

Text Messaging Exciting New Development for Ayrshire Housing Tenants



We are always looking for ways we can improve the efficiency of our services. How we communicate with you can make a real difference. There are a number of ways that we currently use to either contact you directly or to provide more general information and advice.

Whether it is through letters, telephone calls, home visits or our website we try to ensure that the most effective and appropriate method is used to contact you. We are now looking to introduce another way to keep in touch with you.

A significant number of tenants now use mobile phones either to supplement their use of landline telephones or as an alternative to actually having a landline. We are seeing elsewhere an increase in the use of mobile phone text messaging to contact and communicate with tenants. Experience elsewhere suggests that this is proving to be a very convenient way of contacting tenants.

We have been given the opportunity to pilot this method of communication for a two month period. We will then take a view as to whether to purchase the appropriate IT software for us to use permanently. During the pilot scheme we will use text messaging or emails to communicate information regarding gas servicing details and appointments. If the pilot proves successful we will then consider extending the text messaging to cover other areas such as repairs and rents.

Having up to date details of your mobile phone numbers and also email addresses is vital to the effectiveness of this and without these we will not be able to provide these improvements to our methods of delivering these services. Our staff will be asking you for these details before and during the pilot to allow us to be able to contact as many of you as possible using this new method. You can also email us your details to c.donald@ayrshirehousing.org.uk. We would be extremely grateful for your help and co-operation by providing these numbers and email details when requested.

Or update your details online by visiting our website www.ayrshirehousing.org.uk and click on the link within Latest News Articles on our Home Page.

Rent Statement as you will remember all tenants received a copy of their rent statement along with the last newsletter. This will be a regular feature and a statement showing the last 3 months transactions is enclosed with this newsletter. If you are in receipt of Housing Benefit there may be some monies still to be paid to your account, therefore the balance shown may not actually be due from yourself. If you are in any doubt or wish to discuss any aspect of your tenancy please contact your housing officer.

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Twenty Years of Bringing New Life to Ayrshire Villages



It is difficult to believe that its now 20 years since Carrick Housing Association was formed.

Ayrshire Housing is proud to be taking its legacy forward. So to mark the anniversary, we have unveiled a new plaque at Carrick's first development at Oswald Court, Kirkoswald.

The inscription speaks for itself - **twenty years of bringing new life to Ayrshire's villages.**

Kirkmichael Community Shop and Jock's Café

Just over a year ago the village shop and café became a community run concern when the proprietor decided to retire. With the help of grants and a great deal of hard work from volunteers both the shop and café have grown in popularity. The shop sells many locally sourced products, such as honey, meats, free range eggs and seasonal fruit, vegetables and plants.

Jock's café was named after the village blacksmith and handyman. The café is situated in the building which was once his workshop. The café serves country cooking and home baking.

Kirkmichael Community Shop, 24 Patna Road, Kirkmichael, KA19 7PS, Tel: 01650 750499

Did you know?

Housing Benefit non-dependant charges for any adults living with you (excluding a partner or joint tenant) increased on 1st April 2011. Unfortunately this has meant that, for some families, there has been an increase in the amount of rent they now pay.

If you have any children (or any other non-dependant) living with you who is 18 years or over it is essential that you keep Ayrshire Housing and your local authority informed of any changes to their circumstances. This could include a son or daughter starting college, changes to their job/working hours, the type of benefits they claim or even if they move into or out of your home.

Depending on the type of change it could mean an increase or decrease in the amount of rent you need to pay. Please contact your Housing Officer should you need any advice on the above.



Refuse Collections

If your household waste bin has not been emptied recently, please remove any excess waste to ensure the bin lid closes properly and let South Ayrshire Council know the bin is now suitable for collection. If your bin is cracked or damaged, please call South Ayrshire Council to request a replacement bin on:

0300 123 0900

We can supply this document in a print size to suit. It is also available in Braille, audio and other formats, and in other languages. Our website also has several accessibility features which you may find useful.

