



# Fyne news

Autumn 2011

A Fyne Homes publication for Tenants, residents & the wider community

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## HEAT Argyll

Fyne Homes in partnership with the 3 other Housing Associations in Argyll have launched "HEAT Argyll" – Home Energy Advice for Argyll tenants.

The aim of this project is to deliver energy advice to our tenants within their homes. Tenants will also be given advice on the efficient use of their heating and hot water systems, checks will be carried out to see if any insulation upgrades are required and advice on budget methods for payment of utility bills will also be given.

If you feel you would benefit from this advice, please contact Fiona McLachlan on 08450520039

**HEAT**  
**Argyll**

WINTER IS COMING.

## Towards Zero Carbon Bute, part of Fyne Futures

With warnings of another cold winter and rising fuel bills, it's worth spending a little time thinking about ways to winter proof your home. Just a few changes can make a positive difference to your comfort and your pocket.

Here are a few ideas:

### Windows and Doors

1. Why not make some funky knitted draught excluders? Any wool you have left over, a couple of big needles and a good way to re-use old tights and socks. Cast on 40 stitches, knit one row, purl one row for as long as the width of your door, then cast off. Fold in half, sew together along the long side and one short side, and then stuff with old tights, socks or even newspaper. Seal up the final end. Add some finishing touches such as buttons or ribbons for a bit of razzle.
2. Shut out the weather by changing from summer nets or voile panels to heavy, lined curtains. Close your curtains at dusk – apart from keeping draughts at bay, you will feel better not looking at the wind and rain.

### Heating and Lighting

1. Have another think about your heating system. Is it set at the right levels for your needs? If you aren't sure ask for advice.
2. Low energy bulbs are good buy. Challenge the kids – who's the best at switching the lights off in empty rooms? And, of course, you can't beat candles for a romantic atmosphere.

### Money Saving

1. No more standby – switch off at the plug. Once mobile phones or laptops are charged, switch to battery power.
2. One full load of washing uses less energy than two half loads.

It's our future

We are looking for Zero Carbon Heroes – what are your top tips for winter proofing your home? You can share them with us by email to [info@tzcb.org.uk](mailto:info@tzcb.org.uk) or on our Facebook page Towards Zero Carbon Bute or by post to Karen and Reeni, TZCB, 7 Castle Street, Rothesay, PA20 0PG. The top tipster will receive an energy saving gift pack.



## ESTATE MANAGEMENT

Fyne Homes is committed to ensuring that all of our developments are kept to a high standard.

Tenants have an obligation to take their turn at cleaning common areas: including close, stairs, windows and binstores.

Housing Staff will carry out **regular inspections** to all our developments to ensure that all areas are clean and tidy.

We would take this opportunity to remind all tenants that we value your opinions and we would also consider your needs at all times and will endeavour to deal with all estate management issues in a fast and efficient manner.

All tenants are encouraged to report to the office if they have any issues they feel require attention in relation to the common areas i.e. Vandalism, Graffiti, Fly Tipping.

It is the aim of the Association to ensure that all residents can enjoy living in a clean safe and peaceful environment allowing tenants to take a pride in their area.

## Fyne Homes AGM 2011

Fyne Homes held its AGM on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011 at the Discovery Centre, Rothesay. The twenty-four members attending received a full report on the Association's activities from Fyne Homes Chairman, Chief Executive, Technical Services Director, Housing Director and New Business Director.



Mr & Mrs Bulloch with Chairman P. Lingard

Key successes included:

- ◆ Completion of the re-development of the former Council Chambers/Court House on Bute
- ◆ £2,473,306 spent on maintaining and upgrading housing stock using local contractors
- ◆ Won 3 Scottish Design Awards and a RIBA award for Tigh-na-Cladach, Innellan
- ◆ Collected 98.98% of rental income due
- ◆ Arrears of 1.02%

The Association's auditors, Scott Moncrieff were pleased to confirm that the audit had gone very well and that healthy surplus had been produced following a year of careful financial management.

This year saw Lyn Bulloch and Don Williams stand down after 25 years and 17 years continuous service on Committee. They have held various posts in the organisation from Chairman, Conveners of Sub Committees and Directors on the Subsidiary Boards. We are very sorry to lose these experienced Committee members and thank them for their support and loyal service over the years.

Two new members, Hamish Kirk and John Dunn, both from Bute, were successfully elected onto the Committee of Fyne Homes bringing the Management Committee membership up to 11 out of a possible 15 members.

Further information can be found in our Annual Report or on the website. [www.fynehomes.org.uk](http://www.fynehomes.org.uk)



# Your Views Count!

It is now time for us to review our Tenant Participation Survey, and in order to get the best (TPAS). TPAS is a not for profit organisation, who provide independent support to Scottish views count.

