

Barrhead MATTERS

Barrhead Housing Association



Barrhead Housing Association Limited

SCOTTISH CHARITY NO. SC 036265

SPRING 2010

Barrhead Housing Association Receives Extra £27,000 from Big Lottery



Barrhead Housing Association's chairperson, Claire Boyd, is delighted to announce the award of just over £27,000 from the Big Lottery Fund, which will be used to support families

to cope with the impact of the recession. The benefits will be experienced by young families from Dunterlie and will tie in with our on-going commitment to see sustained and lasting improvements in the area. The

project will work on the successful arts based projects, BASIS, and individual participants will receive assistance in building confidence and developing new skills. These will help equip individuals to take forward improvements in their lives and hopefully be able to provide the skills required to look at training, volunteering or employment opportunities for the future. Claire Boyd said: "We are delighted to receive this funding to continue the good work experienced through our successful BASIS project". More information on the arts project is available from the website - www.barrheadarts.org

First Ever FLAIR Annual Review 2009

All residents will now have received their first ever report on FLAIR, the federation of local housing associations in Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire. The photograph shows the launch of FLAIR in Paisley when East Renfrewshire Council leader, Jim Fletcher, met Barrhead's Chairperson Claire Boyd and Director Shirley Robison to celebrate the Review.



Mr and Mrs Hepburn of Barrhead said of their new kitchen "MCN Kitchens did a fantastic job, clearing up behind them - we are delighted with the kitchen".

Our Biggest Ever Investment Programme

The Association is embarking on its biggest maintenance programme ever. We plan to spend over £1.1 million on maintenance this year despite having one of our lowest ever rent increases at 2%. The Association is celebrating the fact that we carried out a large investment programme last year which saw new windows being installed throughout Auchenback and at our sheltered complex. This high level of investment will continue. We will spend the money in three main areas: responsive repairs, cyclical maintenance and planned works. The figures below shows the main areas of expenditure.

Response Repairs £300,000

- Over 2500 individual repairs

Cyclical Works £160,000

- External painting to 150 houses
- Gas servicing to 750 houses
- Legionella, electrical and asbestos testing to 150 houses

Planned Works £675,000

- Stonework upgrades and window replacement to 28 houses at Gladstone Avenue
- Heating and kitchen replacement to 16 houses at Henry Street and George Street
- New digital communal TV aerials in 600 houses
- Electrical repairs and smoke detector replacements to 100 houses
- New front and back doors to 80 houses in Auchenback

We will be writing to all people affected by these works during the course of the year. If you have any queries please get in touch with the office.

IN THIS ISSUE DEVELOPMENT UPDATE • DIGITAL TV • DUNTERLIE NEWS • "JOHN MCINTYRE" GOOD NEIGHBOUR AWARD • YOUTH RE-CYCLING PROJECT

GOT SOMETHING TO SAY? • WANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEWS? • CONTACT US AT: Tel: 0141 881 0638, Web: www.barrheadha.org, Email enquiries@barrheadha.org

Development Update

New homes at St Mary's.



Barrhead's New Homes Completed

The Association, its contractors and consultants have worked hard over the last 18 months to complete the building of 89 new homes in Auchinback and St Mary's, both Barrhead. The Association received £5.4million during 2009/2010 from the Scottish Government towards the costs of these new homes. These homes were built to the highest standards with many being adapted to suit the needs of disabled residents. This brings our total rented housing stock to 868 houses and flats.

