

March 2010

Issue Number

38

# ChitChat

Current Housing Information To Clydebank Housing Association Tenants

## Our Award Winning Development!

We're delighted to announce that our Cart Street development has won the Glasgow Institute of Architects 2009 Design Award, beating off 24 other entries in that category.

The development was project managed for us by Clydebank Rebuilt. The architects were Elder & Cannon and the builder was CCG (Scotland) Ltd.



Photos © Keith Hunter Photography



See page 6 for an opportunity to enjoy a fantastic, fun, free day out!

Our past 5 years accounts now available in the download section:

[www.clydebank-ha.org.uk](http://www.clydebank-ha.org.uk)

## Rent Policy and Rent Increase 2010 - 2011

Following the consultation article in December's ChitChat, our voluntary Management Committee has agreed a 2% rent increase across all of our housing stock. The 2% increase covers all management and running costs of the Association and is one of the lowest rent increases in West Dunbartonshire. In setting the rent, we were required to take account of affordability as well as management and running costs.

The Management Committee also agreed a freeze on charges for services such as landscape maintenance and common electricity for the next year.

Items to be removed from multi storey landings by Friday 16 April - see page 5

### Dates for Your Diary:

Return of LSVT voting forms from transfer tenants	- Wednesday 31 March
Tenant Fun Day	- Wednesday 28 April
Garden competition	- mid-July

Please update your tenants handbook with the insert enclosed

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### We Welcome Diane Calderwood on Board!



Diane was the successful candidate from our recent Housing Assistant interviews. Diane, who joins us with 12 years experience gained in the housing department of North Ayrshire Council, looks forward to assisting tenants.

Diane said, "I hope to use my experience to help tenants with any tenancy matter they may have".

Diane looks after the day-to-day housing management needs of half of our 1,065 tenants.

### Work Experience



We were pleased to welcome Kayleigh Leitch from Clydebank High School, in February. Kayleigh, pictured left, carried out her work experience at our office every Thursday for 6 weeks. Kayleigh helped out in each department in order to gain employability skills.

### What our Voluntary Management Committee does

This 6-monthly feature is to let you know, in practical terms the role and responsibility of our voluntary Management Committee, which makes all the important decisions about the Association. Over the past months, they have discussed or agreed the following:

**Charitable donations policy**

**Rent and service charge policies**

**Annual budget 2010/2011**

**Factoring charge policy**

**Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT) contract update**

**Harassment policy**

**Customer care policy**

**Child protection policy**

In addition to the monthly Management Committee meetings, each member also attends one other meeting of either the Housing Management/Maintenance Sub Committee (monthly) or Finance, Staff and General Purposes Sub Committee (quarterly).

If you are interested in becoming a Management Committee member, please don't hesitate to call Sharon or Fiona at the office. We can provide you with training and support to assist you in this role.

# Maintenance Update

## Electrical Inspections & Smoke Alarm Upgrades



We recently tendered for these works and one of our local contractors, Eti Scotland, was successful in securing the contract.

The contract covers approximately 700 properties and has started at the multi-storey flats at Radnor Park.

If your home is due an inspection, you will be contacted by Eti Scotland to make an access arrangement which is suitable to you. We must stress that these inspections are compulsory as the Association has a legal obligation to ensure that the electrics in your home are safe and up to current standards. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

## Reporting a Repair by E-mail

Our Maintenance Section now has a dedicated e-mail address where you can notify any repairs or other issues directly to us. It is

[maintenance@clydebank-ha.org.uk](mailto:maintenance@clydebank-ha.org.uk)

(Advertising Feature)

## Are you or someone you know looking for a job?

Are you are unemployed, living in West Dunbartonshire and are having trouble getting a job, whatever the reason? Then STRIVE can help you!



Our free 3 week "essential skills" workshop will give you the confidence and skills needed to get a job. Here are some things you will learn about:

- Confidence Building • Interview Techniques • Team Building
- Application Forms • C.V's • Cover Letters • Job Search
- Goal Setting

Did you know that 70% of our clients who complete STRIVE move into employment!

