

Putting Tenants First

Winter 2011— Special Issue

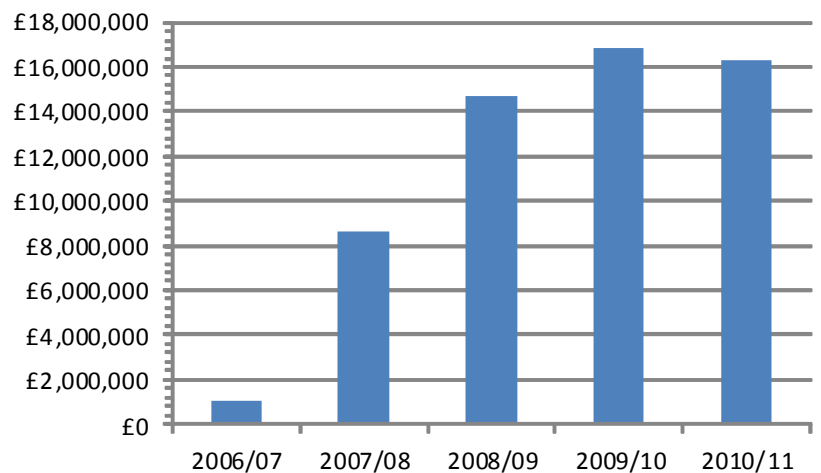
Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA) is interested in your views. Last year we asked you for your views on the rent increase for the 2011/12 year. We issued almost 5,100 documents to tenants. We received 59 responses which equates to 1.16% of all tenants. The full details of those responses were considered by the Board of Management when setting the rent for 2011/12 and published on our website.

We are now starting to consider what rent increase to apply for the next year, 2012/13, but with that in mind we again wanted to do two things; **inform and consult** with you. In terms of informing you we wanted to give you information so you can inform yourselves as to whether ACHA's rent charge represents value for money.

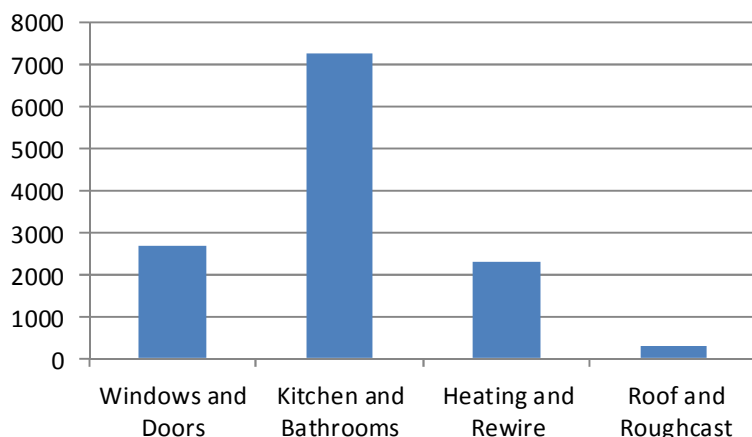
What we have spent to date on the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) Improvements?

ACHA has spent almost £57.6 million so far in putting new kitchens, windows, doors, bathrooms and heating systems in your homes in the last five years. We spend on average £1.6 million each year on what is called cyclical maintenance as we must check and service gas boilers for your safety, check chimneys and clean them, clean gutters and paint stair wells etc.

SHQS Improvements Spend



SHQS Elements



What have we spent that money on?

The Association has delivered 12,510 individual elements of work to meet the SHQS in your homes over the last five years. This is an increase against last year's 8,968 elements of 3,542 individual elements and means that 34% of our homes are now compliant with the SHQS.

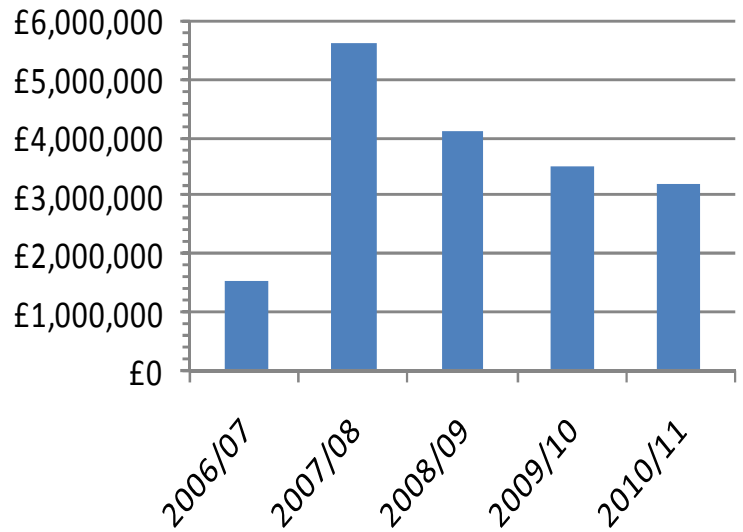
Next year we aim to increase that compliance figure again to at least 46% of our homes.