Committee and Staff Meet to Review Forward Plans and Celebrate Success

Each year, the staff and Committee get together to review the work undertaken over the year and plan for future years. This took place in January 2010. It is always a positive day and we start the day by acknowledging the hard work and achievements undertaken during the year. This year was no exception and we congratulated staff for successes including:

- New homes completed and houses re-let
- Rent arrears still falling
- Investors in People awarded, May 2009
- Healthy Working Lives Silver award 2009
- Qualifications for Staff and Committee
- East Renfrewshire Housing Register implemented
- New staff and new Committee members
- A wide range of Wider Role projects successfully delivered
- A projected surplus at year end
- Factoring service expanded
- Reduced staff absence and commitment to managing attendance
- New windows/kitchens
- Expanding our BHATV/website information
- Successful partnership working

We use this day to plan for the future and we are now finalising our business objectives, our departmental workplans and action plans for the next 3-5 years. More information will be posted on our website when completed at www.barrheadha.org

Barrhead HA's Governed for Success!

As part of our programme of continuous improvement we carried out an independent review on our governance arrangements. The review considered how the organisation's staff and Committee performed against regulatory guidance. The independent review was undertaken by housing consultant Linda Ewart. The purpose of the review was not only to check that the Association complies with current guidance and good practice, but that the organisation is fit to take forward future plans. The review looked at a number of areas including:

- the Association's purpose and outcomes for tenants
- how staff and Committee work together within clearly defined roles
- how we promote good governance
- taking clear decisions and managing risks
- developing the capability of the staff and Committee
- being accountable to our main stakeholders.

The main results were very positive and not only did the report highlight our compliance with the regulatory code but also that we operate a well governed organisation. The report also highlighted:

- our good approach
- a strong sense of working and planning at strategic level
- Committee deal with the big picture and not operational issues, which are the staff's responsibilities
- senior staff and Committee trust and work well together.

Essentially the review indicated that nothing needed "fixed", but there were a number of suggestions that are now being discussed and taken forward on how we can work better. These are mainly around the number and types of Committee meetings and how we can take a review of some governance documents forward. However, it is good to have this report completed and available to residents on our website – www.barrheadha.org.

Should anyone wish any further information please contact the Association's office.

Credit Card Charges

The Association continues to accept payments made by Credit Card. However, due to increasing bank charges on this method of payment, and the greater use of this method, the Association can no longer cover the charges for payments less than £500. If you wish to pay by credit card then you will also have to pay the bank charge for the transaction.



Before making a payment you will be asked to complete and sign a 'Credit Card Payment Charges' form confirming that you are aware of and agree to meeting the charge of the transaction.

The following charges apply:

- **Visa, MasterCard Credit and Credit Electron 2.1%**
- **Visa/MasterCard Business and Premium 2.6%**
- **American Express 2.85%**

Medical Adaptations

The Association carries out a wide range of adaptations to ensure our houses and flats are suitable for residents with varying needs and requirements. Last year we spent £32,656 on these works which were funded by the Scottish Government. All requests for medical adaptations should, in the first instance, be referred to the local occupational health services by our tenants. These are then referred to the Association to take forward. With funding being cut across the whole of Scotland, we hope to receive more funding to allow further adaptations to take place. Please contact the office if you need advice on these issues.

Digital TV

You will have heard from the newspapers and on TV that the way you receive television pictures is about to change. From the middle of 2011 the analogue TV signal received through your existing house aerial will be switched off by the television companies. After May 2011 you will require special equipment to receive any TV signal. (freeview box, sky box, cable box or freesat).

To ensure that all our residents can continue to receive TV pictures we are embarking on a programme to upgrade all our own flats and all our factored owners flats TV reception systems. We plan to install and/or upgrade the TV reception systems to receive all broadcast signals. This is called

an integrated reception system (IRS).

After tendering for these works, the Association has appointed contractors Campbell Kennedy to complete the works. The works will involve upgrading the reception equipment normally located in the loft and wiring two cables from the reception equipment to each house. This will allow all residents to take any service they want including freeview,

freesat or sky+.

The works are programmed to take place between middle of April and the end of July 2010.

If you are affected by these works you will receive a letter and further details in the post. If you have any queries please contact maintenance staff at the office.

Further information can be obtained from www.digitaluk.co.uk



A typical example of a Freeview set-top box.

