & Bute Council in Helensburgh. Alternative options, including utilising the shops at Stuckleckie Road are still under consideration. • Michael Brown and Bill McIntyre, Board members, attended an SFHA conference recently and provided a briefing of the sessions they attended. 	
6.	<p>Tenants Panel Minutes</p> <p>Minutes noted, no comments</p>	
7.	<p>Health & Safety Minutes</p> <p>Minutes noted.</p> <p>IW commented that the minutes can be very nostalgic as he used to attend H&S meetings and the same subjects are discussed.</p>	
8.	<p>Rewiew & Request of EMAP Projects</p> <p>Report circulated detailing the projects approved by Committee members for 2010 /11.</p> <p>IMP advised that the Cowal & Bute Area Committee have requested for future papers that joint information for Emap projects for OLI & C&B are submitted. Members present agreed.</p>	IMP

9.	<p>Review of Key Performance Indicators</p> <p>Solid Fuel – AMI advised that two letters have been received by him to advise in the first instance that two visits will be carried out for Solid Fuel maintenance, and the second advised an appointment time for ‘annual maintenance’. IMP clarified that two visits are required. Committee Members agreed the wording of ‘annual visit’ is open to misinterpretation. IMP advised that she will arrange for the wording to be changed. IMP advised the background to the solid fuel programme, where the In House Team were successful in securing the works. RMC commented that he believes it is very good that the IHT are carrying out the works as tenants know the In House staff and there is the feeling of security for tenants when an ACHA staff member comes to carry out the works.</p> <p>GRFW placements – IMP provided a background to the Get Ready For Work placements and advised that Steven has been working with Oban staff through this placement and due to issues with cover, we were able to keep Steven on in employment for a further 3 months. IMP advised we also have Scott who is currently on the GRFW placement with the In House Team.</p> <p>Void Times – OLI excelled themselves with the void times of 4 days.</p> <p>Emergency, Urgent and Routine Repairs – All 100% for OLI for the month of May.</p> <p>Repairs Satisfaction – 96%</p> <p>Arrears – Unfortunately figures didn’t go into report but Iona advised there is no issues and the figures remain on target.</p>	IMP
	<p>EMAP Proposals</p> <p>Proposal to paint the planters at Dalmally playpark.</p> <p>Kerrera Terrace playpark proposal to clean the equipment, to keep up the maintenance.</p> <p>Travelling Person Site sign – propose to replace the sign with a sign for ‘Ledaig’.</p> <p>Dunmar Scooter Shed – IMP explained the background to the proposal. Costs are extensive for what is effectively a small client group. When initially proposed there were external funders which have now fallen through. IMP advised there are Health & Safety issues with the scooters travelling through the corridors and the charging of them. RMC advised although there is only 3 users currently in the complex, if more RMC asked</p>	

	<p>how they would be allocated in future? Only providing 3, opening the door to having to provide more next year and the possibility of having to provide for all complexes throughout ACHA. AMI advised we would be setting a president to have to provide them. RMC suggested contacting organisations in the city to see how they have targeted the health & safety issues. IMP suggested advising Occupational Therapists that they require to arrange for storage prior to a new tenant moving in if they are a scooter user. IMP advised the Fire Brigade attend the complex AGM's and it would be beneficial at that point to discuss with them and the tenants what alternatives there are.</p> <p>Area Committee Members unanimously voted not to proceed with Dunmar Court Scooter shed.</p> <p>Members unanimously approved the proposals for Dalmaly play park, Kerrera Terrace play park and the sign at Ledaig TP site to commence with works.</p>	
	<p>Gypsy Traveller Strategy</p> <p>Draft copy circulated previously with papers. IMP advised that the document will be recorded to be able to provide audio CD's to any traveler who requires it.</p> <p>Scottish Government Statistics – IMP advised there is a history of information compiled, on certain dates twice yearly for all travelling person sites and encampments throughout Scotland. IMP highlighted findings from the count in July 2009:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were 294 (43%) households living on Council/RSL, 161 (24%) on private sites and 229 (33%) on unauthorised encampments. Comparable figures for July 2008 were 313 on Council/RSL sites, 162 on private sites and 269 on unauthorised encampments. • Around 225 (64%) of households based on council/RSL sites had been tenants for over a year. 31% of all households had held their tenancies for 5 years or more. • Around 43% of the Gypsy/Traveller population living on Council/RSL sites is aged 19 or under, compared to only 23% in the wider Scottish population: conversely only 10% of Gypsies/Travellers are over 60, compared to around 22% of the general population. <p>IMP advised ACHA are the only housing association with a travelling persons site.</p> <p>AMI asked if ACHA have the same staff member carrying out the weekly visits. IMP advised that we have the same person visit each week which helps to build up a trusting relationship between the Association and the Travelers.</p> <p>Specific lease – don't have a Scottish secure tenancy – as a result they</p>	