What we spend on general repairs?

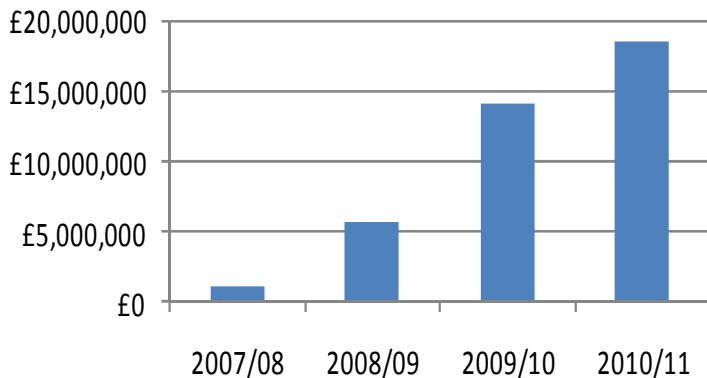
The Association has spent more than £17.8 million since transfer on general repairs to your homes that you have reported to us, such as replacing broken sinks, leaky taps, broken door handles, etc. Our budget for these type of repairs is approximately £3.1 million each year.

Each year you report to us more than 25,000 repairs which need to be carried out. We are spending for each house on average £617 each year on these types of repairs. This has reduced from last years figure of £675. The 2007/08 year was an unprecedented year owing to catch up repairs following transfer in 2006/07.

General Repair Costs



Value of Housing assets



What we spend on building new houses?

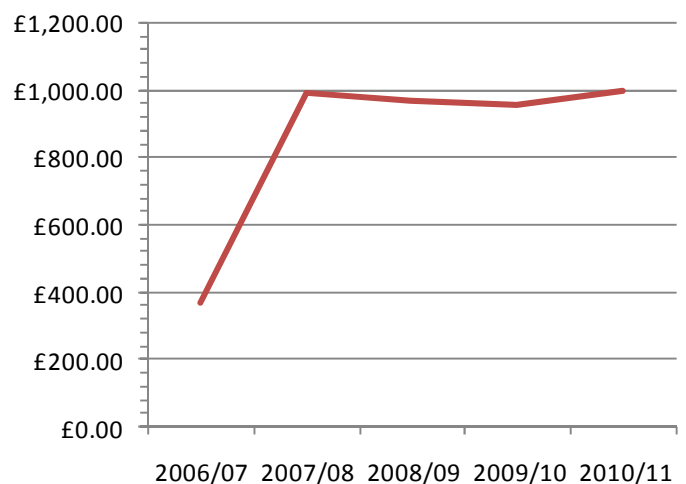
The Association has spent almost £18.5 million in developing new houses for our tenants in Argyll and Bute, particularly, Campbeltown, Garelochhead, Oban and Ardrishaig. Grant has been received of almost £10.5 million with the remainder financed by loans. This year was the first year in which the number of new homes outstripped the number of homes sold under the Right to Buy resulting in an increase in the number of social housing houses we own.