Community Events

We have been pleased to attend and support local community events over the last few months, including International Women's Day and Neilston Up for Powerdown, where the winner of our Easter Egg competition was Siouxie Blackburn-Turner. Well done Siouxie!

We will continue to be out and about at events over the summer months, including the Auchenback Community Safety Day on 12th August 2010 and the Dunterlie Fun Day on 7th August 2010. Both of these are popular events with lots of fun and informative activities so please come along.

If you are interested in finding out more about the community groups who arrange and run these events, and how you could be part of the days, please contact our Community Learning Coordinator, Rhonda Leith on 0141 881 0638.

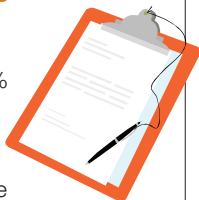
Sheltered Housing Care Commission Inspection and Resident Survey Results

The Association recently received the Care Commission Inspection report for our sheltered housing complex on the Main Street, in Barrhead. Coupled with this we have also carried out a survey of our complex residents to ask for their opinions of the services provided by the Association.

The Care Commission report is available to all residents and shows the various areas that the Association is doing well in, as well as the areas that we will further improve on. We have developed an action plan to address areas for improvement with regards to both the Care Commission Inspection report and the findings of the residents survey.

The resident's survey showed that for over 55% of those who responded:

- 100% were happy with the service levels for repairs, housing management and housing support.
- 100% are happy with the service they receive from the relief warden.
- 100% are happy with the help they get from repairs staff when reporting a repair.
- 100% rated the repairs service better than average.
- Over 80% rated the communication they receive from the Association higher than average.



After School Activity Programme

'CALLING all sporty volunteers!' A new after-school activities programme is being organised at Barrhead High School for upper year groups (teenagers) in the coming months. Organisers are looking for responsible, active volunteers to help out with various sporting activities.

The programme will run twice a week in blocks of five weeks, starting with softball on 19th April 2010 followed by tennis starting on 24th May 2010. Anyone interested in volunteering should contact **Stephen Koeplinger** on **07766 708363**.

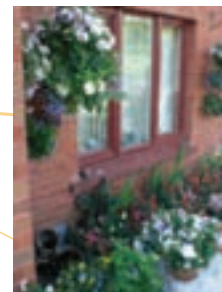


Garden Competition 2010

As the gardening season fast approaches it's time to get the gloves on and get ready for the Association's annual gardening competition. The Association awards prizes for the best gardens and back courts every year. This year the judging will take place during the first week of August, with prizes being awarded at our AGM in August 2010.

You do not have to formally enter as the judges will look at all gardens and back courts. If you would like to nominate

someone who has put in a lot of effort, for example by taking care of a back court on their own, please get in touch with Dougie McIntyre at the office.



Last year's winner.

Dunterlie News...

Calling all Tenants

Dunterlie Tenants Action Group will be holding their AGM in the Resource Centre, Stewart Street, on Thursday 20th May, 2010 at 1pm. If you live in Dunterlie, why not come along and find out more about the group.

We are committed to making sure that our tenants have real opportunities to be involved in decisions which affect them and one way you can take part in this is through involvement with your local Tenants and Residents Group. Contact 0141 577 4543 if you would like more information.

Integration Group

A group of Turkish, Polish and Scottish local people, with support from the Association, have been meeting in Dunterlie Resource Centre on Thursday evenings. The group is open to everyone in the area, newcomer or long term resident, and after Easter will be spending a few weeks looking at Health Issues in the Community. There is a crèche available for the children as well. If you would like to know more about the group then please contact Rhonda Leith at our office.

Staff News...