## Q. What is a Tenant Participation Strategy?

The Tenant Participation Strategy will set out:

- ◆ How Fyne Homes aims to help tenants and residents to get involved
- ◆ What resources Fyne Homes will commit to Tenant Participation
- ◆ How Tenant Participation fits in with the day to day running of the organisation

Here is a list of various ways our tenants and residents could feed back to us:

- ◆ **Consultation Register** - to improve housing services you can join the Consultation Register.
- ◆ **Conferences** – Large gatherings of tenants and residents from all over the Fyne Homes area to discuss a range of issues affecting all.
- ◆ **Local events / meetings** - These can be arranged to address a specific issue.
- ◆ **Surveys** - Used to gather views on specific issues.
- ◆ **Tenants and resident groups** - Fyne Homes will support you to set up a local group or let you know of your area's group.
- ◆ **Local area panel** – Tenants and residents for a specified area coming together on a regular basis to discuss local issues and Fyne homes wide issues.
- ◆ **Focus groups** - From time to time Fyne Homes invite tenants and residents to discuss issues or plans.
- ◆ **Estate walkabouts** – local people tour their area with staff to highlight problems and monitor changes.
- ◆ **Put it in writing** - You can write or email Fyne Homes.
- ◆ **Village voices** – A local individual who others agree can be the link between Fyne Homes and their community.
- ◆ **Fyne Homes Membership** – You can become a share holding member of Fyne Homes.

## Tenant Reward Scheme – £20 Monthly Draw winners



June—Mrs Currie, Dunoon



July—Mrs E. Morrison, Rothesay



August—Mrs Russell, Rothesay

# Your Views Count!

results for our tenants we have linked up with the Tenant Participation Advisory Service tenants and landlords, and have over 25 years experience in ensuring local people's views count.

In order to find out what Fyne Homes' tenants and residents think of Fyne Homes, TPAS is issuing a questionnaire with this newsletter.



## Answer some questions for a chance to win £100

Peter Lingard, Fyne Homes Chair says, "As a wee thank you everyone completing a questionnaire will be included in a £100 prize draw. No one from Fyne Homes will see your individual answers, so you can be as open as you wish."



Marie Bowie, Housing Director, said, "Please take the time to fill in the questionnaire and return it, free to TPAS this is your opportunity to have your chance to impact on the services we provide. Tony Kelly, from TPAS, will follow this up with local discussion groups, to find solutions to the issues flagged up in the questionnaire. We want to offer new opportunities to obtain your views to improve the services we provide."

Find out more - contact Tony Kelly at TPAS: free phone: 0800 269 645 or email: [enquiries@tpasscotland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@tpasscotland.org.uk) or any Fyne Homes staff

## WAYS TO PAY YOUR RENT

**Due to changes within the Bank of Scotland, Fyne Homes are no longer able to provide tenants with rent payin books.**

Please see detailed below various other options on how you can pay your rent:-



With an Allpay card you can make payments at any Post Office and outlets where you see the PayPoint sign.



Allpay have an automated telephone payment system enabling tenants to make repayments from a landline or mobile telephone 24 hours a day 365 days a year.

You can also pay your rent via the internet with your payment card. Log onto <https://www.allpayments.net> and follow the instructions

Callpay – you can now pay your rent via Callpay by debit card at your local Fyne Homes office



Direct debits allow our tenants with a bank or building society account to pay easily and conveniently.

**If you require further information on allpay or wish to set up a direct debit please contact your local office on 0845 6077117.**

## The Scottish Housing Regulator wants to hear your views



Scotland has a new, independent housing regulator. From next April its role will be to safeguard and promote the interests of tenants and others who receive housing services from local authorities and housing associations. It will replace the existing regulator.

Before taking on its role, the new Scottish Housing Regulator is consulting on its approach. It wants to hear the views of tenants, landlords and others with an interest in social housing.

Kay Blair is the new Regulator's Chair. Kay said: "The quality of housing and landlord services have a direct and lasting impact on people's lives. We will regulate to protect tenants' interests and to drive improvements in social housing. We will assess each landlord's performance regularly. In doing so, we will take account of the views and experiences of its tenants. We will publish a range of information on landlords' performance, including progress against the Scottish Government's new Social Housing Charter. This will help tenants to hold their landlord to account and we will take action where we find a landlord is failing to deliver for tenants.

The new Regulator would like to get wide feedback on its proposed approach. The consultation runs from early September. You can respond until late November.

There will also be events across the country, open to tenants and others, to discuss the proposals. You can get a copy of the proposals and find out more about the events by visiting the new Regulator's website, following the consultation on Twitter or contacting its office. You can find the details below.

website: [www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/newregulator](http://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/newregulator)

phone: 0141 271 3810

e-mail: [consultation@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:consultation@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk)

twitter: [www.twitter.com/SHRconsultation](http://www.twitter.com/SHRconsultation)

## Bute Volunteer in shortlist for Award

A Fyne Homes tenant on Bute who had some spare time on his hands has been recognised for his efforts after being nominated for Argyll & Bute 2011 Volunteer Awards.

