



## Bringing stories to life

Are you our next Story Starter? ... *find out more on page 3*

**ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:** "No room for domestic abuse". Almond Housing Association takes domestic abuse extremely seriously, and we do everything we can to support tenants and others who reach out to us for help ... *more on page 2*



Photograph © Laura Dodsworth

# No room for domestic abuse

Almond Housing Association takes domestic abuse extremely seriously, and we do everything we can to support tenants and others who reach out to us for help. In March 2018 we introduced a dedicated Domestic Abuse Policy and Procedure, an approach that was reviewed and approved by Scottish Women's Aid, the lead organisation working towards the prevention of domestic abuse.

## OUR SUPPORT TO VICTIMS

To date we have assisted in nineteen cases of which:

- Four were referred to a refuge
- Four were transferred to alternative accommodation
- Eight homes were made safe with a range of measures to allow victims to remain in their family home
- Three applicants have been re-housed directly from refuge by Women's Aid

## HOW WE CAN HELP

Domestic abuse can happen to anyone, both women and men, and in all types of relationships – heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. We will provide support and assistance to all victims of domestic abuse.

*The main features of our policy are:*

- It is survivor-led, we listen to the victims and work with them to ensure the outcome that they require
- If the victim is not an Almond tenant we will still provide help. This means that if a member of a household chooses to leave because of domestic abuse we will list them for re-housing on our transfer list even if they're not registered as an Almond tenant themselves. Being on the transfer list greatly enhances the possibility of being re-housed.

- Safety features can be fitted such as security lighting, additional locks, spy holes and security chains, allowing the victim to stay in their home if that is their wish
- Our Housing Support Manager is the Association's domestic abuse champion and will ensure that all cases that are brought to our attention are treated appropriately and that referrals are made to specialist support services such as Women's Aid and DASAT (Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault Team)

We are a signatory to the Chartered Institute of Housing's "Make a Stand" campaign and fully endorse its principles.

## Do you feel unsafe?

If you're experiencing domestic abuse, it's really important to talk to someone about it. We're here so you don't have to face it alone.

**IF YOU NEED HELP**  
Call us on **01506 439291** to speak to your Housing Officer or our Housing Support Manager **Tracey Longworth**

If you need help when our office is closed, phone the Domestic Abuse Helpline on **0808 2000 247**

For male specific help call Abused Men in Scotland on **0808 800 0024** (Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm)



**STORY STARTER event!**  
**THURSDAY 1ST AUGUST**  
WHERE? Riverside Community Wing,  
Riverside Primary School  
Keep an eye on our website & Facebook page



Last year we recruited and trained 8 fantastic Story Starters. Layney Campbell is one of them.

## Story Starters – bringing stories to life!



Join us on Thursday 1st August to celebrate the launch of our Story Starters project. Hosted by a children's author and professional story teller, the event is a great way to get your children excited about books and reading, so come along and be entertained as we bring the magic of books and stories to life.

It is top secret at the moment but to give you a clue, this well-loved children's author writes books for our Imagination Library so keep an eye on social media in the lead up to the event to find out who is coming...

### OUR STORY STARTERS PROJECT

Story Starters, a new volunteer-led program, is designed to inspire a love of books from an early age. Volunteers are trained by professionals to use children's picture books to engage with a young audience; to enhance language and literacy skills; and to encourage play and discussions. Our Story Starters will also learn how to help other parents feel comfortable reading stories out loud.

Along with the support provided by Story Starter volunteers, each child under 5 years old will receive high-quality resources from Almond HA's Imagination Library so that they can enjoy the magic of stories at home.

### FREE BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

More than half of all our tenants with children under five have now signed up for our Imagination Library, a scheme where children receive a free book every month in the post until they turn five to start their very own library. If you haven't signed up yet, give us a call today (contact details below).

Almond HA currently have 8 Story Starters but we have room for more. Find out more about what it means to be a Story Starter on: [www.bit.ly/almondstorystarters](http://www.bit.ly/almondstorystarters)

Are you our next Story Starter? If you'd like to volunteer, or to sign up your child for The Imagination Library, contact **Barbara**, your Community Engagement Officer on **01506 835272 / 07525 592313**

# And the winner... of the Almond Award could be **YOU!**

We have not yet been able to get in touch with this quarter's winner, which means the lucky winner could be any of our tenants who meet the criteria below. The winner of the **£250 worth of vouchers** for Almondvale Shopping centre and ASDA will be announced in the next issue of the Almond View. **Good luck, everyone!**



The draw is our way of thanking folks 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 Autumn 2019. All you need to do in order to be entered for the draw to win £250 worth of vouchers is to:

- 1** Have maintained a clear rent account for a minimum period of three months immediately prior to the draw
- 2** Not be involved in any anti-social behaviour in your area
- 3** Maintain your tenancy and any garden area to a satisfactory standard
- 4** Have allowed our contractor to gain access to your home to complete the annual gas check

## Need a Garage? ...rent one from us

We have a number of garages available for rent in the Craigshill and Howden areas.

Our garages are available to anyone and are priced at £31 per month for existing Almond tenants and £37.20 for non-tenants.

For more details, call our office on 01506 439291 and speak to Joss Brown. Or find out more on:

[www.bit.ly/almondgarage](http://www.bit.ly/almondgarage)



# USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

EMERGENCY "OUT OF HOURS" REPAIRS: 0845 038 0040

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