



Hi and welcome to our June newsletter.

In this edition you will find a range of information about the activities of the Association.

Summer is nearly upon us and hopefully we will see lots of entrants for our annual garden competition. This year we are including an award for the most improved garden. So get your garden tools out and you never know you may be one of the lucky winners! Please come along to our Strawberry Tea event in aid of breast cancer

on the **20th June 2008**. The staff are hosting the event and are keen for as many residents to come along and support this good cause. Meantime if you have any views on the content of our newsletter please complete the tear off slip below and return it to the office. On behalf of the Committee of Management and all the staff at Larkfield Housing Association I wish you and your family a warm and pleasant summer!

Agnes McMillan
Chairperson

Environmental Schools Arts Project



The 6th Schools Environmental Art Exhibition took place on Wednesday 26th March 2008 at Ravenscraig Sports Centre. Once again it was a superb exhibition of the children's work. Guest Speaker Linda Megson who is the Head of Schools for Creative Industries with James Watt College opened our exhibition. The exhibition was well attended by parents, family & friends, Community Police officers, Community Wardens, local councillors, and other invited guests. The children had been working hard making local wildlife banners, play area designs, building models of houses for the community using recyclable material and life-size models of people who the children feel play an important role within the Larkfield environment. These included a policeman, lollipop man, Father Benedict from St Andrew's church and a local Head Teacher who will remain nameless! Each school focussed on different aspects of the environment, especially within Larkfield, how their actions affect it and what they can do to improve it. Larkfield Housing Association would like to say a very big thank you to **The Community Police, Inverclyde Council, Patten & Prentice Solicitors, Quality Gas Services, Link Group, Land Engineering, Cleaner, Greener, Safer, Stronger Initiative, Lower Clyde Greenspace**. We will be planning for next years event in the coming months.

Office Closure

July 2008 and in September the dates are Friday 5th September & Monday 8th September, 2008.

Please Note that this year the Association will be closed on the Greenock July & September public holidays. These are **Friday 4th July & Monday 7th July 2008** and in September the dates are **Friday 5th September & Monday 8th September, 2008**.

Its that time of year again when staff are out and

Garden Competition



about in the estate carrying out garden inspections but instead of the staff compiling lists of the best gardens this year the Management Committee thought it would be a good idea for Larkfield **RESIDENTS** to Nominate a Garden which you think should win a prize. This year we are also looking for the Most Improved Garden. **Prize Info:** as in previous years there will be 2 competitions . a Tenant Competition and an Owner Competition with a First, Second and Third Prizes to be won and an additional prize for the most improved garden. You can make your nominations either by completing our tear-off slip or by phoning or visiting our office. The Short Listing of entries and judging will be as in previous years. **Nominations must be in no later than 18th July 2008.**

So if you have been taking notes from the Chelsea Flower Show, now is the time to start putting your plans into action.

Rent Free Weeks

The summer rent-free weeks are on **7th & 14th July 2008.** Remember however if you

have an arrangement to pay towards any rent arrear you should continue to make payments during this period. If you are unsure please contact a member of the Housing Management Team on 01475 630930.

The winner of Feb/Mar is Mrs Cummings 101 Nairn Road,

Repair Prize Draw

Greenock. The Winner of Apr/May is Suzanne Harris, 122 Banff Rd, Greenock **Congratulations**, Please remember to return your repair receipts to ensure your entry to the next prize draw.



Repairs Focus Group

Larkfield Housing Association regularly reviews its Policies and Procedures with the help of tenants, owners and interested parties. In April 2008 it was time to review the Repairs and Maintenance Policy. A Repairs Focus Group was formed consisting of 4 tenants and 2 Committee members with 2 members of staff facilitating the Group. Over the course of 3 lively meetings the group discussed a variety of repairs-related issues including response times, targets, rechargeable repairs, capital works and much more. The group came up with a number of recommendations that will now be put to the Committee of Management's June meeting. We will report on any progress in our next Newsletter. Also a consultation letter will be sent to all our tenants outlining the proposals for their comments and feedback.

If you would like to take part in any of the Association's Focus Groups or have any comments on any aspect of the Association's work please feel free to use the tear off slip provided to let us know.

AGM

The date for your diary is **Tuesday 23rd September 2008.** The AGM is an opportunity for you to hear what the Association has been doing all year and to let us hear your opinion regarding services etc. If you are not a member of the Association and would like to join please complete a form at the office and submit your £1 fee before the end of July to allow for consideration and approval at the August Committee and eligibility to attend the AGM.

Larkfield Housing Association, 14 Lothian Road, Larkfield, Greenock, PA16 0PG

Tel 01475 630930 / fax 01475 636111 e-mail info@larkfieldha.org.uk Web: www.larkfieldha.org.uk

Office Opening Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 9.00am to 12.30pm and 1.30pm to 4.00pm

Wednesday 9.00am to 12.30pm Closed Wednesday afternoon

Gas Servicing



As Landlords, we have a legal Responsibility under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 to ensure that all gas appliances and

flues are checked within 12 months of installation and at maximum intervals of 12 months, thereafter. The Regulations further state that landlords must take all reasonable steps to ensure that access is available for maintenance and safety checks. At Larkfield Housing Association we need your assistance in achieving the 100% servicing of those gas appliances. We normally give you 4-6 weeks advance warning that your gas servicing is due for renewal, which gives us a few weeks to arrange a date that suits you. However, if we cannot get access, we shall be required to serve notice and forcibly gain access to carry out the gas service on your due date. **PLEASE NOTE:** Gas Servicing checks are carried out for the safety of you and your family and with the continued co-operation of all tenants the Association will maintain our 100% performance in completing gas services on time.

