



## CONTACT US

Our office is open from 9.00am until 1.00pm and 2.00pm until 5.00pm Monday to Thursday and from 9.00am until 1.00pm and 2.00pm until 4.00pm on Friday.

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

This statement is the basis on which we build and provide all our services.

It helps us make sure we try to meet the needs of those from all walks of life, and show respect, fairness and understanding in everything we do.

In practice, it means as a landlord and service provider we try to treat everyone fairly regardless of their personal characteristics - including for example, their age, sex, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief; or their

marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, or pregnancy and maternity status.

We also firmly oppose all forms of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

We do this not only because of our legal responsibilities, but because it is a vital part of who we are and what we are trying to achieve as an organisation. It also helps us become better at what we do.

## Suggestions to Improve our Newsletter

Like any other part of our service, we always welcome suggestions for improvement. Is there anything you would like to see in or out of our newsletter? We appreciate positive feedback as well as suggestions to make things better. So please call or drop us an email [abronhillha@btconnect.com](mailto:abronhillha@btconnect.com) and we will take on board all suggestions.

## Useful Numbers

Below are some numbers which may be of use:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Police Scotland</b> – 101           | <b>Council Tax and</b>                 |
| <b>Crimestoppers</b> – 0800 555 111    | <b>Housing Benefit</b> – 01698 403 210 |
| <b>Citizens Advice</b> – 01236 723 201 | <b>North Line</b> – 01698 403 110      |
| <b>Benefits Agency</b> – 0345 604 3719 |  |
| <b>Scottish Water</b> – 0845 601 8855  |  |

Call North Line for all your bulk uplifts, pest control, abandoned vehicles, road and lighting, graffiti removal, Animal Welfare Officer and Environmental Protection Officer.

If you can think of any numbers that would be useful to list in this section please let us know.



Tel: 01236 457948  
Email: [abronhillha@btconnect.com](mailto:abronhillha@btconnect.com) | Web: [www.abronhillha.org.uk](http://www.abronhillha.org.uk)

Registered under the Co-operative and Community Benefits Societies Act 2014 (No 2443 R(S)) and with Scottish Housing Regulator (No HCB 275 AL)  
Abronhill Housing Association is a registered Scottish Charity (Number SC033116) Tax Reference CR533055

## Out of Hours Repairs

If you need to report an emergency during this time please contact the following contractors:

All emergency repairs (non gas central heating related)  
RODGERS AND JOHNSTON  
0844 247 2120

Gas central heating breakdown:  
SALTIRE 0845 606 1555.

Please contact our office on 01236 457948 during normal working hours to report any faults.

Gas escapes should be reported IMMEDIATELY TO 0800 111 999

Our answer machine also details the above numbers. Please keep them handy.

## Senior Officer Services – Changes

Since July 2014 Abronhill Housing Association has received Senior Officer Services from Forgewood Housing Co-operative and Garrion People's Housing Co-operative.

This agreement has now ended by mutual consent. The Management Committee reviewed the available options and agreed that the preferred option was for the Association to remain independent and receive Senior Officer Services for an initial period of two years with a further option appraisal being carried out before the end of the two year period. Following interviews and visits to RSL's who completed detailed submissions the committee agreed to enter into a two year agreement with Hillhead Housing Association who are based in Kirkintilloch.



Paul Broadwith, Chairperson with Stephen Macintyre.

Our new Senior Officer is Stephen Macintyre who is currently the Director of Hillhead Housing Association. He has worked there since 2003 and previously was the Housing Manager and Director at Faifley Housing Association in Clydebank.

## Public Holidays...

PLEASE NOTE OUR OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ON THE FOLLOWING DATES:  
GLASGOW FAIR: FRIDAY 12 JULY 2019 AND MONDAY 15 JULY 2019  
SEPTEMBER WEEKEND:  
FRIDAY 27 SEPTEMBER 2019 AND MONDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 2019



Please like our facebook page Abronhill Housing Association and check regularly for up to date information on the Association's activities.

Visit our website at [www.abronhillha.org.uk](http://www.abronhillha.org.uk)

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## Rent Increase -Tenant Feedback

Following consultation with tenants on this year's rent increase we asked for feedback from our tenants on a proposed increase of 3.4%.

- 4 tenants responded to our request for feedback.
- 2 tenants found the proposed rent increase options reasonable.
- 2 tenants replied without commenting on the proposal.

The proposed increase and feedback were discussed at our management committee meeting on 17 January 2019 where it was agreed to increase rents by 3.4% from the 28 March 2019.