## Interested?

Call a member of the STRIVE team on 0141 951 6450 to book your place on the next workshop. Or text your name to 07951 142 528 and we will call you back.



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## If you have a complaint...

... please contact us. We will try to resolve your complaint using our Complaints Procedure. Please ask us if you want a copy of this document. If we are not able to resolve your complaint to your satisfaction, you can contact the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman for advice. They deal with complaints about councils, housing associations, the National Health Service, the Scottish Government and its agencies and departments, colleges and universities and most Scottish public authorities. They provide a free and impartial service.

### Informal Complaints

Please also note that if you want your dissatisfaction noted but do not want to go through the formal complaints procedure, you can contact Sinéad Boyle at the office. She will take a note of your informal complaint, look into it and let you know the outcome. We still note the dissatisfaction in an informal complaints register. This helps us when updating our policies and procedures.

# ChitChat

## Housing Management Update

For the 350+ transfer tenants who recently received a voting paper, don't forget to return it by 31 March

### Common Housing Register (CHR) - Update!

4 For some time we have been working in close partnership with West Dunbartonshire Council and a number of other Housing Associations in the area to provide a standardised way of applying for and being allocated a house. This is known as a Common Housing Register (CHR). This is an exciting new development in the allocation of houses in the West Dunbartonshire area.

An update on the CHR progress will become a standard feature in ChitChat until its completion.

A CHR will mean housing applicants need only complete one application form to be considered for housing with any of the social renting landlords in West Dunbartonshire. It is also likely that all partners will operate a joint allocations policy, meaning greater transparency in how we allocate our houses. It is also planned that information and advice on different landlords will be available from all partners.

The result of this should be a streamlined, efficient and better service for all applicants seeking housing in the area. Organising such a large project takes time, however it is hoped that the service will be available to applicants within the next two years. In future editions of ChitChat we will provide updates on the progress of the CHR, as well as seeking your views or comments on its development.

In the meantime, if you require any further information on the CHR please contact our Senior Housing Officer, Joe Farrell.

### Tenant's Handbook Insert

Please find enclosed a replacement page for your tenants' handbook. Please remove the relevant page from the handbook you received at your sign up and replace it with this one.

### How to apply for a house or transfer

You may wish to seek a transfer from your current home or know someone who is interested in applying to us for housing. Our waiting list is open to all persons aged 16 and over. Application forms can be accessed:

- from our office reception
- by telephone
- by e-mail
- by downloading from our website

If you wish to receive your application by e-mail or download it from our website, you'll have to print off the form to return it to us. This is so the required declaration can be signed and dated. Please note we cannot accept applications returned by fax or where an original signature is not present.

### If you have a community alarm..

... from West Dunbartonshire Council you should contact Jim Slaven at the Council if any of your details change, such as your doctor or your keyholders. His number is 0141 951 6240.



## Radnor Park Tenants - Items on Landings

Further to an inspection of our multi storey flats in Radnor Park by Strathclyde Fire & Rescue, tenants are now requested to remove all items from their landings, such as ornaments, furniture, plants or similar items, with immediate effect.

These items are classed as a fire safety risk and their removal is necessary for us to comply with fire safety regulations and for tenants to comply with their tenancy agreement.



Any items not removed by Friday 16 April will be removed by us and the costs will be recharged to residents. We thank residents for their prompt co-operation in this matter.

## Housing Management Performance April 2009 to January 2010

The table below shows performance in some of our most important Housing Management functions. As can be seen, we continue to operate within our targets and are performing at a high level in most areas. This said, we are always trying to find ways to continually improve, as well as ensure that the services we offer provide

maximum benefit and value for money to our tenants and customers alike.

Further performance information will be published in newsletters throughout the year but do not hesitate to contact your Housing Assistant if you wish any information in the meantime.

