



ChitChat

LOW RENT INCREASE FOR OUR TENANTS

We will apply a 1.7% rent increase for 2016/17. The increase will enable us to continue to provide competitive and affordable rents, as well as allow for future investment in the maintenance of our housing stock, your homes.

A proposed increase of between 1.7% and 3% went out to tenants for consultation and a total of 96 responses were received. We were absolutely delighted with this response, particularly over the festive period, so thank you. Of those who responded 93% were satisfied with the information provided and 85% understood a rent increase between 1.7% and 3% was necessary.

Joe Farrell, Housing Manager, said, 'We are delighted to be able to limit our rent increase to 1.7%. We only ever raise our rents by the amount required to manage and maintain our tenants' homes and through prudent financial and performance management, we have ensured that our rents remain low in comparison to a lot of other Housing Associations and Councils. We were so pleased so many tenants took the time to respond to our consultation.'

He added, "It is particularly pleasing to see that the majority of our tenants (84%) who currently live in one or two

bedroom properties continue to be charged some of the lowest rents in the district for their size of home and limiting our rent increase to 1.7% for next year should enable us to maintain this position."

We look forward to being able to sustain or indeed exceed our high level of tenant satisfaction by continuing to provide excellent services to tenants whilst at the same time ensuring your houses are maintained to a high standard with planned major repairs spend of just over £1.3 million budgeted for 2016/17.

NEW! Regular Owners' Section - See Page 7



Articles marked with a star have been included as a direct result of your feedback



This issue in pictures...

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RIGHT TO BUY ENDING - PAGE 2

IS YOUR HOME SUITABLE? - PAGE 9

VOLUNTEER @ CENTRE81 - PAGE 11

www.clydebank-ha.org.uk

0141 941 1044



Did you know we design all of our publications in-house? This is to keep costs low. It also means it is easy for us to take on board your suggestions for improving our newsletter and publications, so please contact us if you have any comments.

The Right to Buy in Scotland is Ending

The right to buy in Scotland ends on 1 August 2016 following the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014. If you have the right to buy your home, you will be able to exercise your right to buy if the application is made before **1 August 2016**. The purchase does not need to be completed before this date. The Scottish Government website has information on the right to buy, including information on what ending right to buy means for tenants, at www.scotland.gov.uk or please contact Janet at the office (details on the back page).



Applying for Universal Credit?

Free computer and internet access at our office and Centre81

You can use the tablet computer beside our reception or visit the IT room at Centre81 to complete your universal credit form, browse through our website or pay your rent through allpay.net.

Free, Impartial Welfare Rights Service Reminder

We provide a free and impartial welfare rights service, in partnership with the Clydebank Independent Resource Centre (CIRC). Our residents can go to either of these handy locations for advice on debt, income maximisation, benefits and much more!



Our office every Tuesday and Thursday except the last Thursday of the month:

10am – 12pm (Tues)

10am – 1pm (Thur)



Centre81, 2-16 Braes Avenue, Whitecrook every last Thursday of the month, 10am – 1pm



Book an appointment by calling 941 1044 or 951 4040.



Staff News

After 32 years working as a Caretaker at the Radnor Park multi-storey flats, **Mitch Tyrrell** has decided that it's time to take things a bit easier and retire.

Mitch has been such a positive presence on our estate and will be missed by staff, committee and I am sure the many tenants he has served over the years. He leaves us at the end of March and we wish him a long and happy retirement.

We are delighted to report that **Donnie MacDonald** has returned to his caretaking duties and will take over Mitch's patch.

Our Maintenance Officer, **Ian Dewar** has also decided to retire after his second 3-year spell with us. We will all miss Ian's camaraderie and also wish him a long and happy retirement when he leaves us at the end of March.

After a highly competitive interview process, we are delighted to report that the vacant Maintenance Officer post has been filled by our current Maintenance Assistant, **Jack Devlin**. Jack will take up his new post at the beginning of April.

Clive Honeyman is our new part time Estate Caretaker. Clive will join our Estate Management team at the beginning of April and will be predominantly out and about in our estates to ensure that they are in 'tip-top' condition.

MEET THE TEAM

In this edition, we ask **Joan Craig**, Housing Assistant, about her role here at the Association...