	<p>don't have a right to buy or the right to qualifying repairs. IMP advised she strongly believes that travelers should be entitled to the qualifying repairs and receive the same service as general housing tenants as well as the same right to aids and adaptations. Members were in agreement.</p> <p>IMP advised that it is proposed that while carrying out the twice yearly count, ACHA will conduct an annual survey of tenants of Travelling Persons Sites on their thoughts on current services provided and aspirations for future service developments.</p> <p>Illegal encampments – IMP advised historically, police served notice to the travelers to move on. IMP advised ACHA don't have a responsibility for encampments as this is the Council's responsibility, but that ACHA have provided a leaflet giving information on the sites available, a supply of which will be provided to the Police and the Council.</p> <p>IMP advised that we currently have a low demand for Ledaig TP Site which currently has vacant pitches.</p> <p>Leases – IMP highlighted the sample Travelling Persons Lease and the main differences to that of a general housing lease. IMP pointed out that travelers have no right to sublet – IMP advised that is not an issue as we have vacant pitches available.</p> <p>Item 11 – no burning of vehicles, tyres or any other materials – IMP advised this is very relevant for TP Site lease.</p> <p>No right to assign the tenancy without prior written approval – IMP advised again this has no consequence as we have vacant pitches.</p> <p>14 – No caravan or vehicle shall be sold or transferred to a third party and thereafter remain on the Site - IMP advised previous issues with former tenants abandoning old caravans on site.</p> <p>17 – Only lease with a speed limit on it. IMP further advised there are speed bumps on the site.</p> <p>18 – Permission will be granted to vacate the pitch for a maximum of 8 weeks of any 12 months, rent for period being ½ share – IMP advised this was a good thing to allow travelling and to be able to return.</p>	
10.	<p>Local Report</p> <p>Ford Spence Court - 20th Anniversary of the building which IMP commented is still immaculate as it is so well kept by staff. To celebrate the residents and staff held a Ceilidh which Area Committee members were invited to. IMP advised it was a very successful night and there was a subsequent press article.</p> <p>Community Action Fund - Ford Spence Court Tenants group and the Islay and Jura Youth Wind Band were successful in their applications for funds from the Community Action Fund with both groups receiving £300.</p> <p>Dalmally play park – ACHA works in partnership with the school taking turns to provide plants for the Play Park which the children plant to</p>	

	<p>encourage them to take pride in their park. This year ISS kindly donated the plants.</p> <p>Storms May 2011 – IMP provided pictures of a property in Longsdale where a tree came down and collided with the property, thankfully not causing any damage. There are a number of projects with joint owners currently to remove dangerous trees.</p> <p>Sheltered Housing Open Day – Marrie Curie Coffee Mornings were held at Ford Spence Court and Dunmar Court in conjunction with an open day which provided an opportunity for the public to view the complexes. Office staff participated to help with serving tea and coffee and helping with viewings of flats. A Thank you email was received from Anne Ferguson, who advised that £438.46 was raised.</p> <p>Drugs – AMG wrote into the Oban Times to explain the Associations stance on drugs. The following day a number of drugs busts were carried out in the town. ACHA's doors have been very secure, a bit too secure for the Police to batter down. ACHA have been working with the police to make better arrangements.</p> <p>GF highlighted the article in yesterday's Oban Times, featuring RMC. RMC advised he does not see the logic in tenants who are evicted for drug dealing then receiving a new property though the Council's obligation regarding statutory homeless. RMC asked if ACHA are evicting is there a partnership with other housing associations and the Council taking the same stand and refusing to rehouse. RMC is going to pursue with the Council officials.</p> <p>Chimney sweeps – Email received from Norman Beaton to provide feedback on the service he received as a tenant. The feedback was very positive, from the quick responses he received from office staff and the chimney sweep men who were described as polite, cheerful, conscientious and technically competent.</p> <p>IMP advised that a new clerical assistant has been employed to assist with the administration for the solid fuel project. IMP advised of the background of the solid fuel staff including that we provide accommodation for them, IMP advised that we have been able to use guest rooms in the sheltered housing complexes if available.</p> <p>IMP advised she would like to thank all committee members on behalf of herself and AMK. IMP presented GF with a memento for serving as Chair over this past year and added that it is appreciated that members give up their own time not only for meetings but often traveling to openings and events.</p>	
11.	<p>AOCB</p> <p>GF commented that he would like to thank fellow committee members for their support.</p>	

	<p>Stanalane Play Park Sign – Islay staff approached Islay Primary School to see if they would participate in a competition to design the new sign for the Play Park, which has just recently been upgraded by ACHA. Area Committee Members faced the hard task of picking the winning design from 81 entries from all primary classes within the school. Committee Members agreed there was a very high standard with lots of lovely colourful designs. The winning entry is from Rowan Hayes, aged 8 from primary 3.</p> <p>Islay Visit – IMP suggested the Islay visit could coincide with the opening of the new Play Park Sign, and suggested that we don't hold a meeting in Islay which would mean the visit could be a day return. Members present agreed.</p>	
11.	<p>Date and Time of Next Meeting</p> <p>Monday 5th September, 3pm, Menzies House, vc Tiree</p>	