## Tenant Satisfaction Survey

We will be carrying out a tenants satisfaction survey this autumn. We will write to all tenants nearer the time to confirm who we have commissioned to carry out the survey. We would appreciate your co-operation in completing the survey.



— SATISFACTION SURVEY 2019 +

## New Committee Members

We aim to provide good quality affordable housing for people who want to live in Abronhill by giving a high quality housing service controlled by local people.

We are looking to recruit new committee members who wish to make a difference to their community.

Our committee meetings are normally held once a month on a Thursday evening between 6pm – 7.30pm. We also provide training to our Committee Members to give them the skills they require.

If you are interested in joining our Management Committee or would like more information please contact our office. We can arrange for you to come along to a meeting as an observer so that you can see first-hand how our committee works, what items are discussed and how you can become involved.

We look forward to hearing from you.



## 100th Birthday Celebration

In December 2018 the Association's tenant **MRS ANNE SCHMELTER** celebrated her 100th birthday. Andrew Moore presented Mrs Schmelter with a basket of flowers on behalf of the Association.

## Advice For Tenants and Residents (AFTAR) Project

As you will know the Association has worked in partnership for a number of years now to provide all of our tenants and residents with the unique in house AFTAR project. The financial gains for our tenants has been nothing short of remarkable and we encourage anyone who needs advice and assistance to make an appointment with one of the fully trained vastly experienced advisors.

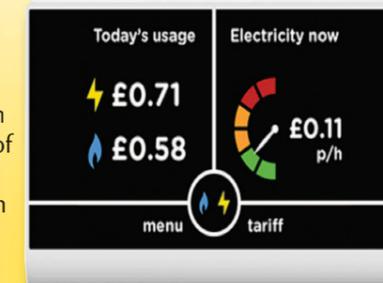
During the last financial year over £42,000 financial gains were realised for our tenants.

Appointments are available on Tuesday's or Friday's and you can either come into our office to meet with an advisor or request a home visit. Please contact our office to make an appointment.

As the advisors are not based locally please note that if two appointments are missed without them being cancelled or rearranged in advance then any further appointments will be refused and you will be directed to the drop in bureau at the town centre, Cumbernauld.

### AFTAR Energy Project - Smart Meters

1. SMART meter technology is now available in an upgraded version which will allow ease of transfer from company to company should tenants wish to do so. The upgraded version is the only version being installed.
2. SMART meters work on same principal as mobile phone and if you receive a good signal in your home from your mobile phone then there would be high expectation SMART meters would function reliably.
3. The Gas meter, if installed, would communicate with the electricity meter and the electricity meter would then communicate with the supplier and deliver both Gas and Electric readings. This eliminates the need for tenants to supply readings and should ensure accurate billing.
4. The display monitor which may be supplied for use in the home is NOT the SMART meter it simply serves to display energy costs at any given time and can be switched off. If it is accidentally damaged it does NOT mean a loss of supply.
5. It is not mandatory to have a SMART meter installed but some Companies may insist a SMART meter be installed for some cheaper tariffs
6. It would be expected install would be around 1 hour and an adult would be required to be in property to ensure safe practice when meters are being de-installed/installed. (Household appliances being switched off and back on as required)
7. The SMART meter itself would not automatically mean lower costs it is only an aid to high light consumption and possibly help to reduce unnecessary consumption. It could however give access to cheaper tariffs.
8. If further information is required please contact:



**Motherwell & Wishaw Citizens Advice Bureau on 01698 265349 or contact Ian Symington on 07741 332028**

## Fire & Smoke Alarms: Changes to the Law

Upcoming legislation will extend the existing high standard of protection from smoke and fire – currently required in private rented housing – to all homes in Scotland.

All homes will be required to have:

- One smoke alarm installed in the room most frequently used for general daytime living purposes
- One smoke alarm in every circulation space on each storey, such as hallways and landings
- One heat alarm installed in every kitchen
- All alarms should be ceiling mounted
- All heat & smoke alarms should be interlinked

There will also be a requirement for carbon monoxide detectors to be fitted where there is a carbon-fuelled appliance or a flue.

There will be a two year period for compliance once the regulations are in force, with all detectors to be installed by February 2021. The Association will be in contact in due course to arrange installation of the new alarms.

### IS YOUR SMOKE DETECTOR WORKING

REMEMBER THAT detectors should be tested on a weekly basis to ensure they are working correctly. If the detectors are not working, please report this immediately to the Association. If you have battery detectors, please ensure that you replace the batteries as soon as they need replacing.