I have worked with Clydebank Housing Association since 1999 when stock was transferred to them from Scottish Homes. I'd worked with them for 5 years at the time. I became permanent Housing Assistant in May 2013 but had covered the role temporarily for a period of 3½ years.

In any one day I could be dealing with tenancy sign ups, housing applicant visits, estate management issues, rent arrears and anti-social matters. Every day is different and brings new challenges!

The best thing about my job is meeting people and being of assistance to them. It's great having 1-to-1 contact with tenants and applicants. I especially like seeing the excitement when someone is offered a house. I enjoy building up a relationship with tenants.



COMPETITION WINNER!

Mr Gangel of Radnor Park, pictured right, was the lucky winner of our Facebook 'likes' competition, where tenants or owners who liked our page by 31 January would be entered into a draw. Mr Gangel is seen accepting his £50 of grocery vouchers prize from Communications Officer, Sinéad Boyle.

Keep up to date with us by liking our Facebook page. Search for Clydebank Housing Association.



Compliments

We are pleased to receive many compliments on our service when we have got things right, some of which are dotted about the newsletter. We thank customers for taking the time to contact us.

Complaints

We want to provide the best service possible to you. Your complaints really matter to us. Don't hesitate to get in touch if you are dissatisfied. A copy of our Complaints Handling Procedure can be found on our website or on request from our office.

Complaints - 1 October - 31 December 2015	
Total number of complaints received	8
Number which were about equalities	0
Number where we were at fault, apology given and rectified	6 (75%)
Breakdown of complaints where we were at fault:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 Maintenance 	
Responded to in full	8
Resolved at front line (5 days)	6
Resolved within our timescales	6 (100%)
Resolved after investigation (20 days)	2
Resolved within our timescales	2 (100%)
Improvements made as a result of complaints:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractors reminded that; property must be left in clean/tidy condition following completion of works; clearly communicate reasons for visit; general communication i.e. use of signs Procedures for responding to new heating system repairs updated 	

Complaints Timescales



Stage 1: frontline resolution. We will always try to resolve your complaint quickly, within five working days if we can. If you are dissatisfied with our response, you can ask us to consider your complaint at **Stage 2: investigation.** We also look at some complaints immediately at this stage, if it is clear that they are complex or need detailed investigation. We will acknowledge your complaint within three working days. We will give you our decision as soon as possible, no more than 20 working days, unless there is clearly a good reason for needing more time. We send all complainants a questionnaire to ensure they are happy we have adhered to these timescales.



Scottish Housing Regulator

Help us to improve social landlords' services...

Who we are

The Scottish Housing Regulator's role is to protect the interests of tenants, homeless people and others who use the housing services of councils, housing associations, co-ops and other social landlords.

The National Panel: what it's for and why it's important

The National Panel is an important way for us to hear about your priorities and the services you receive. We use feedback to help make sure we're focusing on the important things.

Who can join

You can join if you are a tenant of a social landlord, are homeless, a home owner receiving factoring or common repairs services from a social landlord, or a Gypsy/ Traveller who uses a social landlord site.

What's involved

As a Panel member we will send occasional surveys asking for your views. Surveys are quick and easy to complete – we are running a survey at the moment that is open to new members. Panel members can also give feedback in other ways such as discussion groups or over the phone.

Every new member completing the survey will have the chance one of 4 x £20 prizes.

To see our current survey (and join)

- Sign up online at bit.ly/natpan3
- Scan the code with a smartphone
- Call Craigforth (who manage the Panel) on 0800 027 2245



OUR CORE VALUES

“The Management Committee and staff have recently discussed at length and agreed our organisational core values which we will promote both internally and in our customer relations. We believe it is important that you know what these core values are and the type of behaviour and actions you should expect in your dealings with us.” **Sharon Keenan, Chief Executive**

“Customers are our priority and we ensure equality of service throughout our organisation.” We will achieve this by being ...

Respectful We will treat all our customers with courtesy and respect.

Responsive and Informative We will listen, respond and inform through effective and timely communication.

Professional We will ensure we have the appropriate skills and strive for excellence in all aspects of our service.