Staff Changes at Barrhead Housing Association



We would like to highlight a few changes at the Association over recent months. Our new Property Assistant, Lynne Sheridan started with us on 22nd February 2010 and we were delighted to welcome Lynne (left) to

the Association. Some local tenants may also have noticed that Siobhan Cannon is now off on maternity leave, having had a healthy baby in early January and we wish her well meantime. We welcomed back Christine Hay (below) to cover Siobhan's maternity leave. Our residents may remember Christine from 2008/9 when she covered maternity leave for Dionne Rennie and we welcome Christine back. We are now currently recruiting a new part-time housing assistant, following Christine Gilmour's decision to leave the Association and we hope to have a new appointment in place very soon.



Staff Celebrate Success

Congratulations to Michael Byrne, our Housing Manager who has passed his SVQ level 4 qualification in Health and Social Care through Langside College and also to Margaret Wilson, our Housing Support Officer at the sheltered housing complex for passing her SVQ level 2 qualification earlier in the year. This sets them both up for the changes that come into place for ensuring staff working within our sheltered housing complex are suitably qualified to deliver the services needed for our elderly tenants. A qualification all staff working with vulnerable people should have by 2010.

Health and Safety is an important part of our commitment to staff and residents, and we are pleased to report that Dougie McIntyre, our Property Manager, has completed his National General Certificate in Health and Safety. Well done to them all!

Tenants and Residents Annual Conference

The annual tenants and residents conference is to take place on Wednesday, 19th May 2010 from 2.30pm to 5pm at the Salvation Army Hall, Main Street, Barrhead. Everyone is invited to come along and meet with staff and Committee, and receive information on our work. Transport and a crèche can be arranged for the day but please let us know in advance if this is required.

The 'John McIntyre' Good Neighbour Award

In recognition of our previous chairperson, John McIntyre, this year's award has been won by **Mr & Mrs Hepburn**, Main Street, who were nominated by their neighbour Mrs Murphy. Mrs Murphy said "both Mr & Mrs Hepburn were neighbours she could completely rely on to help her with any job she needed doing, particularly while recovering from surgery last year". Mrs Murphy added "they always made themselves available and she could call on them at any time".



AWARD WINNER

Mr & Mrs Hepburn are seen here being presented with the trophy by the Association's Chairperson, Claire Boyd.

Big Lottery Youth Re-cycling Project



We have recently been involved in a locally based project with young people aged 16-24 from East

Renfrewshire and Art in Partnership looking at ways of recycling old furnishings. The group have been running for a few weeks now and have been looking at ways of re-using items of old furniture and re-cycling newspapers and magazines to create funky storage boxes, mirrors and a variety of other useful items.

If you are interested in coming along and trying out some ideas or if you have any unwanted items that could be recycled please call Susan O'Neill on 0141 577 4066.

Environmental Project

The Association has been working with our FLAIR partners to put forward a second phase of an employability project. This project aims to give training and work experience to the unemployed. The project would involve two environmental improvement projects, one at John Street/Barnes Street development (upgrading the communal area) and one in Dunterlie (improvements to the division fencing to reduce the use of gardens as shortcuts). The Association would pay for the materials needed while the Scottish Government would pay for the labour/training costs.

Consultation will take place soon.

Looking After Your Property and the Local Area – Useful Reminders

Wheelie Bins – please note – it is your responsibility to take your bin out to the street for collection and returning it to the bin area/store.

Dog Fouling – do not allow your dog to foul on any of our open ground/ communal areas, be a responsible pet owner and take your dog to the park. Don't forget to bag and bin it.

Bulk Up Lift – please phone the Council on 0141 577 3345 for any items requiring a special up lift. (that is anything other than your normal household refuse).

Garden Maintenance – regularly garden inspection take place between March and September, it is your responsibility to keep your garden tidy. *And remember, our Garden Competition is held in August!*

Re-cycling Furniture Project

Following on from Voluntary Action's successful application for funding for this project, we will be working to complete an application to the Scottish Government's wider role fund. We hope to support this project later in the year. More information will follow.



If you have any comments or complaints to make about any of our services, please contact the office:
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 60-70 Main Street, Barrhead G78 1SB
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 E: enquiries@barrheadha.org
 W: www.barrheadha.org

