

# Barrhead MATTERS

Barrhead Housing Association



Barrhead Housing Association  
Limited  
SCOTTISH CHARITY NO. SC 036265

1986-2016: Celebrating 30 years working in the community

AUTUMN 2017

## Another Successful year at the Sheltered Complex



The tenants at the Sheltered Housing Complex came together in August to mark some of this year's successes brought about through Barrhead Housing Association and a range of external partners.

The celebrations and lunch included the official opening of the communal garden area. The transformation of the back garden has created an open space for the tenants to access which is easy to maintain and an inviting place to come together and enjoy.

Local tenants not living in the project

were also invited along to the lunch and were able to enjoy the use of the facilities. This was part of a giving back project by City Gate Construction who donated funds for the complex to enable senior citizens to come together in the local community to prevent social isolation.

It was a very successful and productive day celebrating just some of this year's successes at the Sheltered Complex with preparations now ongoing for the coming official 30th anniversary of the Complex at the end of this year.

## New Repairs Operative Services



Levern Property Services (LPS) a wholly owned subsidiary of Barrhead Housing Association is delighted to announce that our newly recruited Repairs Operative,

**Richard Anderson** started with us on 28th August 2017.

Providing our own in-house Repairs Service team was the direct result of listening to our tenants to ensure we are delivering a personalised and first class service to our customers.

Ricky has already been in your area dealing with repairs such as:

- Replacing faulty locks
- Fixing leaking taps
- Re-securing loose handles
- Replacing faulty showers
- Sealing round baths

A number of tenants have already met Ricky and benefitted from the new service and the early feedback is very positive.

You will see our new vehicle with BHA and LPS livery about the community very shortly and this will increase our visibility across our local community. So watch this space and look out for the Ricky, the Man with the Van near you...

## New IT Post



We are delighted to announce that we have successfully recruited an IT Business and Support Officer, **Greta McPhail** who started working with us on Monday 7th August 2017.

Greta comes with direct experience of our computerised housing system and brings a significant amount of knowledge with her. Greta's skills will improve our services and ensure we remain at the forefront of technological advances, and we will also be looking to develop the services we provide over the coming couple of years.

For instance, we will be looking to develop an app to provide more options to allow you to pay your rent.

Is there anything you would like our IT team to develop or perhaps do differently? We would love to hear from you. We want our tenants to shape how we work, so your feedback helps us achieve this.



## East Renfrewshire Foodbank

**Barrhead Housing Association is a distributor for the foodbank based at St Andrew's Church in Barrhead.**

We stock a small supply of food parcels that can be accessed by any of our tenants if they are facing financial difficulty, unemployment, sanctions or delays in benefits. Our Welfare Rights Officer, **Jennifer McCann** can make referrals for food bank parcels and can arrange for parcels to be collected from our office.

All circumstances will be considered, Jennifer can also carry out an Income Maximisation check to ensure that tenants are receiving the benefits they are entitled to which may help alleviate some financial pressure. Jennifer can be contacted on **0141 881 0638** or by email at **jenniferm@barrheadha.org**.

**IN THIS ISSUE** GARDEN COMPETITION WINNERS • FOUR BIN SERVICE • JOHN MCINTYRE GOOD NEIGHBOUR AWARD • AGM 2017

GOT SOMETHING TO SAY? • CONTACT US AT: Tel: 0141 881 0638 • Web: [www.barrheadha.org](http://www.barrheadha.org) • Email [enquiries@barrheadha.org](mailto:enquiries@barrheadha.org) • or follow us on



# Our Garden Competition winners are...

The summer of 2017 was a fairly dismal one, however there were plenty of lovely gardens to be judged in this year's garden competition.

Overall winner and runner up prizes were given throughout our areas for gardens, backcourts and verandahs. The photos you see here are all our winners. Well done to all our winners and thank you to everyone who have clearly put a lot of effort and effort into their open spaces.