Accountable We will be open, honest and approachable and act with the highest integrity at all times.

SATISFACTION WITH OUR SERVICES

Thank you to the tenants and owners who continue to take part in our quarterly independent satisfaction survey. We're always looking to improve so your feedback on our service is greatly appreciated. Many of this edition's articles have been included as a direct result of your feedback and are marked with a star (right). We look forward to reporting results and actions to improve in a future newsletter.



Tenant Census Feedback

Thank you to the 309 tenants who returned our Tenant Census form in time for the prize draw on 5 February. The lucky winners were Mr & Mrs Cameron from Radnor Park. Many more have since been received - keep them coming! It is a requirement of your tenancy to keep us up to date with who is living in your home.

Mrs Cameron is pictured (below) receiving £100 of vouchers from Joe Farrell, Housing Manager.



Thanks to young Brandon of Whitecrook Street who did us a lovely drawing when he visited our office recently.





Clyde Shopmobility helps people of all ages with physical and learning disabilities.

Clyde Shopmobility recognises the difficulties people with disabilities throughout West Dunbartonshire can face and provides a variety of services that will increase their access throughout their local community.

The Sighted Guide Service is becoming more popular, allowing people with visual impairments to go on their weekly shop or meet up for a coffee.

William Bowen (pictured), a member since 2012, has used the service over 300 times. He said: "I don't know what I'd do without the service, I'd be stuck indoors and never leave the house – it gives me the freedom to do what I want."

Clyde Shopmobility also recognise that people with disabilities are at risk of isolation and loneliness, and arranges one-off social events on top of their all-year round services.

For further information about Shopmobility (which is actually about much more than "Shopping") check out the website at – www.clydeshopmobility.co.uk or Facebook – www.facebook.com/ClydeShopmobility.

Clyde Shopmobility, 22 Alexander Street, just down the road from Clydebank Railway Station.



The Public Reassurance Team

The Public Reassurance Team's main role is to work in partnership with Police Scotland to problem solve areas in West Dunbartonshire blighted by anti-social behaviour. We are currently working in the Radnor Park area.

During this process the Public Reassurance Team will:

- survey residents in the problem area
- carry out environmental visual audits
- co-ordinate multi-agency meetings
- draw up multi-agency action plans
- identify sustainable solutions for the area
- work with all partners to ensure that these solutions can be put in place

We also work with West Dunbartonshire Council's Community Safety Team and the Early Intervention Team to support and assist with new initiatives throughout West Dunbartonshire.

Anti-social behaviour is not the norm and communities should never accept it. Report anti-social behaviour to the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Helpline on 01389 772 048 or Police Scotland on 101.

**Anti-Social Behaviour Helpline:
01389 772 048**

Email: ASBhelpline@west-dunbarton.gov.uk



SPOTLIGHT ON... CENTRAL CLYDEBANK

- Spacious 1 and 2 bedroom flats
- Amenities on your doorstep such as Clydebank Shopping Centre and College
- Amongst the lowest rents in the district
- Secure and well maintained
- Great transport links via road and rail to Glasgow and beyond
- Diverse community
- Grounds maintenance service for residents



Contact the office if you, a friend or relative are interested in being considered for housing in Central Clydebank.

©Keith Hunter

Thank you for dealing with my complaint in a professional and sympathetic manner. You have been wonderful.

*Tenant, Radnor Park
January 2016*

We are Positive About Disabled People

We passed our annual Positive about Disabled People review which means that we are committed to employing disabled people and have made the commitment to the 5 requirements of this accreditation from the Department of Work and Pensions.



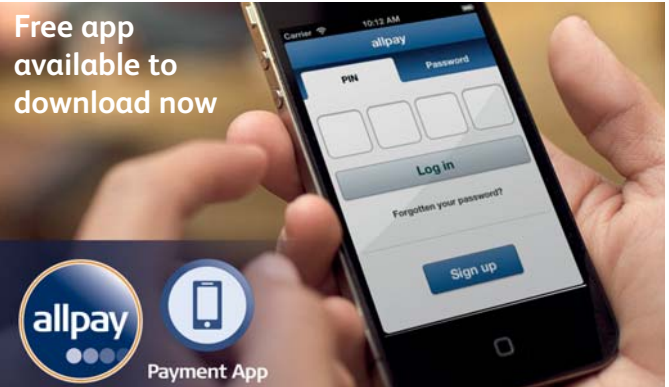
A warm welcome to new owners who have recently purchased a property and are now included in our factoring service.