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Indicator 31 January 2010	Performance   April 2009 to 31st March 2010	Year End Target
Maximum rent loss on vacant properties	0.35% to date	0.9% of annual rent income
Non-technical arrears (current tenants as % of rent receivable)	1.15%	1.2%
Number of calendar days to let a property	10.4 calendar days	20 calendar days
Processing of housing application forms	10.2 calendar days	18 calendar days
Carrying out new tenant visits	94% visited within timescale*	Within 4-8 weeks of tenant moving in
Investigating neighbour complaints	Category A 100% within timescale Category B 81% within timescale** Category C 93% within timescale** Overall 91% within timescale	Category A (Extreme) 1 working day Category B (Serious) 10 working days Category C (Dispute) 15 working days

\* Those outwith timescale include tenants being unable to accommodate the visit due to medical conditions, or where the tenants give up their tenancy within the period

\*\* Complaints outwith timescale were due to us waiting on further information, for example from tenants, the Police or other organisations

you think at .....[www.clydebank-ha.org.uk](http://www.clydebank-ha.org.uk)

## Tenant Participation and Wider Role

### Joint Tenant Participation Training

Radnor Park  
Multis Tenants  
and Residents  
Association

Early in February, members of the Radnor Park Multis Tenants and Residents Association (RPMTRA) were invited to our office to take part in

training on Tenant Participation, along with members of our Management Committee and staff. The training provided a valuable reminder of the rights of tenants to participate in decisions which affect them.

For more information on getting involved, contact Sinéad at the office.

### Tenant's Fun Day

As part of our 25th Anniversary celebrations, we'd like to invite tenants to join us for a day of fun!

Date:	Wednesday 28 April 2010
Time:	12.00pm - 4.00pm (with coach/taxi collection from 11.40am)
Venue:	Centre81, Whitecreek (which we own and manage)
Catering:	Tea/coffee on arrival then lunch and refreshments later
Cost to tenants:	No cost
Tenant spaces:	50

Return transport, refreshments and lunch will be provided.

We'll take part in some different styles of dancing such as ballroom and line dancing (or you can watch!), have a bite of lunch and a chat and a game of prize bingo.

If you're interested, simply complete and return the tenant comment slip (on the back page) by Friday 9 April 2010. If more than 50 tenants respond, slips will be put in a draw and the first 50 picked will be notified by Monday 12 April.

Unfortunately, you won't be able to attend if you've not completed and returned the above slip, as we need definite numbers in advance for catering, seating and health and safety purposes - so return your slip today!

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Only £5.00  
per day  
to hire\*

For more information on this radical, new eco-friendly car hire scheme or to book, please call 0141 941 1044, email [ecars@clydebankha.org.uk](mailto:ecars@clydebankha.org.uk) or visit our website at [www.clydebank-ha.org.uk](http://www.clydebank-ha.org.uk) and click on eCars.

Open to all CHA tenants, sharing owners, owner-occupiers and shareholders.

\*terms & conditions apply, limited period only



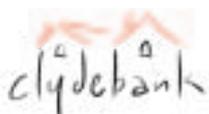
“eCar roadshows coming to a street near you soon”

### Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2010

As mentioned in our December ChitChat, our Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2010 is now underway.

By now, many of you will have been contacted by Management Information Scotland who were successful in winning the tender for this work. A total of 532 tenants will be surveyed (50% of our tenants). As usual, please check the ID of all callers. Please contact us, without hesitation, should you have any queries about the validity of the caller.

We will publish the results in a future newsletter. Your participation in this independent, anonymous survey is greatly appreciated and will help us to improve our service to you.



## Share Membership... Share in the action for just £1

If you'd like to become a share member of the Association, simply request a form from our office.

It only costs £1 for life and entitles you to attend our Annual General Meeting and social event (in June) and gives you you a chance to join our Management Committee (see page 2 for more info).

Don't miss out on this years' 25th AGM and social event - become a share member now!

