

CORDALE HOUSING ASSOCIATION

NEWS



MAY 2007

HOUSING ASSOCIATION

RUMOUR MILL

The rumours we have heard and the truth revealed.....

Rumour number 1

The Association has started to allocate the apartments within the Very Sheltered Housing building.

The Truth is.....

The Association has not allocated any apartments within this building as yet. Currently we have taken names of applicants who are interested, but even this is not a guarantee of being allocated one of these apartments. The Association has not as yet devised the Allocation Policy & Process for these apartments. It is likely that this will be agreed after the summer 2007.

Rumour number 2

You need to come from outwith Renton to get a house.

The Truth is.....

This is not true. We have reported in previous newsletters that, in line with the Scottish Executive legislation, we cannot operate a housing list just for people from Renton; we need to have an open housing list. It is such a turnaround and is a credit to the village that people outwith the village want to stay in Renton; years ago the Association could not let its empty houses and many people were given up their tenancy and moving away – not now. Unfortunately we cannot satisfy demand – we have over 300 applicants on our housing list and very little turnover. See below for where people have been rehoused from over the last few years: -

Housed From	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007
Renton	31	24	15	6
Haldane	1	2	0	3
Bonhill	4	5	3	5
Alexandria	3	4	4	3
Dumbarton	6	3	1	4
Other Areas				
West Dunbartonshire	1	10	1	1
Outwith West Dunbartonshire	3	8	1	0

OFFICE REFURBISHMENT WORKS

The office and surrounding entrance will be undergoing some essential refurbishment works over the period Monday 23rd April 2007 to Friday 1st June 2007.

During this time should you require to call to the office to report a repair or make a general enquiry, it would be much appreciated if you could telephone the office on 01389 721216 or email us at info@cordalehousing.org.uk and we will either take the details over the telephone or arrange to visit you. If you require to visit the office we have set up a temporary entrance to the right of the normal entrance that you would normally use. Signage is in place.

We apologise for the inconvenience during this time.

Gas Servicing

Cordale Housing Association will rigorously adopt and follow procedures to ensure that it is meeting its obligations as a landlord as confirmed in Gas Safety (Installation and Use Regulations 1994) (amended 1998).

The Association has a legal obligation to carry out a gas safety inspection in every property with a gas supply every year. This is also a condition of the Association's tenancy agreement.

Why do we service your boiler very year? We service this so that the whole system is checked to minimise repair problems throughout the year and also so that there is no danger of carbon monoxide poisoning which is dangerous to people's health.

If you are not in and a card is left please contact the engineer, who is currently E-On Energy Services on 0141 613 4439 or you can contact the office and we will arrange the visit for you.

Have you seen our website yet?

If you have seen it, but haven't had a look for a while log on to www.cordalehousing.org.uk. We have been updating the website over the last few weeks. We are also delighted to have been selected by Communities Scotland, to participate in an audit on Openness and Access to Information, which will include Communities Scotland examining the content of our website.

If you haven't seen it, it's worth a look!!

OFFICE CLOSED EMERGENCY REPAIR NUMBERS FOR CORDALE TENANTS

For gas central heating and no hot water emergency repairs, please contact E'on Energy Services 0141 613 4439

For all other emergency repairs, please contact PME 08459 30 30 31

For gas escapes, please contact Transco 0800 111 999

For complete power failure, please contact Scottish Power 0845 2727 111

Please cut out for future use



Did you know you have a contract with the Association?

It's called your tenancy agreement.

The undernoted provides you with a simple explanation of your rights and things you must do. It is for everyone who rents their house from Cordale Housing Association.

What is a tenancy agreement?

Cordale Housing Association provides you with a written tenancy agreement. This is a contract between you and us setting out the rights and responsibilities of your tenancy. Your tenancy agreement with us is a Scottish Secure Tenancy, which provides you with certain rights that are undernoted below: -

What you can expect from us:

Peace of Mind

As a Scottish secure tenant you cannot be evicted from your home without a court order, which would only happen in extreme cases, for example if you failed to maintain a payment arrangement to clear rent arrears or if you behaved in an anti-social manner towards your neighbours.

Passing on your tenancy

If you die, your tenancy can be taken over by either:

- Your husband or wife
- Your partner
(as long as they have been living with you and have been registered as staying with you on the Association's records for a minimum of 6 months)
- A joint tenant
- Another member of your family who was living with you when you died.

If none of these people are able to take over the tenancy it can be passed over to a carer who gave up their home to care for you or a member of your family before you died.

Joint tenancy

Anybody who lives in your house and uses it as his or her only home can apply for a joint tenancy. We will agree to this unless we have good reason for not doing so.

