

ALMONDVIEW

ALMOND HOUSING ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2024



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Please note, our office and phone lines will be closed on Friday 29th March & Monday 1st April for the Easter break. For emergencies during this time, please phone 01506 439291 and select the most appropriate option.



A message from John...

Hi all...welcome to the Spring edition of Almond View which marks a full year since we moved our newsletter online as part of our efforts to reduce our carbon footprint. I hope that you continue to access Almond View from our website but please contact us if you require a printed version.



Thank you to everyone who responded to the recent rent consultation. You will have now received notification of the rent increase which will be applied from 1st April. As indicated in the letter, the discovery of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in just over 300 of our homes has presented a significant additional cost to the Association which resulted in the requirement to implement the higher increase. More information about these works can be found on page 3.

With regard to the rent increase we will of course continue to support you as much as possible and if you are finding it difficult to make ends meet, I would urge you to contact your Housing Officer to discuss what we can do to help.

A summary of the most recent Tenant Satisfaction Survey is available on page 3. This survey is required by the Scottish Housing Regulator and allows for comparison with other providers. Although this is very important, we also send more regular surveys by text or email to ask for feedback after you have used a service from us. This feedback is valuable as it allows us to recognise what we are doing well and what can be improved, ensuring we can respond quickly in terms of making improvements.

We are keen to hear your thoughts on our services and encourage you to respond to these surveys. If you are interested in finding out more about getting involved, please get in touch.

As ever please contact me at john.davidson@almondha.org.uk if you have a particular issue that you would like us to address or ideas on how we can do better as your landlord.

John Davidson, Chief Executive



Damp and mould

We have a zero tolerance approach to damp and mould. If you have any of this in your home, it's important you contact us as soon as possible so we can investigate.



Ways to pay... Pay your rent at a time and place that suits you using the payment methods below. For more information and for other available payment methods, visit our website www.almondha.org.uk

allpay

Day or Night, We've Got You Covered

The allpay App is free to download from your Apple or Android smartphone and enables you to pay your rent quickly and easily at the touch of a button.

allpay also allows you to pay your rent 24/7 using Interactive Voice Response technology by phoning 0330 041 6497. All you will need is your Payment Reference Number which you can find on your recent rent increase letter and your credit or debit card details to make the payment.



Survey Results

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the Tenant Satisfaction Survey recently. Thanks to your feedback, we have plenty to think about and there are themes emerging which will allow us to create a plan on how to improve these areas going forward.

The area most highlighted was around the repairs service. Over the next year we intend to consult with you around how this service looks as it enters the final year of the current Reactive Repairs supplier contract.

We will continue to invest in our stock with several million planned in investment for 2024/25.

We're also about to embark on the installation of a new Housing Management System to improve how you can interact with us, in terms of reporting repairs and other important services, such as your rent balance, current details, open applications and more.

HOW SATISFIED WERE YOU WITH...

<i>Our overall service</i>	84%
<i>Our repairs service</i>	79%
<i>Value for money</i>	73%
<i>Management of open spaces</i>	74%
<i>Opportunities to participate in decision making</i>	83%

Opening Hours



Following consultation with the Tenant Focus Group, we are making a small adjustment to our opening hours from April 2024. From this date, drop-in sessions will take place on **Tuesdays from 10am to 12pm** and **Thursdays from 2.30pm to 5pm**.

You can contact us to book an appointment outwith these hours by phoning **01506 439291**. Our phone line opening hours will remain the same which is **Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 8.30am to 5pm** and **Wednesday and Friday from 8.30am to 3.30pm**.

The new opening hours will be reviewed later this year with the Tenant Focus Group and Tenant Consultation Group, along with wider customer feedback to ensure they continue to meet your needs. Please let us know what you think by emailing enquiries@almondha.org.uk or speak to us the next time you're in contact. To join one of our Tenant Participation Groups, contact us or visit www.almondha.org.uk for more information.

RAAC

In January we wrote to approximately 300 customers in Craigshill advising that their homes had been built utilising Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) to form a flat roof. Most of these houses and flats had pitched roofs installed over the RAAC panels in the early 1990's. Surveys of every property affected commenced in February and on completion we will be able to determine any work that may be required. On receipt of the advice from the Structural Engineer, we may need to review existing programmes of work to allow us to deliver any works required within existing budgets.

Pictured opposite: Craigshill 1972. Most homes in Craigshill had flat roofs originally but not all were constructed from RAAC.



We have a winner!

Congratulations to Donna McBride who has won our Almond Award for this quarter. Donna was delighted to be presented with **£250 worth of vouchers** for The Centre and Asda.



This draw is our way of thanking customers for keeping on top of their rent payments, taking care of their home and generally being a good tenant.

Our next **Almond Award** will be run in **Summer 2024**. To be entered for the draw to win **£250 worth of vouchers**, simply:

- 1 Maintain a clear rent account for a minimum period of three months immediately prior to the draw.
- 2 Ensure you have not been involved in causing anti-social behaviour in your area.
- 3 Maintain your tenancy and any garden area to a satisfactory standard.
- 4 Allow our contractors to gain access to your home where appropriate.
- 5 Be a member of our tenant consultation list. Contact us or visit our website to find out more and sign up.

Well done to Donna and a big thanks to all our tenants!



Katherine Street

Our major refurbishment and upgrading contract is underway at Katherine Street with McTaggart Construction carrying out this work over the next 12 months. Internally properties have been stripped back to their original shell and work is on-going to remove the external wall insulation and render. It will be replaced by an improved external wall insulation system which will make the fabric of the building more energy efficient.

This is also our first project where each flat will have heating and hot water provided by air source heat pumps rather than gas boilers.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

To report an emergency repair when our office is closed, please call 01506 439291 and select option 3 or contact the out of hours service directly on 0141 225 2842.

Almond Housing Association	01506 439 291	Homeless Persons	0800 032 3450	Scottish Power (General)	0845 270 0700
Gas Leaks	0800 111 999	Howden Health Centre	01506 423 800	(Emergency)	0845 272 7999
Citizens Advice Bureau	01506 432 977	Litter Hotline	0800 616 446	St John's Hospital	01506 523 000
Craigshill Health Centre	01506 432 621	Police	101	Street Lighting	01506 280 000
Energy Advice	0808 808 2282	Refuse Collection	01506 280 000	West Lothian Council	01506 280 000