

# ALMONDVIEW

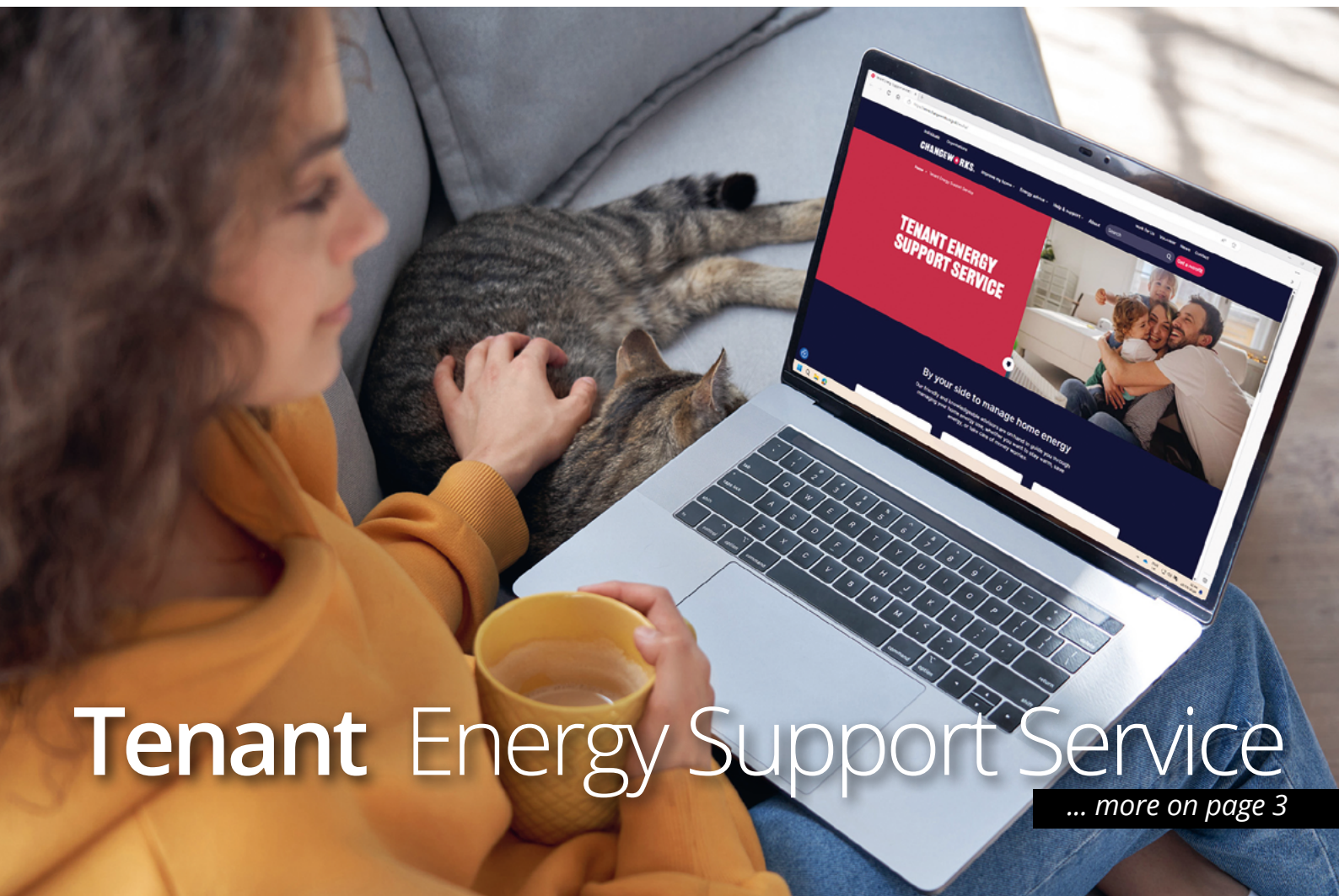
ALMOND HOUSING ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2024



## RAAC

*... more on page 2*



## Tenant Energy Support Service

*... more on page 3*



## A message from John...

*Hi all... I hope this finds you and your family/friends all well. With September now upon us, I hope that you were able to make the most of a disappointing summer weather wise.*



*Reflecting on previous updates which I have provided in Almond View, it is pleasing to note that we have seen continued improvement with our repairs following the work our team have been carrying out with the contractor since this time last year. The number of outstanding repair jobs has continued to reduce significantly and is now at its lowest level for several years. I hope that you have seen improvement in this area, and we will continue to work hard to further improve.*

*We recently held our Annual General Meeting (AGM) and it was encouraging to see so many of our tenants there. We had a chance to reflect on the financial year 2023/24 during which we continued to focus on service delivery and supporting our customers as much as possible. You will note within the newsletter an update on Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) and the significant work which will be undertaken over an 18-month period. Clearly this represents a significant challenge for those tenants affected and the organisation, but we will be doing everything we can to ensure that the process is as smooth as possible.*