Strawberry Tea

Our staff are trying to be more charitable and are holding a Strawberry Tea day in our office



at 14 Lothian Road on Friday 20th June between 10am & 4pm. Come along and sample some delicious home baking, biscuits, tea or coffee and as we are raising funds for Macmillan Cancer Research the staff are dressing down and will be wearing Pink. We look forward to seeing you on the day and raising some money for a worthy cause.

Committee Profile

Danny McMillan has been a member of the Committee since Larkfield



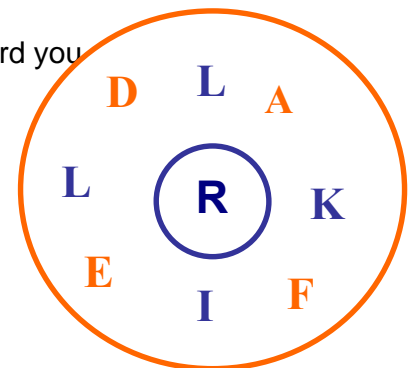
Housing Association came into being in 1997 having previously been a member of the Larkfield Repairs Board and the Chairperson of the Larkfield Scottish Homes Tenants Association committee. He has lived in Larkfield for almost all of his life and through his concern for this community he became involved with housing in the area. He is married with 5 children, 2 grandchildren and another on the way. He loves playing golf as often as possible and taking his caravan all around Scotland. We asked him some crucial questions:

QUESTION	ANSWER
Football or Rugby	Football
Tea or Coffee	Coffee
Holidays abroad or holidays at home	Home
Nights in or Nights out	Nights out
Movies or Books	Movies
Chinese food or Indian food	Chinese

Puzzle

How many words can you make from the letters in LARKFIELD? In this edition every word you make must include the letter in the middle of the Letter Circle, i.e. R. Write down all the words you can make on a separate sheet

and return it to our office at 14 Lothian Road. You can use each of the letters only once. We will announce the winner in the next edition of the Newsletter, and they will receive a £10 Gift Voucher. The puzzle in the last edition attracted a number of entries and the winner, Betty Lewis, came up with an impressive 80 words. Ms Lewis will receive a token of appreciation for her efforts from the Association. The runners-up were Jacqueline McNeil and Michelle McQuillan. Congratulations goes to them and well done to all those who entered. We look forward to receiving even more entries this time round.



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Right to Repair

Tenants have the right to have a small number of urgent repairs (up to the value of £350) carried out by the Association within a given

timescale. This is called the Right to Repairs scheme. If the Association's primary contractor fails to start the repair on time or starts the job on time but fails to complete the repair within the time limit set, the tenant has the right to instruct another LHA listed contractor to carry out the repair instead. In such circumstances, the tenant is also entitled to a compensation payment from the Association and levels of compensation are detailed below.

Qualifying Repairs:

Blocked flue to open fire or boiler; blocked or leaking foul drains, soil stacks or toilet pans where there is no other toilet in the house; blocked sink, bath or drain; insecure external window, door or lock; unsafe access path/step; leaks or flooding from water or heating pipes, tanks, cisterns; loss or partial loss or gas supply; loss or partial loss of space or water heating where no alternative heating is available; toilet not flushing where there is no other toilet in the house; unsafe power or lighting socket or electrical fitting; loss of water supply.

The following repairs must be completed within **3 working days**: (after the date of receipt of notification of the repair/inspection)

Partial loss of electric power; partial loss of water supply; loose or detached banister or hand rail; unsafe timber flooring or stair treads.

The following repairs must be completed within **7 working days**: (after the date of receipt of notification of the repair/inspection)

Mechanical extractor fan in internal kitchen or bathroom not working.

Compensation

If our primary contractor fails to start the qualifying repair within the set time limit, the tenant may instruct another contractor from our list to carry out the repair. The second contractor will then advise the Association of this and we will pay £15 compensation to the tenant for the inconvenience caused. If our primary contractor has started, but not completed, the repair within the maximum time, the tenant will also be entitled to £15 compensation. The second contractor has the same length of time to carry out the repair as the primary contractor. If they fail to carry out the repair within the time limit set, the tenant is entitled to a further £3 compensation for each working day until the repair is complete, up to a maximum of £100 per any one repair.

There may be circumstances under which it is not possible for the Association to complete the repair within the maximum response period. The following circumstances may fall into this category:

Repairs within a property's defects liability period, which the contractor is responsible for.

Repairs, which might involve an element of recharging to the tenants

Repairs, which are not the Landlord's responsibility

Where the repair was made safe whilst awaiting specialist components.

We have also enclosed with this Newsletter the Association's Repairs Leaflet. If you have any queries regarding this please do not hesitate to contact a member

NAME: _____

CONTACT NUMBER: _____

ADDRESS: _____

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN YOUR NEWSLETTER: _____

How can we improve the services we provide to you? _____

Please put your answers to the puzzle on a separate sheet and attach it to your tear off slip.