ONLINE PAYMENTS

Did you know you can now pay your factors bill online?

Go to website <https://www.allpayments.net> or download the free app to your phone from <http://www.allpay.net/allpay-payment-app> for Apple, Windows, or Android devices.

All you require for the initial sign up is an email address and your factors card number! Please pop in or contact Michael at our office if you would like help setting this up. It shouldn't take more than 5 minutes.



Renewal of Close Doors

The renewal of close doors (band 1 tenements) is underway. All owners involved were issued with consultation documents regarding door and colour choices. Owners meetings took place week beginning 8 February and as a result of feedback at these meetings, further consultation with owners will take place before improvement works go ahead.






SPOTLIGHT ON COMPLAINTS

In the period 1 October 2015 to 31 December 2015, we received no complaints relating to our factoring service.

A copy of our Factoring Complaints Handling Procedure is available from the download area of our website. Alternatively, contact Fiona White at the office.

Our Performance in Housing Management - Apr 15 - Jan 16

The table below shows our performance in various Housing Management functions so far this financial year. We are working hard to ensure our performance is within our targets by the end of the year.

Indicator	Performance to 31 January 2016	Year End Target	Previous years' performance	What this means for you...
Maximum rent loss on vacant properties	0.41 % £15,112.49 	0.9 % of annual rental income	0.35 % of annual rental income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We can keep rent increases as low as possible
Current tenant rent arrears (as % of the total annual rent receivable)	1.16 % £43,389 	1.1 %	0.9 %	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We offer support/advice to help tenants remain in their homes Keeps our costs low and therefore rent increases as low as possible
Number of calendar days to let a property	16.1 calendar days 	14 calendar days	13.7 calendar days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We can keep rent increases low Properties become available quickly which benefits the area No problems with empty properties e.g. vandalism
Processing of housing application forms	8.3 calendar days 	15 calendar days	6.9 calendar days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your transfer housing application form will be dealt with quickly Applicants are aware of their prospects for housing
Investigating neighbour complaints by category: A - Extreme B - Serious C - Dispute	A no complaints received B 100 % (10) within timescale C 97 % (34) within timescale 	A - 1 working day B - 10 working days C - 15 working days	A - none received B - 100 % (10) within timescale C - 100 % (37) within timescale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We manage your area in a sensitive manner Better place to live if ASB issues dealt with promptly Happier in your community Getting on with your neighbours
Overall 98 % investigated within timescale, 93 % resolved/concluded within timescale.				

UNIVERSAL CREDIT

Under the new Universal Credit system, Housing Benefit is paid directly to the tenant (alongside all other applicable benefits) making them solely responsible for managing this money and paying their rent in full and on time. This could result in tenants falling into arrears if they do not pay. We can assist tenants currently receiving Universal Credit to ensure this does not happen and help other tenants prepare in advance of any change to Universal Credit.

It is important to note that in order to receive Universal Credit, claimants must have a bank account capable of electronic payments. We can help tenants with this also. Contact your Housing Assistant with any questions you may have.

WELFARE REFORM

If you are living in a property with an extra bedroom and are receiving Housing Benefit, the Scottish Government recently announced increased funding to combat the occupancy charge (bedroom tax) in Scotland.

To qualify for this money you must apply for Discretionary Housing Benefit (DHP) as no automatic payment of DHP will be made to you or CHA. We are able to assist all our tenants with the application process. Please contact Catherine Banks or Joan Craig as a matter of urgency to ensure your application is made.

Happy with the suitability of your home?



Are you thinking of downsizing? Do you require a move due to a medical condition or change in family circumstances? Is your rent too high? Is there something else about your home that makes it unsuitable?

If the answer is yes to any of the above then you may wish to consider a move through our Transfer list. We offer points to all tenants looking to transfer and there are extra points available to tenants with extra bedrooms and medical needs*. This could mean we are able to offer you a different home.

