

OUR PROMISES ON RENTS AND YOUR RIGHTS



ACHA has recently completed a second wave of tenant roadshows, taking in 29 venues across the length and breadth of Argyll and Bute. The roadshows, along with research findings, suggest high awareness levels of the plans to transfer Council housing to ACHA. In fact, at this stage, over 91% of tenants have said “yes” to being aware of the Council’s plans for transfer.

Following on from the roadshows and the first of these factsheets, distributed in November last year, we have pinpointed a number of areas that require clarification. This leaflet will focus on how we will guarantee to protect your rents and rights following transfer.

REASSURANCE ON RENTS

With all the improvements that ACHA are proposing, will we see higher rent increases after transfer?



ACHA will be able to deliver improvements to your homes and housing services with no significant rent increases. This is due to an investment package from the Scottish Executive that will include a grant of £40 million and also the removal of the existing £48million housing debt.

This means that ACHA can guarantee, for the first 5 years after transfer, that your rent will not increase by more than inflation plus 1%. This is a rent guarantee the Council cannot make.

ACHA also pledges that, following this initial period of 5 years, every effort will be made to continue that low level rent increase. Please remember that the Management Committee, on which tenants are in the majority, will decide on any future changes to rent levels.

What about my Housing & Council Tax Benefit?

These will continue to be administered and paid by Argyll and Bute Council.

How will I be able to pay my rent to ACHA?

In addition to 'over the counter' payments at housing offices, you will be able to pay your rent to ACHA in the following ways:

- At the Post Office
- By direct debit and standing order
- By telephone, using debit or credit cards
- By post (using cheques)

ACHA are also looking at other ways to make paying your rent easier.

What will ACHA do about tenants who don't pay their rent?

ACHA will have a firm but fair policy towards people who do not pay their rent.

If a tenant is in rent arrears, ACHA will contact them as soon as there is a problem and will work out a practical repayment plan. ACHA will employ Welfare Rights staff who will assist tenants to claim all benefits due to them and help with resolving debt issues.

Only as a last resort would ACHA raise court action to end a tenancy.

REASSURANCE ON YOUR RIGHTS

Will I have the right to remain in my current home should transfer take place?

Yes because transfer does not mean that you will have to move home.

Will I still be able to buy my current home after transfer?

Your right to buy is protected under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. This means that, if you currently have the right to buy your present home with the Council, then you will have the right to buy your current home from ACHA after transfer.

What about my other existing rights?

The transfer of your home to ACHA will not affect your rights as a tenant.

Under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, but subject to terms and conditions contained within the Act, you will keep the following rights:

- Right to sub-let
- Right to take in lodgers
- Right to joint tenancies
- Right of succession
- Right to consultation on rent and service charge increases
- Tenant Participation

- Right to access ACHA's policies
- Right to consultation over any of ACHA's proposals that may affect tenants

What kind of tenancy will I have?

The tenancy offered by ACHA will be a Scottish Secure Tenancy, which will be substantially in the same form as the tenancy agreement that tenants currently have with the Council.

What if I move to another house with ACHA after transfer?

You will have an amended Right to Buy with different terms as a result of Government changes.

For example, due to a change in the law there will be different discount levels, which may result in a lower discount, for all tenants who choose to move house and then submit an application to buy that house (this would also apply if the Council remained your landlord).

If you are unsure about your right to buy please contact us.

Please remember that all your rights are protected by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and the Scottish Executive, through its housing regulator Communities Scotland, will ensure that they are upheld.

Please contact us
for more information



Please contact us for more information - we
will be delighted to answer any questions
you have.

You can write to:

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