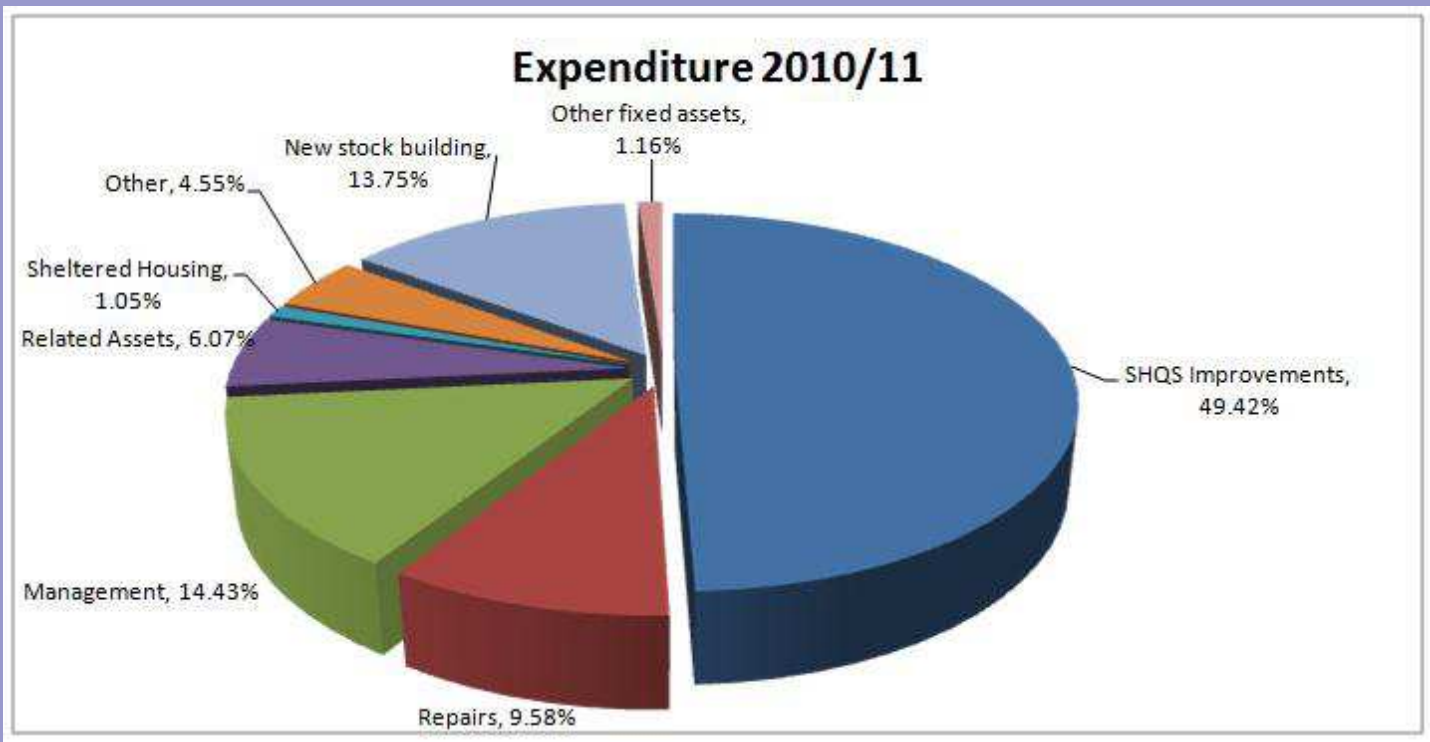
What we spend on running costs

We currently employ 168 full time equivalent staff to deliver these services for you. This has reduced since last year. Taking account of the salaries, pension costs and other overheads such as premises, IT, equipment, stationery, etc. it costs on average £5.1 million to deliver these services each year.

Our management costs per home are consistent year on year. The average management cost per staff member remains relatively static year on year.