## Performance Update

Here is an update on our performance as at 31 March 2019. We have also referred to which Indicator within the Scottish Social Housing Charter each performance area relates to.

Area of Performance	Scottish Social Housing Charter Indicator No	Scottish Average for 2017/18	Association performance at 31 Mar 2018	Association performance at 31 Mar 2019
% of rent lost through properties being empty in the year	34	0.7%	0.32%	0.6%
Average length of time taken to relet properties in the previous quarter	35	30.7 days	15 days	17 days
Anti social behaviour cases resolved within locally agreed targets in the year	19	87.9%	100%	100%
Average length of time for emergency repairs	11	4 Hours	2.08 Hours	2.44 Hours
Average length of time for non-emergency repairs	12	6.4 days	5 days	3.5 Days
Percentage of repairs completed right first time	13	92.2%	90.99%	93.83%

## Complaints Performance

Between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019, the Association received 9 complaints at frontline and 4 Stage 2 escalated complaints that required input from a manager.

### Summary of Stage 2 complaints

Reason for complaint	Outcome of the Complaint	Any follow up action necessary?
Decor damaged following leak	Decoration vouchers offered which were accepted	No
Appealing offer of decoration vouchers following repairs relating to dampness	Revised alternative compensation arrangement agreed	No
Items damaged in cupboard due to dampness issues in property	Claim was passed onto insurance company	Claim rejected by insurance company
Loss of heating through windows of property	Claim was passed onto insurance company	Claim rejected by insurance company

## Housing (Scotland) Act 2014

In 2014 the Scottish Government passed a new Housing (Scotland) Act which was to change some of the rights and responsibilities of tenants; and would also give some additional powers to providers of social housing such as Councils and Housing Associations.

One of the first changes implemented was the end of the Right to Buy in August 2017.

Most of the other changes in the Act do not begin to take effect until 1st May or 1st November 2019.

The changes which may affect most tenants were notified to you by letter in September 2018 which advised that you must keep the Association up-to-date about who is living in your home.

If you don't do this, others in your home may lose their future rights to have a joint tenancy with you; or to take over the tenancy if you leave or die.

If they have not always lived with you, their rights begin 12 months after you have notified the Association that they are living with you. If you did this before 1st November 2018 then they will have these rights when the law comes into effect on 1st November 2019.

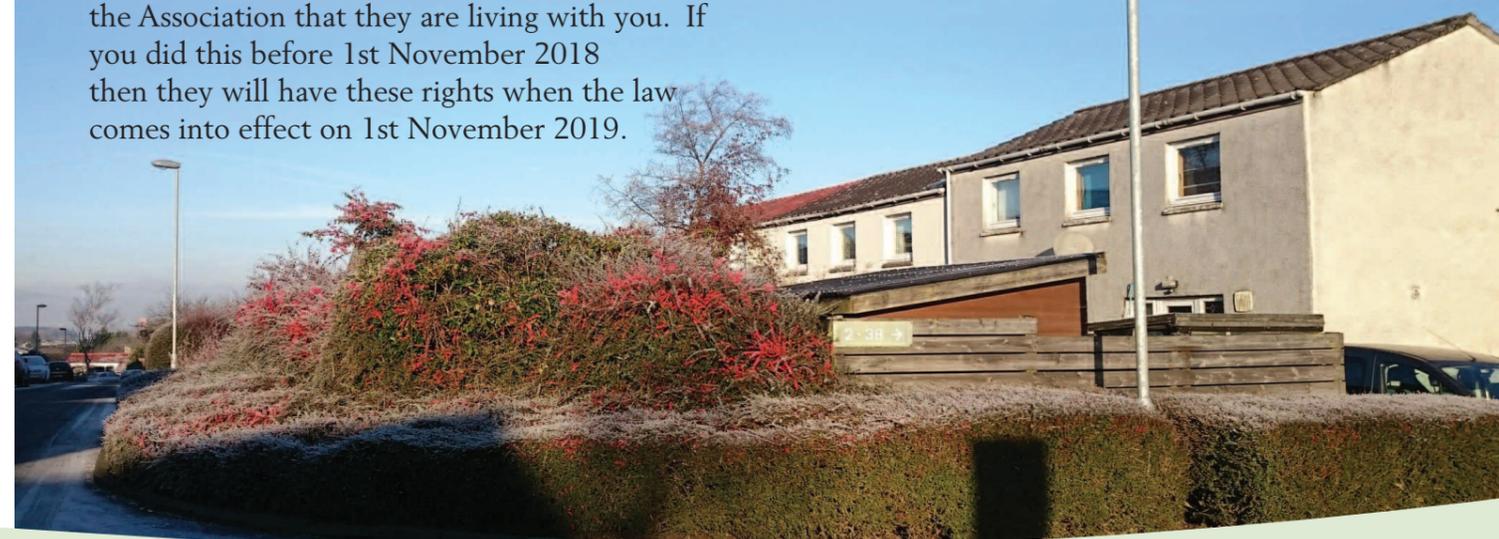
If you now have someone living with you that you have not told us about, you are strongly advised to let us know about them as soon as possible.