Sharing your home / use of your home

You can sublet your tenancy, exchange your house or take in a lodger. You can also sign over your tenancy to anyone who has

lived in your house as his or her only home for a minimum of 6 months. You must get written permission from us before you can do this.

Repairs

We provide an extensive repairs service within given timescales. If certain repairs are not carried out on time we call this your "right to repair"; guidelines relating to Right to Repair are defined by the Scottish Executive.

Home improvements and compensation

At the end of your tenancy we will compensate you for improvements you make to your home. You must have received written permission from us before carrying out the work. You must also keep receipts.

Keeping you informed

We provide you with a tenancy agreement and explain it to you. We also provide information about our complaints procedure and information about the right to buy your home.

If you ask we will also provide information on our policies such as how we allocate houses, carry out repairs and maintenance and set rent levels.

Consulting with you

We have a policy of asking tenants what they think before making or changing any management policies, such as how we carry out repairs and maintain homes.

Tenant groups can register with us and will be consulted on how we manage and maintain your home. Further details of how we consult tenants are set out in our participation strategy, which is available at our office.

If you want to be consulted, let us know and we will add your name to our consultation list.

What you have to do: -

You must make sure you and anyone living with you sticks to reasonable rules contained within your tenancy agreement: -

- Please make sure you pay your rent on time (due in full on 28th of each month)

Your house and shared areas:

- You must live in your house. If you are going to be away for more than three weeks, let us know.

- Be a good neighbour.
- You must take your turn in cleaning the common parts, such as close cleaning.
- You must maintain your garden if you have one.

Respect for others:

• You must not behave anti-socially. You are also responsible for the behaviour of those living with you and of your visitors.

Repairs, maintenance, improvements and alterations:

- You must report any repairs that need carried out
- Allow us access to carry out repairs (we will give you a minimum of 24 hours notice).
- Ask for permission before carrying out any home improvements.

• Provide access on an annual basis to enable the Annual Gas Safety Inspection be carried out to the central heating and hot water boiler

Pets:

- You should ask us for permission to keep a pet. All birds must be kept in a suitable cage. Pigeons cannot be kept as pets.

Ending the tenancy

• Give us 28 days written notice when you are ending your tenancy.

We may enforce the tenancy agreement: -

A breach of your tenancy agreement may result in Cordale Housing Association taking action against you and/or charging you for any losses we have suffered. A Court Action could ultimately lead to your eviction, however this is a last resort.

If your neighbours are behaving anti-socially you can report this to us confidentially and we will take action against them. You can also call the Police on 01389 823000 or the Councils out of hours mobile team on 01389 772049.

LET US HELP YOU

If you have any questions about your tenancy agreement or any of the information contained in this newsletter please ask your Housing Services Officer, Yvonne Reilly, for advice by telephoning our office on 01389 721216 or email us info@cordalehousing.org.uk

Looking after your garden

Looking after your grass is like looking after your figure, fairly easy. It is like your diet, if you feed it correctly, it looks great.

It is like your hair, if you trim it twice a month, you look great.

The following are a few easy steps in giving you less work and results in a great looking and well conditioned garden lawn.

1. In Spring, (End of March, beginning of April.) An application of weed and feed, B.&Q or Homebase or similar own brand is as good as any other.
2. Cut the grass twice a month, but not to short in the first month.
3. In Summer if the grass is looking poor or yellowing it is asking you for some more feed. If weeds are starting to show then another feed and weed application will be required.
4. **DO NOT** use normal weed and feed after August, but use an Autumn weed and feed, this feeds the roots only and helps keep the grass healthy for the following season.
5. If frost is on the ground, do not walk on the grass as this causes damage to the grass.



Planned Maintenance Works 2006/2007

- Servicing of all tenants heating systems
- High level gutter cleaning to refurb blocks

Garden Competition 2007 & Best Close Competition 2007

Yes, it's that time of year again. Judging has already started!!!

Hire garden tools - free of charge

Garden Stations are situated throughout the Estate and you can borrow garden equipment at any time.

They are located at: -

47 Grant Crescent, 19 Stirling Street

5 McFarlane Place, 1 New Cordale Road

We are always looking for tenants to hold garden equipment and give out to tenants for their use during the summer. If you would like to volunteer please contact Yvonne Reilly, Housing Services Officer.



Estate Management through the tenant's eyes

At the Rent Review Consultation meeting held in November 2006, one tenant, Pat Weir, kindly agreed to take part in a Spring/Summer estate management walkabout with Yvonne Reilly, Housing Services Officer. This is to let Pat see what type of things the Association looks for during an estate inspection, for example common repairs etc. This will also give us an insight into what a tenant thinks about the quality of the estate management and hopefully we will learn more about what you, the tenant, expects. If anyone else would like to take part in this walkabout, please contact Yvonne at the office.

