

# Barrhead MATTERS

Barrhead Housing Association



Barrhead Housing Association  
Limited  
SCOTTISH CHARITY NO. SC 036265

1986-2016: Celebrating 30 years working in the community

SPRING 2017

## Your Housing Association Needs You!



### Dalmeny and Barrhead Centre Tenants and Residents Group

We are looking to see if anyone would be interested in getting involved in forming a tenants and residents group for Dalmeny and Barrhead Centre.

If you are interested or would like any further information, please contact **Douglas Wilson** our Customer and Quality Services Manager on **0141 881 0638**, who will take your contact details, and keep you informed of any further developments.



### Garden Competition 2017

No need to enter – we will be judging the annual competition during July 2017 with prizes awarded at our AGM later in the year.



Did you know that we have only one tenant member on our Governing Board? And only 30% of our Board membership is currently female! We have representation from a diverse range of people, but we really need to fill two spaces with female Board members.

Do you have a couple of hours to spare each month? We meet on the last Thursday night of the month at 6pm in our office in the 60-70 Main Street, Barrhead. We offer training and induction. Come along as an observer to see what you think? You would then be invited to become a member, which

costs £1, and then be elected to the Board at the next AGM. We also have sub-groups looking at our financial position, and we have a subsidiary Board looking to expand factoring and other services.

Further details of Board membership are available on our website/about/governing body section and more information in our download section. If you'd like to chat this through, please contact our Chief Executive, **Shirley Robison** at the office on **0141 881 0638** or email [enquiries@barrheadha.org](mailto:enquiries@barrheadha.org) by **29th April 2017**.

**IN THIS ISSUE** ALL OUR WINNERS IN 2016 • SOCIAL SECURITY CHANGES • CARERS ALLOWANCE • RENT INCREASE • RENT CONSULTATION OUTCOME

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





# Congratulations to all our Winners in 2016!

**FEB**

**Launch of the Apprenticeship Challenge with SFHA. We took on our third trainee who has now successfully gained a qualification in housing.**

We asked for your feedback on how we should celebrate and the most popular suggestions were included in a wide range of events and competitions which took place throughout the year. We would like to thank everyone who participated in our 30th anniversary celebrations throughout 2016 and would ask that you watch this space for competitions throughout 2017.

**MAR**

**Saw the new Build Opening of 15 new build properties at Rankin Court – opened by the then Housing Minister Margaret Burgess MSP.**

**MAR**

**The Craft Café Exhibition was launched in March 16 at the Paisley Arts Centre, with the exhibition moving to the Sheltered Housing Residents Complex in May.**

**MAY**

**Winner of the garden make-over competition worked with employability partners Impact Arts and our young people to design their front garden.**

**JUN**

**Local residents were entertained by Pulse FM and a live band on our Fun Day. Activities for children included sumo wrestlers, face painters, slides, bird handling and bouncy castle...to name but a few.**

**JUN**

**We ran a 30th Anniversary badge competition involving two local schools, St John's and St Luke's, where lots of entries were submitted and three winners from each school were chosen.**

**AUG**

**Five lucky Weeks Free Rent entrants were picked from a hat and received a week's free in the month which went towards things such as DIY projects and a weekend away.**

**AUG**

**We extended our annual garden competition with more prizes and trophies awarded across all our areas; the annual John McIntyre Good neighbour trophy was awarded at our AGM.**

**SEP**

**Staff at Barrhead organised coffee mornings in our offices and local residents also baked cakes and helped out at the Sheltered complex. Overall £393 was raised for MacMillan cancer.**

**OCT**

**We held a competition to win some really great prizes from local businesses. Three lucky winners were picked from over 60 entries.**

**DEC**

**We provided 67 tenants over the age of 75 with a £15 Boots gift voucher and we also successfully obtained Cash for Kids funding to provide £25 Silverburn vouchers to over 110 local children.**

**DEC**

**Employee of the Year nominations were received and two staff members with the most nominations were Awarded Certificates.**

**DEC**

**Congratulations to Lyndsay Millar of Barrhead who won the £50 M&S voucher receiving her prize from Claire Boyd the Association's Chairperson.**

**DEC**

**Congratulations to Lynn Murray of Barrhead who won the voucher for a meal at Amano Italiano restaurant in Barrhead receiving her prize from Lorraine Dallas, Director of Customer Services.**



## Important Social Security changes which may affect you from April 2017

### Child Tax Credits

From the 1st April 2017 anyone claiming Child Tax Credits who already have two or more children will not be able to make a claim for any additional children. HMRC have capped claims to a maximum of two children per household.