*Best Kept Garden – Barrhead Centre  
Winner: Doreen Williamson*



*Best Kept Front/Back Close – All Areas  
Winner: Lowndes Court*



*Best Kept Verandah – Barrhead Centre  
Winner: Andrew Inglis*



*Best Kept Garden – Auchinback  
Winner – Mrs Bowie*



*Best Kept Garden – Thornliebank  
Winner – Elizabeth Murray*



*Best Kept Garden – Newton Mearns  
Winner: John Pollock*



*Best Kept Garden – Dunterlie  
Winner – Lynn Fulton*



*Best Kept Development – Neilston  
Winner: McCulloch Way*



*Best Kept Garden – Neilston  
Winner – Phyllis McLeod*



*Best Kept Verandah – Thornliebank  
Winner: Andrzej Wroniszewski*



## Think globally act locally...recycle!

The Association has been dealing with an increased number of complaints regarding messy and overflowing bins areas and have spent a considerable amount of time and money cleaning up bin areas. We have found that this issue persists because some residents are not using the recycling bins provided. Staff found in some instances that recycling bins are empty despite household waste being piled up in general waste bins, resulting in overflowing bins and conditions such as the below.

We are urging all residents to use their recycling bins as much as possible to reduce this build-up of waste which not only attracts vermin but poses a significant fire hazard to you and your neighbours.

For more information on what to recycle you can contact the office or visit <http://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling>.

## Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)



The education maintenance allowance (EMA) is a weekly payment of £30 to help support a student in education beyond the school leaving age of 16.

### Who can apply

For academic year 2017-2018 you can apply for an EMA as long as you meet the following criteria:

- Your date of birth is between 1 March 1998 - 28 February 2002
- You attend a school within East Renfrewshire Council
- Your household income falls within the approved income thresholds set by the Scottish Government
- Your course involves at least 21 guided hours of learning per week
- You agree to and sign a valid learning agreement with your school
- How much will I get?

The table below illustrates the allowance contribution Household Income Criteria

Household Income	Amount
Income up to £24,421 for families with a single dependent child in the household	£30
Income up to £26,884 for families with more than one dependent child in the household	£30

# Complaints Update: April 2017 – June 2017

Barrhead Housing Association continues to welcome feedback from all our customers who receive services from us and have also used our complaints policy, which help us make improvements in the services we provide to you.

We received in total 19 complaints over the period 1st April 2017 to 30th June 2017

During this period there were 17 Stage 1 complaints and 2 Stage 2 complaints processed. We successfully completed our investigations into 94 % of stage 1 complaints within the 5 day target date and

100% of all stage 2 complaints within target completion dates.

### Resolved Complaints

- 53 % of stage 1 complaints were upheld.
- 100% of stage 2 complaints were upheld
- 77% of customers said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the outcome of the complaint,
- 23% of customers said they were dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint made

### Examples of the main theme complaints

Complaint Area	You said	We did
Kitchen installation contractor	The contractor didn't clean up properly and left some debris from the new kitchen installation in the property	Advised the contractor who returned the next day to clean the kitchen properly and remove and dispose of all debris.
Main Repair Contractor plumbing	That a leak from a neighbour's house was causing water ingress in to your tenancy, however the leak cannot be traced by the repairs contractor	Arranged for a specialist contractor to carry out a site visit and they located the leak from a neighbouring property and had a repair carried out to both properties.
Main Contractor Plasterer	That the contractor failed to keep to scheduled appointment to carry out plasterwork	Contacted the contractor, who apologised for the error and for the failed appointment as they did not assign the works to an employee to carry it out.

## HMRC have introduced an online facility that allows you to update and check your personal and financial details

### What you can do?

You can use your personal tax account to:

- check your Income Tax estimate and tax code
- fill in, send and view a personal tax return
- claim a tax refund
- check and manage your tax credits
- check your State Pension
- track tax forms that you've submitted online
- check or update your Marriage Allowance

- tell HMRC about a change of address
- check or update benefits you get from work, for example company car details and medical insurance

If you would like to set up your personal tax account and would like help to do this please contact **Jennifer**, our Welfare Rights Officer on **0141 881 0638** or email her at [jenniferm@barrheadha.org](mailto:jenniferm@barrheadha.org) to arrange a suitable appointment.