Our Performance - 2001 to 2007

Performance Indicator	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
Average re-let time for void properties shown in calendar days	11 working days not calendar days	28 calendar days	25 calendar days	18 calendar days	5 calendar days	16 calendar days
Average let time for new build properties from date of handover - shown in calendar days - all let on date of handover	0	0	0	0	0	0
Void Rent Loss: Percentage of annual income lost during the year through voids - target no more than 1.5%	0.3%	0.5%	0.4%	0.5%	0.04%	0.24%
Number of housing list applicants	166	122	217	272	378	298
Number of section 5 homeless referrals received and housed - where not rehoused by Association, there has not been any available properties	N/A	1 recd and 1 housed	10 recd and 4 housed	8 received and 6 housed	6 received and 3 housed	7 received and 5 housed
Gross rent arrears as a % of rental income	10.07%	8.06%	4.49%	4.2%	4.2%	3.0%
Non technical arrears as a % of rental income	5.4%	4.92%	3.37%	2.9%	2.9%	1.7%
Technical arrears as a % of rental income	4.67%	3.14%	1.12%	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%
Former tenant arrears as a % of rental income	1.79%	0.88%	0.29%	0.41%	0.24%	0.31%
Percentage of tenants in receipt of full housing benefit	69%	56%	54%	53%	50%	50%
Percentage of tenants in receipt of part housing benefit	8%	11%	14%	11%	16%	14%
Average Repair Response Times: Percentage of repairs completed within the timescale	92.5%	94%	98%	97%	97%	98%

YOUR RADIO COMES TO RENTON

Radio listeners were switched on to Renton's remarkable regeneration when Cordale Housing Association took to the airwaves. Your Radio's Live@Lunch team broadcast the one-hour show live from the village over five days in April. The show visited Cordale's offices and spoke to tenants and staff. The team also dropped into the Carman Centre, Integrated Healthy Living Centre and Spar shop to chat to workers and service users.

Presenters Gavin Wallace and Dave Ross found out the benefits of being a Cordale tenant when they chatted to Mrs Norah Cooper.

The village pensioner was interviewed on air and told the pair all about her "beautiful" Cordale home and her "fantastic" landlord. She said: "I had called Cordale that morning to report a repair and when the workman came round to fix it later that day the radio presenters were with him".

"I just think Cordale are fantastic. I can't describe what a difference this house has made to me. I keep saying to myself 'God on high Norah what did you do to deserve this. It's beautiful, safe and I feel secure. The neighbours are great and if there was ever any problem I know I can just phone Cordale. Even if there are any repairs you just call them and they come out that day or the next. It's wonderful. I'm so happy here, it's changed my whole life and I was delighted to tell the world that on the radio."

Cordale Director Stephen Gibson, Chairperson Archie Thomson and Committee members Tom McKeown and Isobel Barr also chatted about the transformation of the village and the association's work in Renton as well as its plans for future developments including the multi-million pound scheme at Dalquhurn.



Registered Tenant Organisations

Many residents make their views known to their landlord through a residents group. Cordale recognises and seeks to support both formally constituted resident organisations as well as more informal groups that may have emerged due to a particular issue. Informal groups will receive support 'in kind' for example staff support to get started or help with photocopying. In order to receive any financial support or resources all groups must have a written constitution which everyone can see, a Committee and accounting records, and show how it will represent members interests. It must also comply with Cordale's Equal Opportunities policy.

To find out more about how to form a registered resident organisation, Resident Group Starter Packs are available in the office reception.

Office opening hours: -

Mon, Tues, Thur & Fri – 9.00am to 12.30pm,
1.30pm to 5.00pm

Wed – closed am, open 1.30pm to 5.00pm

Evening home appointments can be arranged by calling 01389 721216.

Why not become a member?

Being a member of Cordale Housing Association entitles you to attend the Association's Annual General Meeting, held in September every year. At this meeting you can have a say in the Association's activities.

You may even to take being a member a step further, by becoming a Management Committee member. The Management Committee is made up of voluntary members of the community, who receive no payment, but make decisions about the housing and environment of Cordale and who also have the responsibility for the recruitment of employed staff who look after the day to day running of the Association.

To join, simply complete the undernoted and return it to our office at 1 Red Row, Renton, with a payment of £1.00, which buys you lifetime membership of the Association.

Name

Age

Address

Signature

Date



CONTACT US

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Tel no 01389 721216, Fax no 01389 755990

email: info@cordalehousing.org.uk

web: www.cordalehousing.org.uk

This newsletter can be made available in other languages, on tape, large print or Braille on request.

Cordale Housing Association is a recognised Scottish Charity (SC032859) and is registered under the Industrial & Provident Societies Act No. 2411 R(S) and with Communities Scotland No. HBC 259