

Putting Tenants First

Winter 2010



Pictured from left to right on back row: Norman Beaton, chairman of ACHA, Alastair MacGregor, Chief Executive of ACHA, Councillor Duncan MacIntyre JP, Chair of the Councils Area Committee and Iain Gray MSP, Leader of the Scottish Labour party. Sarah MacTaggart cuts the ribbon (she's our tenant who's been longest in Croft Avenue) along with new tenants 10 month old Arran MacGregor Anderson and his mum Leah.

It was a happy day in Oban when 8 new ACHA homes were officially opened on 29th October.

Four houses had been demolished on the site at Croft Avenue due to poor ground conditions and the new £1million development provides 6 two bedroom flats and 2 four bedroom houses. Funding to provide these badly needed new homes has come from the Scottish Government, Argyll and Bute Council and ACHA. As with ACHA's other new homes, solar panels on the roof provide low cost hot water helping to make these homes even more affordable for tenants. These new homes also provided an economic benefit to the community by the continued employment of 34 employees of the builders, M&K MacLeod and also training for 3 apprentices. ACHA staff wish all the best for new tenants.



In this issue - Good Neighbour Award

In this edition of Tenants First there is coverage of the association's latest new build housing development in Oban. At the association's last three new build openings in Campbeltown, Ardrishaig and Oban, the association has invited senior politicians from different political parties along. Our purpose has been to show the value of, and the need for, affordable housing. In our communities up and down Argyll and Bute, politicians ultimately decide how much of the Scottish Budget gets spent on housing. Next year it is likely that there will be cuts of 19% in the programme to build new affordable homes in Scotland. With 3,800 families and single people on waiting lists in Argyll and Bute the need for a substantial investment programme for housing has never been more pressing. In the run up to the Scottish Elections on the 5th May this year, the association will be seeking opinions of all political candidates in Argyll and Bute to ascertain their views on housing need in our communities. It is the association's view that the case for housing should be put forward at every opportunity. We hope that all our tenants and partners can join us in the campaign.



Alastair MacGregor, Chief Executive

New Contracts Awarded for Replacement Heating Systems and Re-wiring

Tenders have been submitted and the contracts for the works have been awarded to the following contractors who will do both heating and re-wiring together:

Cowal and Bute	Carillion Property Maintenance
Helensburgh and Lomond	Carillion Property Maintenance
Oban, Lorn and Isles	British Gas
Mid Argyll and Kintyre	British Gas

The contractors along with ACHA staff will arrange surveys of homes early in the new year and will prioritise those tenants who previously had surveys carried out but where work was suspended. We apologise profusely that a further survey is required and ask for your patience and understanding whilst we carry this out. When we write to you about the surveys you will be given a contact name and phone number should you have any questions or problems.

Please note that contracts previously carried out by Connaught will now be carried out by the Lovell Partnership. All vans and identification will gradually change over to Lovell.



Fantastic Sum Raised for Macmillan Cancer Support

The Tenants of Cragroy Sheltered Housing Complex in Dunoon held a coffee morning to raise money for McMillan Cancer Support. Every year tenants raise money by making delicious home baking, bric a brac stalls, a raffle and Tombola. Donations were also made by ACHA & McNeas Building Contractors. This year a total of **£1,025** was raised, this is the largest amount raised to date. **Well done everyone!**

Pictured left to right: Margaret Campbell, Lydia Sands, Stewart McLean, Sandra Scott (ACHA), Nan Reid. Front: Margaret Ferguson & May Johnston



Did you know anyone who pays their rent by Direct Debit is entered into a prize draw each year and can win **£100 !!** The draw is carried out at our AGM in September. Ask for a form at your local ACHA office.



A New Service for ACHA Tenants

Tenants now have another way to pay their rent. By going onto the ACHA website at www.acha.co.uk you are now able to pay rent using the new on-line service.

All the other methods of paying rent still exist and don't forget that if you change to Direct Debit you can have the chance to win £100 in the annual prize draw.

If you are having any difficulty paying your rent, get in touch with us as soon as possible to get help and advice. See contact numbers on the back page.



Mrs Gilfellon from Furnace was the first tenant to pay rent using the new on-line service. Pictured above with Lindsay, Chris and Claire in the mid Argyll office. Delighted with her bouquet, Mrs Gilfellon said "I called the ACHA office to pay by phone and Claire mentioned that if I had a home computer I could now do this using the ACHA website ... it was so easy, thank you ACHA".



Watson Place, Ardbeg, Rothesay

"Thank you for the new play park at Watson Place, I've been playing in it every night".

These were the words of Abbie Tayler (age 9) from Ardbeg, Rothesay in a letter to us. We're glad you like it Abbie and hope that boys and girls all over Argyll and Bute are enjoying 15 newly upgraded play areas. ACHA has employed local contractors from Dunoon, Rothesay, Oban and Mull to do the work.



Newton Park, Innellan



Kerrera Terrace, Oban



Ella MacLean enjoying the new play area at Bentalla, Mull

Keeping Tenants Safe in the Cold Weather

This winter ACHA staff have again phoned and visited any tenant who may be vulnerable to the extremely cold weather. During the extended period of snow and extreme cold staff have been checking that people are warm and have some food. Pictured right is Miss McLaughlin from Lochgilphead who was very appreciative of some hot soup delivered by staff member Ailsa Barr in November.