## Dumped items in back courts

Residents are reminded that if they are disposing old furniture, carpets, household items etc. then they must arrange an uplift for these items. An uplift can be arranged by calling **East Renfrewshire Council** on **0141 577 3001** or online at: [www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk](http://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk).



## The John McIntyre Good Neighbour Award

Barrhead Housing Association received two nominees for this award, Alec Smith and Joe Connelly with Joe receiving the award. Joe was nominated as a fantastic neighbour who helps with the bins, cutting grass and generally keeping a lookout for his neighbours in the event that they need anything, and always has time for a little chat. Well done Joe!



## 14 proposed new homes in Neilston halted by East Renfrewshire Council

Barrhead HA has been working on proposals to develop the site at Kirkstyle Lane (Pigs Sq) in Neilston since last October 2016 – a site that was identified for housing by the Council and approved for funding last year. In July 2017 we were told that this site was not supported for housing by the Council and the land would not be transferred to BHA. While we are still in discussion with ERC regarding this, the Association has spent a considerable amount of time and money (tenant's rental income) on the development of this site for affordable housing. We realise that there are real objections by local residents to the development, many of these objections relate to the traffic congestion around the area as a drop off point for the school and issues around an old sycamore tree. The Council now wish to conduct a feasibility study for a joint school campus. We will continue to support the need for more affordable housing to be built within East Renfrewshire to satisfy the demand for housing from our waiting list. The Association will not be in a position to draw down the £1m grant available for this development. This site was part of the Scottish Government's new housing programme to build 50,000 new homes.

## Do you want to be £140 warmer this winter?



All of the larger energy companies offer the Warm Home Discount. This is £140 discount that is credited to your electricity meter or electricity bill, depending how you pay for energy, if you meet the eligibility criteria. You will receive the discount during the winter months, before 31st March 2018.

The criteria are slightly different with each energy supplier but if any of the following applies to your household circumstances then you may qualify for the discount:

- Income Support
- Income Related Employment & Support Allowance
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
- Universal Credit
- Disability Living Allowance/Personal Independence Payment
- Incapacity benefit
- Attendance Allowance
- Child under 5 years of age

- Child receiving free school meals
- Child under 18 years in Full-Time Education
- Aged 64 years or older
- Child or Working Tax Credits
- Annual household income less than £16,190
- Household annual energy spend more than 10% of annual income

All of the energy companies operate a 'first come first served' basis and applications close once a quota is reached. So it is best to apply as soon as possible. You will need to apply again, even if you received the discount in previous years (unless you receive the Guarantee Element of Pension Credit).

For more information call Energy Advisor, **Amanda Kean** on **0141 881 0638** or email **amandak@barrheadha.org**. Alternatively you can pop into the office.

## Annual General Meeting 24th August 2017

The Association held its 31st AGM in The Foundry in Barrhead which was successfully attended by shareholding members. The audience heard from our Chairperson, our Chief Executive, our Director of Corporate Services and our external auditor. Chiene & Tait, external auditors confirmed that the audit had been conducted well and that the Association continued to hold a strong financial position with no significant issues to report. Presentations are now available in the download section of our website.

Following the AGM, the governing Board elected the following Office Bearers: Chairperson Claire Boyd, Vice Chair Rena McGuire BEM, and Secretary Brian Connelly MBE. Our co-optee position, normally filled by a local Councillor remains vacant until we receive a nomination from East Renfrewshire Council.

The AGM concluded with a presentation to all our garden competition winners and winner of the 'John McIntyre' good neighbour award.



If you have any comments or complaints to make about any of our services, please contact the office:  
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