In addition to these changes, there are also changes to the law which take effect on 1st May 2019, in relation to anti-social behavior. These changes may make it slightly easier to take court action against tenants and their families or visitors who behave anti-socially.

Although the Acts changes the terms of your Tenancy Agreement, we are advised that you will not need to sign a new agreement. The provisions of the Act will simply come into effect from 1st May or 1st November 2019 and all existing tenants will be bound by them.

If however, you move home either with the Association or to another social landlord, after 1st May 2019, you will need to sign the new version of the Tenancy Agreement.

**If you have any questions about any of this, please contact your Housing Officer.**



## Universal Credit

### Universal Credit scams

We have been informed that there are people currently 'scamming' claimants out of their Universal Credit by offering to help them make claims, getting all their personal details and then making off with the advance payment. If you want advice about claiming UC you should seek help from a reputable agency such as the AFTAR project run by the Citizens Advice Bureau. (See page 3).

### Two child limits

The government have recently changed the rules in relation to people with more than 2 children claiming Universal Credit (UC) which means that if you have children born before April 2017 you will have a child element included for them.

However, any third or subsequent children born after April 2017 will still be excluded from Universal Credit unless they meet one of the exemptions.

### Court case loss

You may have seen recently that the DWP lost a court case about UC Assessment Periods and how to treat earned income. When you are paid early, such as in the cases of Christmas or your payday falling on the weekend, or another public holiday, the UC system will count you as having 2 months earnings in the one month and this could end your UC award completely. The High Court ruled that the DWP have been treating income incorrectly by doing this. If you have been personally affected by this system of calculating your earnings you should seek advice.

### Changes in Rent Charge

If you are currently in receipt of UC you will need to put a change of circumstances on your journal to tell the DWP if your rent has gone up. If you have not already done so you need to do this as a matter of urgency. The DWP sent out a 'to do' to remind you to do this. If you leave this

for too long you may not receive the new rent amount in your award which could cause you to get into rent arrears and the difference will not be made up at a later date.

### Best Start Grant

From the 3rd June 2019, applications will be opened to the public for the extension of the Best Start Grant Scheme. The School Age Element is a one off payment of £250 for children of school age from low-income families to buy educational toys and after-school activities. Parents of the child will need to be in receipt of a qualifying benefit which includes Universal Credit, JSA, ESA, Income Support, housing benefit, tax credits or pension credits.

You can find out more information and how to apply at <https://www.mygov.scot/best-start-grant/>

Tax credits for new claimants have been abolished since February this year. Only existing claimants, and people who meet the severe disability premium (SDP) gateway for UC, will be able to continue to receive Working and Child Tax Credits. Existing claimants will still need to complete and return renewals in the July deadline, otherwise, their claim will be closed. If you have been in receipt of tax credits any time in the financial year from 2018-2019 you may still receive an end of year notice and will need to check the information on this. People who do not already receive tax credits, and who do not meet the SDP gateway, will have to claim UC instead. If you are pension age and become responsible for children you can now get financial assistance for them in your pension credit claim.

**UC** Universal Credit

## RECHARGEABLE REPAIRS

If you lose your keys or lock them in your house and need a joiner to gain access, the Association will charge you for the cost.

If possible leave a spare set with a relative or trusted neighbour. You could offer to do the same for them and save you both the worry and expense.



## ALTERATIONS OR IMPROVEMENTS

Please remember if you want to carry out an alteration or improvement in or around your home that you seek written permission from the Association in the first instance.

## DOG OWNERS

Please be a responsible dog owner and pick up after your dog. The Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act makes it an offence not to clear up after your dog. You can pick up free dog bags from our office.



**Tenancy Details** Please remember to advise the Association of any changes to your contact details to ensure that we have up to date information on our system.