ACHA teams keep paths gritted

Mr Handyside from Rhu wanted to come out to thank Robert Jardine who works with our Helensburgh and Lomond team for all his hard work. Robert did a grand job of sweeping and gritting the paths in November to let elderly tenants get out and about.



Did you know that you can apply for a '£1 for life' membership? Ask any member of staff for a form.

All Members of ACHA are entered into a prize draw to win a hamper. Pictured right is Mr Sutherland who won the Helensburgh/Lomond area hamper.

Also winning this year was Mr MacKay (Oban, Lorn & Isles), Mr Muir (Mid Argyll & Kintyre) and Mr Dickson (Bute & Cowal).



All Members are invited to the AGM— pictured above is the 2010 ACHA AGM In Inveraray

Cold Weather Precautions

At this time of year we want to remind you that the low temperatures bring an increased risk of damage to your home and personal belongings. Taking some basic precautions can help prevent pipes freezing and then bursting.

During the coldest spells of weather leave heating on especially during the night—if you have a thermostat set it for 10°C at night. If you are going away let us know and we can advise you about draining down your system. Leave a key with someone and let us know who to contact.

If you find frozen pipes ... Contact us immediately for advice.

If a burst happens ... Contact us immediately. Turn off the water at the stop cock straight away and turn the taps on to drain the system (find out now where your stop cock is). If possible, try to bind the damaged pipe and notify any neighbours who would be affected by the water. Switch off the electricity supply at the consumer unit to prevent the water coming into contact with any 'live' electrical appliances.

Phone the REPAIRS Freephone number 0800 028 2755 (this number should be called even for out-of-hours emergencies)



Good Neighbour Award

2011

Is your neighbour one in a million? Do they make a difference to your life or the lives of people in your community?

We're looking for nominations for a new award introduced by ACHA this year. The Association has introduced this to give neighbours a chance to say 'thank you' to someone they know who goes out of their way to help others, someone who shows kindness and consideration.

The winner will be selected by our Senior Management Team and the winner will receive a **£50 shopping voucher** and a commemorative certificate presented at the Associations AGM in September. We would also like the winner to be featured in a press release on the award and to highlight why they won it. The closing date for nominations is Friday 19th August 2011.

Please fill in this form if you would like to nominate your neighbour for an award and we will send you a nomination form. Further information and a copy of the nomination form are available on our website www.acha.co.uk

Name

Address

Tel number



In the last issue of *Tenants First* we included a **Rent Consultation paper**. This went out to all our 5,090 tenants explaining how rent is used and the background to next year's rent decision. There were 59 respondents to the consultation (25 used the tear off slip and 34 responding using the ACHA website based electronic survey). The full analysis of the responses from tenants, protecting the identity of the respondent, may be found on our website under the Press and Publications section at www.acha.co.uk.

The full analysis of the consultation will be presented to your Board of Management when considering the rent increase for 2011/12. We would like to thank those people who took the time to respond as we appreciate your views and comments.

How To Contact the ACHA Area Offices

Helensburgh & Lomond telephone 01436 658700
31 James Street, Helensburgh G84 8AS
housing.lomond@acha.co.uk

Cowal telephone 01369 708688
Dolphin Hall, Manse Avenue, Dunoon PA23 8DQ
housing.cowal@acha.co.uk

Bute telephone 01700 501314
Union Street, Rothesay PA20 0HD
housing.bute@acha.co.uk

Mid Argyll telephone 01546 604800
Dalriada House, Lochgilphead PA31 8ST
housing.midargyll@acha.co.uk

Kintyre telephone 01586 559055
Old Quay Head, Campbeltown PA28 6ED
housing.kintyre@acha.co.uk

Islay telephone 01496 301312
Jamieson Street, Bowmore PA43 7HP
housing.islay@acha.co.uk

Oban, Lorn and Isles telephone 01631 567962
Glenshellach Business Park, Oban PA34
housing.lorn@acha.co.uk

Mull telephone 01688 301025
Breadalbane Street, Tobermory, Mull PA75 6PX

ACHA's Community Action Fund

Rhu/Shandon Play Area Assoc.
Kintyre Environmental Group
Soroba Young Families Group
Campbeltown Tenants Assoc.
Oban War & Peace Museum
Kintyre Youth Cafe
Tiree Youth Club
Kintyre Environmental Group
Oban Thistle Junior Football Team
Argyll & Bute Women's' Aid
Campbeltown Trading Assoc.
Ardrishaig Community Trust
Kintyre Cultural Forum
Big Green Tarbert

If you are part of a group that could make use of a small grant, then contact ACHA on 01631 567912 and ask for our Community Action Fund application form - it's only one page. Good luck!

Winner of the annual Direct Debit £100 prize draw was Mrs McNab from Campbeltown
Well done!

www.acha.co.uk

new hits in Nov 862
recurring hits in Nov 4,085

Wearing it pink in October for Breast Cancer, ACHA staff in Dalriada House, Lochgilphead raised over £235. Well done to everyone who contributed.



If you would like this newsletter in larger print, in an alternative language, on audio cassette/CD or in an electronic format or you would like someone to read it or explain any of it please contact Gillian McInnes on 01546 604576 or gillian.mcinnnes@acha.co.uk
All our newsletters can be downloaded from our website www.acha.co.uk

**FREEPHONE REPAIRS No:
0800 028 2755**