- Our Tenant Participation Strategy is undergoing a minor review. Please contact
- Sinead by the end of April if you'd like to
- comment on any proposed changes.

## Centre81 Update

**Centre81** Centre81, our regeneration centre in Whitecrock, runs a variety of classes for young and old throughout the week. See below for a sample of what's on. Classes change monthly so for an up to date diary, log on to [www.clydebank-ha.org.uk](http://www.clydebank-ha.org.uk) and click on the Centre81 logo.

- Monday - Cheerleaders
- Tuesday - CAOS Youth Music, Tulloch Trust, Cheerleaders
- Wednesday - Tulloch Trust Club Night, Voices Group, CAOS Pottery Class, Riverside Football Club, Cheerleaders
- Thursday - Tulloch Trust, Stop Smoking Group, Cheerleaders, CAOS Break Dance, Guitar Lessons
- Friday - CAOS Boogie Babies, The Pulse

We will shortly be running introduction to IT/Computing classes both in the afternoon and evening. For more information please call Ali Mailey on 0141 533 7070 or pop in and see one of our friendly staff. We also have a great cafe serving delicious homemade food which is open from 11am until 9pm, Monday to Friday.

Centre81 facilities are available for organisations to hire and discounted rates are available to local community groups.

## Wee ChitChat

Well, in what was our last wee ChitChat competition until December 2010, Caitlin McDonald was picked as the lucky winner. Caitlin, of Linnvale, correctly answered our question and was picked from the draw as the winner of a family pass, worth £50, for a 45-minute sledging session at SNOLzone, Xscape. Congrats to Caitlin and thanks to everyone who entered the competition.

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## Do you need information in a different way?

There are many of our residents who need information, such as letters and newsletters, in a different format. All information sent to these residents is sent automatically in the format of their choice, for example in large print or on audio tape. There is no charge for this service.

Please do not hesitate to contact Sinéad at the office (details at the bottom of the page) if you would prefer information in Braille, large print, on audio tape or CD, on computer disk or DVD or in any other language.

If any tenant currently receiving information on audio tape would prefer it on CD, simply contact us.

General housing information packs are available in many languages from our reception, including Chinese, Gaelic, Kurdish and Polish and welcome information is available on our website in Chinese, Polish and Somali.

# ChitChat

## Tenant Comment Slip

Please complete and return to the office by the date(s) indicated for specific topics or whenever you wish for general topics.

I have a comment(s) about the (please circle):

- tenant fun day**      **website**      **newsletter**
- tenant conference**      **other**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

If you are responding about the tenant fun day, do you require return transport      Yes       No

Comments:.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

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.....

Feel free to attach a separate sheet if necessary.

Would you like a response?      Yes       No

## Did you know

**Our office staff saved 19 trees from destruction in 2009**

and received a certificate of environmental accomplishment for participating in a program where our shredding is recycled.



## Citizens Advice Bureau - Address and Number Update

The Citizens Advice Bureau has now moved to their new office at 34 Alexander Street. Their updated numbers are: Tel: 0141 435 7590 Fax: 0141 435 7591

## Clydebank Housing Association Emergency Number

Only to be used in an emergency

# 0845 6123 160



Also available on our website and on our office answering machine.

Cut Out and Keep



## Office Hours

Please note that the office will be closed on the following public holidays:

- Friday 2 and Monday 5 April 2010
- Monday 3, Friday 28 and Monday 31 May 2010

Our usual office opening hours are as follows:  
Monday to Thursday 9.00am to 5.00pm and Friday 9.00am to 4.00pm

The office closes between 1.00pm and 2.00pm each day for lunch.

The office also closes on the first Wednesday morning of each month for staff training.

**YOUR NEXT CHITCHAT WILL BE DELIVERED IN JUNE 2010**



## Please recycle this newsletter

To the best of our knowledge all of the information contained in this newsletter is correct at the time of going to print



**clydebank housing association**

celebrating 25 years 1985 - 2010  
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If you need this newsletter in any other format please contact us.