If you are interested in applying for another home please contact your Housing Assistant for more details, or ask for a Housing Application form at the office.

**Medical points only available where your current home is unsuitable for your medical conditions*

BREACHES OF TENANCY



It is important that you adhere to the terms of your tenancy agreement to ensure that you do not put your tenancy at risk. Breaches of tenancy can also have an adverse effect on your neighbours and may result in action being taken against you, by us or even the Police. It is important to us that all our tenants are happy with their homes, estates and the services we provide and therefore we take any breach seriously. Examples of breaches are...

- deliberately vandalising close doors or common areas
- dealing drugs from your tenancy
- anti-social behaviour towards your neighbour
- parking in restricted parking areas/yellow boxes
- carrying out alterations without permission
- not paying your rent

If you are a victim of anti-social behaviour as a result of your neighbour breaching their tenancy agreement, we want to hear about this. All information will be treated confidentially and your name will not be associated. We also recommend that for criminal offences such as drug dealing, you contact the Police without fail.

Are you coping with your tenancy?

Do you need help with budgeting, keeping unwanted visitors out, decorating your home, personal problems etc? If so, Clydebank Housing Association is here to help you.

Either through our own support services or by signposting you to another agency, we can help you maintain your home and help you deal with the issues which may be making it difficult for you to live in your house or flat.

Our aim is to help all our tenants turn their house or flat into a home that they want and are able to stay in for many years or as long as they wish to. Moving home or having to give up your tenancy can be expensive and there is no guarantee that you will be able to walk straight into another house elsewhere.

We will be introducing a Tenancy Sustainment Policy this year, which will pull together all of the services and initiatives available to our tenants and housing applicants.

In the meantime, we are keen to hear from tenants who are currently experiencing difficulties in their homes. If this is you, please contact our Housing Management department in confidence. We really want to help you and will do everything we can to try and improve your situation.

DECORATING
DEBT
NEIGHBOURS
BUDGETING



RADNOR PARK

CCTV

In February, our Management Committee agreed to the installation of CCTV cameras at all 7 multi storey blocks and they will be fitted by the end of March/ beginning of April.

Foyer Refurbishment

Foyer refurbishment has been delayed due to high cost of tenders received and we will be exploring revised specifications.

Structural Works

Structural works have been delayed due to prolonged bad weather and will not now finish until late April / early May.

The installation of my new heating system was so smooth. The tradesmen were brilliant. I can't praise them highly enough.

*Tenant, Whitecrook
February 2016*

Street Lighting



Most street lighting in and around our estates is managed by West Dunbartonshire Council. Non-emergencies should be reported via their website (www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk) and emergencies should be reported on 01389 737631 (office hours) or 0800 373635 (out of hours).

Exceptions are the following areas where we are responsible, so please give us a call:

- Ian Smith Court (courtyard only)
- Glasgow Road/Hume Street (car park)
- Attlee Place (car park)
- Cart Street (car park)
- Melfort Court

Our Performance in Maintenance 1 April - 31 December 2015

The table below shows our performance in various Maintenance functions so far this financial year.

Charter Indicator	Year so far 2015/2016	Year 2014/2015
Percentage of tenants satisfied with the quality of their home	92 %	90.21 %
Average number of repairs per occupied property	2.89	2.93
Average length of time to complete emergency repairs	1.75 hours	1.93 hours
Average length of time to complete non-emergency repairs	3.65 days	3.60 days
Percentage of reactive repairs carried out in the last year completed right first time	99 %	99.34 %
Percentage of appointments kept	100 %	100 %
Percentage of properties that require a gas safety record which had a gas safety check and record completed by the anniversary date	100 %	99 %
Percentage of tenants who have had repairs or maintenance carried out in the last 12 months satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service	91 %	92 %
Percentage of approved applications for medical adaptations completed	81 %	90.5 %
Average time to complete approved applications	32 days	48.9 days



REPORTING REPAIRS



Please don't assume someone else has reported a common repair. We'd rather get 3 calls than none, especially when the repair could affect the safety and security of you and your neighbours' homes such as faulty close entry doors.