Grounds Maintenance

The grounds maintenance contract covering the common landscaped areas, which includes the Garden Maintenance Scheme for qualifying elderly or disabled tenants, is currently undertaken by ISS Waterers Ltd.

The contractor's performance during the current growing season has resulted in a number of complaints from residents. In response to these complaints, we have held regular meetings with the contractor's representatives and the consultants employed to manage this contract to discuss the issues and express our dissatisfaction with the service provided we hope these discussions have secured improvements in the quality of their work.

The situation will continue to be monitored over the remaining term of the contract and action will be taken as necessary to resolve any further problems. Resident feedback is always welcome and tenants are invited to report any additional problems to the office.

Annual General Meeting

This year's AGM was well attended. Members heard from Jim Whiston, Director, that Ayrshire Housing has had another successful year in delivering good quality services to its tenants and other users.

The election results were announced by Jim Sinclair, External Auditor of Armstrongs Chartered Accountants.

We welcomed a new community member Stuart Reid and a new tenant member Corraine Wilson to the Board. Paul Torrance was re-elected.

It was with regret that we said farewell to a valued member of our Board, Margaret Imrie. Margaret has been with us for 3 years and in her words it "had been a pleasure".



We were delighted with the turn out from our competition entrants who received their certificates on the night. Fiona McIntyre, of South Harbour Street, Ayr is pictured with David McGivern, Housing Manager, receiving her certificate for her window box entry in the garden competition.

2011 Pet and Garden Competition Winners

Pet Competition winners with joint top spot are Piper the Bengal cat; who lives with Mrs Eileen Clark, Ayr, Elvis the Amazon bird, who lives with Miss Marie Hillan, Ayr, and Jack the Jack Russell dog, who lives with Mr & Mrs Alexander, Kirkmichael.

Commendations were given to the six goldfish companions of Mr Steven, Ayr. Two cats, Cujo and Church, companions of Mrs Harkness, Crosshill. Drambuie the canine companion of Kendall and Danielle Robson, Girvan. Skibo the Spaniel companion of Mrs Pringle of Straiton. Bilbo the Poodle and Cushty the Parrot companion of Miss Hillan, Ayr. Barbarella the cat, companion of Mr & Mrs Barr, Straiton.



Our Garden Competition received a large number of entries and the winners are:

Joint Winners—Best Garden Mrs Martha Scott, Ayr and Mr & Mrs Alexander, Kirkmichael.



Joint Winner—Best Shared Garden

A group of tenants from 93 South Harbour Street, Ayr.

Look out for the details of all the awards in our next edition.

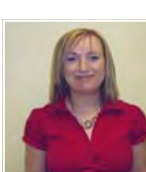


Housing Officer Areas



Carol Young, Senior Housing Officer (01292) 885567
Forehill, Ayr

Isobel Moore, Housing Officer (01292) 885569
South Harbour Street, Corton Howe, George Place and Duke Terrace in Ayr, Maybole, Dalrymple, Dailly, Crosshill, Kirkmichael and Straiton.



Dawn Bigham, Housing Officer (01292) 885570
Etterick Place and Prestwick Road in Ayr, Mossblown, Tarbolton, Symington, Dundonald, Annbank, Monkton, Troon and Prestwick.

Ann Tosh, Housing Officer (01292) 885578
Belmont, St Leonards Road, Blackfriars Court, Rockrose Park and Rush Hill in Ayr, Barr, Girvan, Ballantrae, Kirkoswald, Saltcoats, Maidens and Springside in Irvine.



Margaret Woods, Housing Officer (01292) 885566
Viewfield Court, Lochside, Braehead Ave, Ferguson St, Walker Rd, Fulshaw Pl, West Sanquhar, Crown Square, The Sandgate and Thornyflat in Ayr and Coyton.

Repairs and Maintenance Team



From the left Michelle Reid, Housing Assistant, John Hendry and Murray Paton Maintenance Officers, Scott Hutchison, Technical Services Manager and seated Carol Craig Housing Assistant.

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