Management Cost Per Home



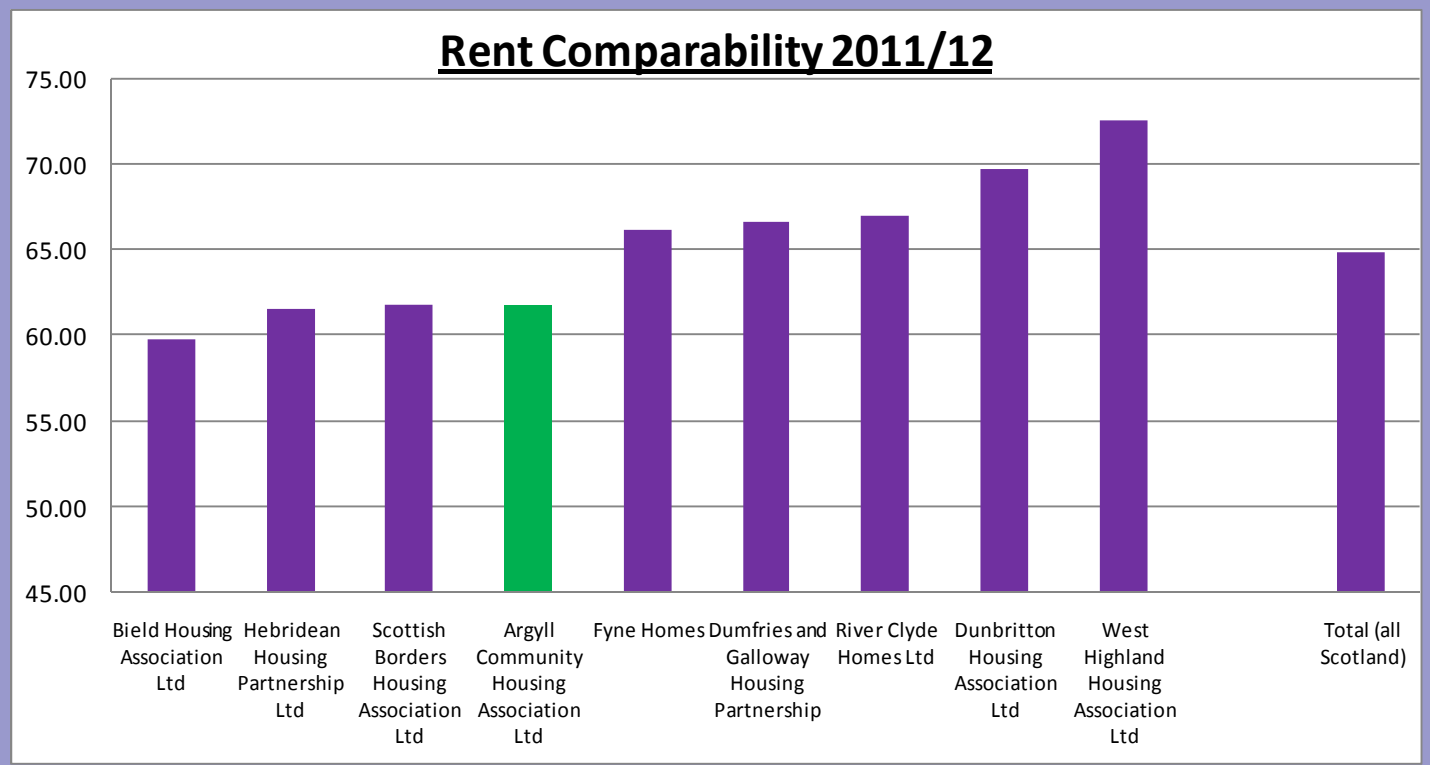


What do we spend your rent on?

Last year the Association spent more than 65% of its total expenditure on improving your homes through the SHQS improvements, responsive repairs or looking after the environment around them through related assets spend. In addition we developed new homes with almost 14% of our expenditure. Management costs which include all staff costs, the costs of offices, IT and administration accounted for 14% of expenditure.

The Association incurred interest costs of £1.06 million for the year which equates to 3.4% of expenditure.

Rent Comparability



Your Rent Guarantee

The five year rent guarantee given by ACHA to all its tenants, existing or new since transfer, that rents would not rise by more than the Retail Prices Index (RPI) plus 1% ends at the end of this financial year 2011/12. Each year so far we have kept that promise and in 2009/10 we increased rents by RPI only reflecting on the difficult economic circumstances at that time. The Association committed at transfer to aim to hold rent increases within that RPI+1% framework beyond the expiry of the rent guarantee.

Rent increase process

The rent increase that is applied by ACHA is based on the RPI as at December each year. This only becomes known in mid January of the following year and we must inform you of the planned rise by the end of February in that year. This leaves little or no time to consult with you on the rent levels and for your Board to approve the increase formally which is why we are consulting with you now on the principles.

Your 2012/13 rent increase

At this time the Association plans to increase its rents by meeting the aim of RPI+1%. Using current RPI levels as a guideline only it may mean an increase of around 6.6% (RPI 5.6% plus 1% where RPI is September 2011). This equates to approximately £4.08 a week extra on the average rent of £61.80 for 2011/12, taking the average rent for 2012/13 to £65.88 per week.

The same increase above, of 6.6%, would apply to Travelling People site rents, Garage rents, Garage site rents and Service Charges in our new build properties where these are applicable.

Sheltered Service charges

Sheltered service charges are **not** subject to the same increase as above as their charges are related directly to the actual costs incurred in providing the services at each sheltered housing complex. Any changes to these charges will be communicated to our tenants in sheltered complexes separately.

In terms of consulting with you we want to take account of your comments, and are asking you to indicate to us your views on the questions below.

Your views and comments do count!

You may do this by completing the tear off slip attached below and handing it in to our offices or our staff, or e-mail your views to, rentincrease@acha.co.uk or complete our online survey at www.acha.co.uk

.....
Write your comments here

.....**Hand to a member of staff**

If you would like this report in larger print, an alternative language, or a different format such as audio cassette, 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: enquiries@acha.co.uk

यदि आपको सूचना किसी अन्य भाषा या अन्य रूप में चाहिये तो कृपया हमसे कहे

Ma tha sibh ag iarraidh fiosrachadh ann an cànan no riochd eile, feuch gum faighnich sibh dhuinn.

如欲索取以另一语文印制或另一格式制作的资料，请与我们联系。

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھیے۔

如欲索取以另一语文印制或另一格式制作的资料，請與我們聯絡。

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, prosimy dać nam znać.



Our offices are open from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

If you wish to make a suggestion or complaint about ACHA please contact us using the details above, we will do our very best to solve any problems.

ACHA has a Customer Care Charter which explains our complaints procedure, it is available from any ACHA office or from our website www.acha.co.uk

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Industrial and Provident Society - registration number: 2661R (S)

Care Commission - registration number: CS2005093680

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