Thanks to the Scottish Government's People and Communities Fund we regularly run IT classes, confidence building classes and keep fit classes in the heart of your community. If you would like to register for any of them, please call Ali or Jean on 0141 533 7070.

Centre81, 2-16 Braes Avenue, Clydebank G81 1DP
www.clydebank-ha.org.uk/whats-on-at-centre81.html

0141 533 7070

 facebook: Centre81



Cabinet Secretary Alex Neil Visits Centre81 15 February 2016

Minister Alex Neil visited Centre81 in Whitecrook on 15 February to hear about the Confident Clydebank project which has received over £320k via the People and Communities Fund since 2011.

The centre has many project partners delivering a wide range of services to create a more 'Confident Clydebank' such as IT classes, personal development courses, free fitness classes and employment drop-ins.

Mr Neil spoke to the project partners and participants in attendance including those from West College

Scotland, ISARO Social Integration Network, Action for Children and the Working4U team and said it was a "fantastic centre with fantastic services."

Sharon Keenan, Chief Executive of Clydebank Housing Association, said, "It was great that the Minister got to hear about the Confident Clydebank project at Centre81 first hand.

"The funding provided by the Scottish Government has had a positive impact on individuals and the community as a whole."



- No contract
- No cancellation fees
- No joining or rejoining fees

Price List

Pay-as-you-go - £4 per session (max 1 hr)
Annual - £100
Monthly - £10
Induction - £10 (compulsory)



Volunteering Opportunities @ Centre81



Giving up as little as one hour a week can not only help others but it can rebuild confidence, enable you to meet new people, help you to develop new skills and give you the tools to get back into employment or training. Please call Ali at Reception on 0141 533 7070 or pop in and see us for more information. We would love to hear from you.

Volunteer Gardener

Volunteer Centre Assistant

Volunteer Receptionist

“Customers are our priority and we ensure equality of service throughout our organisation”

FEEDBACK/COMMENT SLIP

Please let us know if you have comments or suggestions for future editions of ChitChat or our service in general. We value your views. Radnor Park tenants can place slips in our laundry letterbox.



Name: (Optional)

Address: (Optional)

Email: (Optional)

Would you like a response: Yes No

I have a comment(s) about:

Complaints

Performance

Volunteering@C81

Other

Comments (please use a separate sheet if necessary):

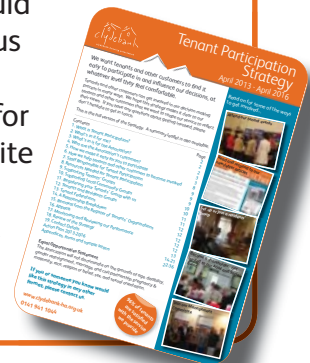
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Tenant Participation Strategy Review 2016

Our Tenant Participation Strategy is due for review by June 2016. This document sets out the way you can exercise your right to participate in our decisions which affect you, so it could be important to you. It covers:

- how we support tenants to get involved
- how we support tenants groups to get started and continue
- the resources we provide to make this happen, such as training and funding
- monitoring and reviewing our performance

We'd be delighted if you would give it the once over and let us know your thoughts. Please contact Sinéad at the office for a copy or view it on our website downloads section (Tenant Participation Strategy 2013).



EMERGENCY NUMBERS

The number to telephone City Technical for out of hours gas central heating emergencies, including CHP breakdowns in Radnor Park, is:

 **0844 579 6493**

All other out of hours emergency repairs (fire, flood, break-in, repairs to Quantum heating systems), should be reported to our contractors, West Dunbartonshire Council:

 **0800 197 1004**

These numbers are also available on our website and office answering machine.

OFFICE HOURS

Monday to Thursday 9.00am to 5.00pm
Friday 9.00am to 4.00pm

We close on the first Wednesday morning of each month for staff training.

We will be closed on the following **public holidays**:

Friday 25 and Monday 28 March
Monday 2 May, Friday 27 and Monday 30 May

If you or someone you know would like this newsletter in any other format, please contact us.

Clydebank Housing Association Ltd, 77 - 83 Kilbowie Road, Clydebank, G81 1BL

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Fax: 0141 941 3448 www.clydebank-ha.org.uk facebook: search for us