*As part of the wider work we do in the community, the Board of our subsidiary, Almond Enterprises Ltd (AEL), have recently approved a business case to introduce a training scheme which provides an initial opportunity for a trainee to join the team at AEL. The first step on the project is the recruitment of a multi-skilled supervisor and it is great to see employment and training opportunities being provided locally. As the new scheme grows, we hope to be able to offer more opportunities in future.*

*As we continue to mark the 30th anniversary of Almond HA, I would, as ever, encourage you to get involved in a way that suits you. The organisation has taken great strides over the past 30 years, and this would not have been possible without the valued input from our customers. Please get in touch if you are interested in finding out more.*

*Alternatively, please do not hesitate to contact me personally at [john.davidson@almondha.org.uk](mailto:john.davidson@almondha.org.uk) if you would like to propose any ways in which we can do better or if you have a particular issue that you would like us to address.*

John Davidson, Chief Executive



## RAAC update

In late August we wrote to customers whose homes contain Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) to advise them of the outcome of the surveys carried out in their homes. In all cases where a property contains a loft hatch, we will need to remove one or two RAAC panels. This work is likely to involve customers being moved out of their homes for a short time while work is carried out. We are in the early stages of planning this work which we hope will commence in late 2024/early 2025 and are pulling together a team to manage this project to ensure we can support customers during this work in their home. It is likely that some work originally planned to be carried out across our stock in 2025/26 will be delayed to allow this essential work to go ahead, however, we will keep you updated regarding works which will be completed during 2025/26 once our plans have been finalised.

## Artex in your home

Please be aware the Artex in your home may contain traces of asbestos. If you are planning to do any work which involves more than painting the Artex, please get in touch and we will arrange to have it tested by a specialist company. There is no risk unless it is disturbed.

# Changing Tenant Receipts

As mentioned in our newsletter last year, we have recently changed the way we send tenant receipts and repairs satisfaction surveys. From September, we have replaced paper repair receipts and surveys with text messages or emails (if we don't have your mobile number).

The text or email includes key information about the repair and provides a link to a short survey for you to complete once the repair has been carried out. This change has been made to improve customer services, increase response rates and to be more environmentally friendly.

Don't worry, if you don't have a mobile phone or email, you will still receive the paper copy as normal.

Please get involved and help us to improve our services by completing the survey after your repair has been carried out.



## Tenant Energy Support from CHANGEWORKS.

Thanks to funding from Energy Action Scotland, we are now able to offer a brand-new energy advice service.

The Tenant Energy Support service will offer access to extensive, specialist support via Changeworks Affordable Warmth Service, Scotland's leading environmental charity and experts in energy advice.

Who the service is for:

The service is designed to provide something for all Almond HA tenants and offers a range of support to help with varying challenges around energy use in the home. Tenants who will benefit most from support will be those living in or at risk of fuel poverty, new tenants moving into a home, tenants who may be adjusting to new heating systems, tenants with billings issues, more vulnerable tenants or those with specific needs who may require personalised support.

Almond HA will be hosting our annual **Get Ready for Winter Event** on 14 November 2024 from 10.30am until 12.30pm. Please pop a note in your calendar and come along for a coffee, a chat with the team from Changeworks and meet people from a wide range of other support services too.

In the meantime, if you would like to access this service, please email: [enquiries@almondha.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@almondha.org.uk) or call the team on **01506 439291**.

## AGM...

Thank you to everyone who came along to our AGM on Thursday 5th September. The meeting took place in Mercure, Livingston and we were pleased to welcome a total of 25 members and guests.

If you would like to attend next year, you can become a member of Almond HA for a fee of £1. This gives you the right to attend and vote at AGMs. It also gives you the right to nominate another Member for Board election or stand for election to the Board yourself.

Find out more on our website:

[www.almondha.org.uk/  
your-views/getting-involved](http://www.almondha.org.uk/your-views/getting-involved).



# We have a winner!

Congratulations to Mr & Mrs Fyfe who won our Almond Award for this quarter. Mrs Fyfe was delighted to be presented with **£250 worth of vouchers** for 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 **Winter 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 Mr & Mrs Fyfe and a big thanks to all our tenants!*

## AEL Recruitment

Almond Enterprises Ltd (AEL) are looking for a Cleaning & Environmental Operative to join the team.

AEL is a social enterprise and wholly owned subsidiary of Almond Housing Association, carrying out a range of high quality, good value cleaning and environmental services across West Lothian.

To find out more about the job and apply, please visit [www.almondha.org.uk/about-us/current-vacancies/ael-cleaning-and-environmental-operative](http://www.almondha.org.uk/about-us/current-vacancies/ael-cleaning-and-environmental-operative) for the full job description and application form. The closing date for applications will be Monday 7th October 2024.



## 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
Home Energy Scotland	0808 808 2282	Refuse Collection	01506 280 000	West Lothian Council	01506 280 000