Existing claims will not change however from 1st April you will not be able to add any more children on to your claim. There are some circumstances that will be exempt from the rule, so please speak to us to get more information.

### Employment & Support Allowance

If you claim Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) from 1st April and are assessed as having some capability for work and placed into the Work Related Activity Group (WRAG) did you know that you will no longer receive any additional money to your Employment and Support Allowance?

You will now receive the same amount as those on Job Seekers Allowance. If you are placed into the Support Group then you will receive an additional payment to your Employment and Support Allowance. Existing claims are not affected.

## Minimum Wage and impact on Carers Allowance

The Minimum Wage will increase on the 1st April 2017.

If you are currently in receipt of Housing Benefit you will need to contact East Renfrewshire Council and let them know about this change of income, as this is not done automatically. If you do not notify the benefits section of any change in your family income then this can lead to an overpayment of Housing Benefit which you will be expected to pay back.

If you are in receipt of Carers Allowance then please be aware that any increase in your minimum wage could also mean that you no longer qualify for Carers Allowance. This is because the maximum that you can earn after deductions is £110 per week.

For example, if you are over 25 and work 16 hours at £7.50 you will earn £120 per week, this is above the amount that you can earn to qualify for Carer's Allowance.

### Minimum wage rates from 1st April 2017

25 and over	£7.50 per hour
21 – 24	£7.05 per hour
18 – 20	£5.60 per hour
Under 18	£4.05 per hour
Apprentice	£3.50 per hour

## Complaints Update: October 2016 – December 2016

We continue to welcome feedback from all our customers who receive services from us and our Complaints Policy continues to highlight where you can help make improvements in our service to you.

We received 17 complaints over the period 1st Oct 2016 to 31st December 2016, bringing our total to date to 50. During this period there were 47 Stage 1 complaints and 3 Stage 2 complaints processed.

There were 3 Stage 1 complaints open or actively being investigated on the 30th December 2016 and no Stage 2 complaints actively open on the 30th December 2016.

In the above period referred to-overall, we

successfully completed our investigations in to 78% of Stage 1 complaints within the 5 day target date. In total to date we have completed 100% of all Stage 2 complaints within the agreed target completion date.

### Resolved Complaints

- 76 % of the Stage 1 complaints were upheld.
- 78% of customers said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the outcome of the complaint.
- 22% of customers said they were dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint made.

### Examples of complaints made...

Complaint Area	You said	We did
Close Cleaning Contractor	The close cleaning wasn't being carried out correctly	We arranged for the contractor to return and complete the cleaning to a satisfactory standard. We now have quality control checks in place which has helped in preventing further complaints.
Property Repairs Contractor	The contractor failed to keep to arranged appointment	We contacted the contractor and we arranged for them to return at a mutually agreed time.
Gas Service and Repair Contractor	The contractor failed to attend appointment	We contacted the contractor and rearranged for a return appointment and insisted that they leave calling cards for customers, if they do not gain access to scheduled appointments.

## How well are we performing?

Here are some results for the first nine months of the year:

Charter Indicator	Actual Performance to 31/12/2016	Target	Trend
Current rent arrears – Indicator 31	2.03%	2.5%	Down
Former tenant arrears – Indicator 31	1.37%	1%	Up
Rent loss from void properties – Indicator 34	0.21%	0.25%	Up
Average days to re-let – Indicator 35	10.7 days	11 days	Up
Percentage of complaints received about anti-social behaviour, and resolved within locally agreed targets – Indicator 19	100%	100%	Down
Average time taken to complete emergency repairs – Indicator 15	2.21 hours	3 hours	Up
Average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs – Indicator 12	5.07 days	4.2 days	Up
Percentage of properties that require a gas safety record which has had a gas safety check by anniversary – Indicator 15	100%	100%	Level
Repairs right first time – Indicator 13	83%	90%	Down
Appointments kept – Indicator 14	90%	97%	Down

## Dog fouling – bag it and bin it

Dog fouling is both unsightly and can be a health and safety risk to you and your family.