Alfie Slaven a resident in Rothesay has been working at the Green Tree Café, a Community based project with Bute Healthy Living Partnership, as a volunteer for several years.

The awards ceremony for the Project was at Argyll & Bute Council Headquarters at Kilmory. Although Mr Slaven wasn't placed first he was recognised for his efforts in the Community.

Mr Slaven's volunteering work is very much appreciated by the Community and Fyne Homes would like to wish him all the best for his continuing efforts!



## Our Repairs Categories

In order to provide you with an efficient repairs service, the Association has set "repair categories" with different timescales within which works should be completed.

When you report a repair the person taking your call will tell you the category which your repair has been placed in and the date by which your repair should be completed.

Our categories and timescales are detailed below.

### Emergency Repairs – Completed or made safe within 6 Hours

Repairs necessary to prevent serious damage to the building, danger to health, risk safety or risk of serious loss or damage to the occupiers of the property.

### Urgent Repairs – Completed within 3 working days (commencing day following reporting)

Repairs which seriously affect the comfort or convenience of the occupier.

### Routine Repairs – Completed within 10 working days (commencing day following reporting)

Repairs which will not seriously interfere with the comfort or convenience of the occupier.

### Qualifying Repairs

To comply with legislation we also have the "Right to Repair" scheme. This right entitles you to have certain "qualifying repairs" carried out within a specified timescale, or you can bring in another contractor. You may also be eligible for compensation if the work is not completed on time.

You will be advised when reporting a repair if it is included in this scheme. For more information on qualifying repairs please contact our Technical Services Department at our Rothesay Office (direct line telephone number 0845 0520039).

### Inspections

Some repairs may need assessed before repair work can be instructed. The member of staff taking your repair will advise you at the time of reporting if an inspection is required to be carried out. Inspections will be done within four working days. Following the inspection we shall advise of the action to be taken.

When you report a repair we will issue you with a repairs request confirmation slip detailing the repair, the contractor who has been instructed to carry out the work, any access arrangements and the target date for completion.

This slip also contains a tenant satisfaction survey. In order to allow us to continually monitor and improve the service we provide we would be grateful if you could complete this and return it to the Association in the freepost envelope that we provide.



## DUNOON OFFICE

We would like to remind tenants and applicants that our Dunoon office is not open to the public. If you have any housing enquiries or wish to report a repair please contact the appropriate department or member of staff via our telephone number: **08456077117**. Our local staff in Dunoon are happy to make appointments to discuss specific issues and will arrange home visits if requested.

## ANNUAL GAS SERVICING & SAFETY CHECK

As your landlord, Fyne Homes has a legal responsibility to carry out an annual safety check on all gas appliances owned by us.

Near the time the annual safety check is due to your property our gas servicing contractor will contact you with an appointment. They will provide you with a telephone number to contact them should the given appointment be unsuitable.

Fyne Homes cannot stress enough the importance of having these checks carried out to ensure the safety of our tenants.

**PLEASE ENSURE ACCESS IS MADE AVAILABLE TO YOUR LOCAL CONTRACTOR.**

### ACCESS FOR REPAIRS/MISSED APPOINTMENTS

No access visits are a waste of staff and contractors time and can be costly to the Association.

Access arrangements should always be made when reporting a repair, however, if due to unforeseen circumstances these require to be changed by us we will always endeavour to contact tenants and advise them of any changes.

Likewise, should you require to change access arrangements we would be grateful if you would advise us as early as possible in order to make alternative arrangements.

## Emergency Repairs

In the event of an emergency repair outwith office hours, or on a public holiday, you should call the following 24hr emergency number:-

**0800 592 276**

Your call will be answered by the Hanover Telecare call centre, where one of their trained repair operators will take the details of your repair and arrange the necessary assistance.

Please note that this service is for "emergency" repairs only. Emergency repairs being repairs necessary to prevent serious damage to the building, danger to health, risk of safety or risk of serious loss or damage to the occupiers of the property.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

Tel: 0845 607 7117 • E-mail: [postmaster@fynehomes.co.uk](mailto:postmaster@fynehomes.co.uk) • Web: [www.fynehomes.org.uk](http://www.fynehomes.org.uk)

<u>Rothesay—Head Office</u> Fyne Homes Ltd 81 Victoria Street Rothesay Isle of Bute PA20 0AP Fax: 01700 505267	<u>Dunoon</u> C/O Argyll Training 215 Argyll Street Dunoon Argyll PA23 7QT Fax: 01369 702006	<u>Campbeltown</u> 42 Ralston Road Campbeltown Argyll PA28 6LE Fax: 01586 552680	<u>Lochgilphead</u> The Attic Manse Brae Lochgilphead Argyll PA31 8RA Fax: 01546 606519
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*This Newsletter and other documentation can be made available in other formats i.e. large print. We also subscribe to language line and induction loops are available within Fyne Homes offices.*



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