It is an offence for any person in charge of a dog not to immediately remove and dispose of the dog fouling from any public space. Excrement should be picked up and disposed of in a responsible manner by either depositing it in the nearest dog waste bin, litterbin or in your domestic waste bin at home.

Community Wardens at East Renfrewshire Council issue fixed penalty notices and carry out regular patrols of areas which have been identified as having a dog fouling problems. Offenders may be liable to receive a Fixed Penalty of £80, rising to £100 if not paid within 28 days

Did you know that offenders can also be reported to the Procurator Fiscal and may be fined up to £500 if convicted. It is a criminal offence to fail/refuse to provide your name and address to an authorised officer. Failure to provide such details could result in a £500 fine on conviction.

If you see someone not removing dog fouling then please call East Renfrewshire's confidential Ring and Report helpline on: **0800 013 0076**.



## Bereavement Benefits

From 6th April 2017 Bereavement benefits will be changed and a new Bereavement Support Payment (BSP) will replace the three existing bereavement benefits, being: Bereavement Payment; Bereavement Allowance and Widowed Parents Allowance.

BSP can be claimed if someone's husband, wife or civil partner dies on or after 6th April 2017. Deaths prior to this date will fall under the current Bereavement Benefit process.

The eligibility rules are very complex and dependant on your age and the type of benefits you are on.

If you think that you may be affected by any of these social security changes due to be implemented on the 1st April then please contact **Jennifer McCann** our Welfare Rights Officer. She will be happy to talk through the changes and how they will affect you. She can be contacted on **0141 881 0638** or by email at **jenniferm@barrheadha.org** alternatively you can contact the Association and arrange a suitable appointment to discuss any benefit issue or get advice.

## Rent Increase

Your rent has increased by 2% from 1st April 2017. If you pay your rent by bank standing order, please get in touch with your bank to increase your payment to match the new rent charge. You will find details of your new charge on the rent increase letter which was sent to you in February 2017. Alternatively, you can contact the office and we can provide you details of this. **Tel: 0141 881 0638** or **email: enquiries@barrheadha.org**

If you pay by direct debit, the Association will alter your payments for you and if you receive housing benefit the Association will

notify the Council of your new rent charge.

The Association has notified the Department of Works and Pensions of the new rent charges for the tenants that we know are in receipt of Universal Credit. If, however, you have not notified us that you are in receipt of Universal Credit you should contact the Association **immediately**. This will allow us to notify the DWP on your behalf, as your rent will not automatically be increased.



## 2017/18 Rent Consultation Outcome

Following consultation, the Association have decided on a 2% rent increase for 2017/18.

There have been various approaches to consultation with you, which has included:

- A new consultation leaflet confirming our proposed increase of 2% was issued to all tenants week commencing 12th December 2016. This offered a number of ways you could respond with your views.
- Consultation with the Tenant Scrutiny Panel in January 2017.
- Consultation with Sheltered Tenants in February 2017.
- Staff undertook telephone surveys in January/February 2017.
- Views were obtained when tenants came into the office and when staff undertook home visits.
- Info was posted on our website, on Facebook and via Barrhead TV.



Three options were given on the Rent Review Consultation:

- **Option 1:** I think the proposed rent increase of 2% represents Value for Money.
- **Option 2:** I think Barrhead should offer a lower rent increase by reducing some services or cutting back investment on homes.
- **Option 3:** I think the increase should be higher so that Barrhead can offer more services or deliver better investment than planned.

And a summary of those responses are detailed below:

Question	Yes	Yes %	No	No %	Unsure	Unsure %
I think the proposed Rent Increase of 2% represents Value for Money	55	82%	12	18%	0	0
I think Barrhead should offer a lower rent increase by reducing some services or cutting back investment on homes	46	79%	21	21%	0	0
I think the increase should be higher so that Barrhead can offer more services or deliver better investment than planned	14	21%	50	74%	3	5%

The Association will be contacting all of those tenants who took the time to respond to us, and will also be looking to set up a focus group to explore options 2 & 3 further.

If you want to find out more or get involved in a focus groups please contact **Lorraine Dallas** on **0141 880 3833** or pop into the office for an informal chat and further information.

If you have any comments or complaints to make about any of our services, please contact the office:  
**Barrhead Housing Association Ltd**  
 58-70 Main Street, Barrhead G78 1SB  
 T: 0141 881 0638  
 E: enquiries@barrheadha.org  
 W: www.barrheadha.org

