



Hi and welcome to our March newsletter. In this edition you will find key information about the annual rent increase, information for owner-occupiers, details of our school arts project, and a guide to recycling. We have also a new competition designed to test your "word" skills. The winner will be announced in the next edition of our newsletter.

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 happy and peaceful Easter.

Agnes McMillan, Chairperson

Tenant Participation Strategy

As you will remember from previous newsletters we reviewed our Tenant Participation Strategy and we set up a focus group to help us with this. The Committee of Management has now approved the recommendations from the focus group and the action plan for the Association's Tenant Participation Strategy for 2007/08 is as follows:

- To ensure that residents and tenants are involved in the continued development of the Community Safety Group and its work in the local area.
- Organise and promote an Environmental Art Schools project among local primary schools to help raise their awareness of their environment.
- Update the Association's website to make it more interactive and ensuring all information is up to date.
- To continue supporting community project such as the Community Garden & Fun Day Projects
- To continue promoting Public Meetings such as the AGM to ensure Maximum attendance.
- To continue to look to improving the Associations Newsletters.
- Maintain our established Register of Interested Tenants and Service Users for different areas of the Associations Services.
- Promote Mystery Shopping as a valuable tool to assess the quality of services provided by the Association
- Assess the potential use and implementation of Tenant Led Inspections.
- Provide new tenants with a "new tenant information and welcome pack" containing practical advice and basic household items such as cleaning materials and other useful household items.
- To provide a range of promotional items promoting the name and work of the Association and it's services. For example key rings to be provided to new tenants, fridge magnets containing key contact telephone numbers, etc.

If you would like a full copy of our new Tenant Participation Strategy please contact a member of the Housing Management Team on 01475 630930.

Larkfield Housing Association, 14 Lothian Road, Larkfield, Greenock, PA16 OPG

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

Owner Occupiers

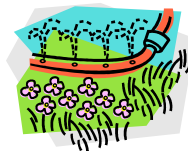
The Association will be issuing its annual Common Areas Maintenance Charge at the end of March for the period 31st March 2007 to 31st March 2008. This includes certain paths, grass and common raised footpaths in the area, which are the responsibility of the Association and other owners, and not the council. You have been given six weeks before **9th May 2008** to make payment, or there will be extra administrative charges added to your bill. Please note that if you bought your house during the year we will recalculate the sum due if you contact the office with your full details. Your bill should be paid by cheque or postal order. **The Association does not hold cash in the office.**

Owners this is for YOU!

In previous years we have successfully taken owners to court for non-payment of maintenance charges. The Sheriff granted decree jointly and severally against the defenders for payment to Larkfield Housing Association. Expenses and interest were added to these outstanding balances until full payment was received. Inhibitions were served for the first time 2 years ago. An inhibition causes an owner of a property the inability to sell or re-mortgage their property without repaying the debts due. A register of Inhibitions is kept in Edinburgh and all Inhibitions are served by Sheriff Officers. The costs are borne by the owner and not the Association. Both legal methods are successful and will be used against owners each year for non-payment of maintenance charges. Outstanding debts for the previous year are currently being assessed for court action.

Although the recent cold snap has had everyone scuttling indoors, the longer daylight hours and the first flowers of the year mean that spring is on the way. Lawnmowers that have lain rusting all winter will soon be seeing active service again. The Housing Management staff will be doing their rounds, so let's make Larkfield a place to be proud of! The Management Committee is currently looking at running the Garden Competition again this year with prizes to be won. So what are you waiting for! Here's to a warm summer and we hope that things will be looking rosy in Larkfield.

Spring's On the Way



Committee Profile



QUESTION	ANSWER
Football or Rugby	Football
Tea or Coffee	Coffee
Holidays abroad or at home	Both - hotels abroad, caravanning at home
Nights in or Nights out	Nights out
Movies or Books	Books

Jim Canning has been living in Larkfield over 35 years and was a member of the Larkfield Repairs Board before Larkfield Housing Association came into being. As a local resident on the Committee of Management he joined as a way of protecting the interests of owner-occupiers throughout Larkfield. He is married with 5 children and 6 grandchildren. He is a keen traveller and spends a lot of time caravanning and riding his motorbike!!! We asked him some crucial questions.

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Schools Art Project

For the fifth year running Larkfield Housing Association is proud to present another successful Environmental Schools Art Project. We are again working with Ravenscraig Primary, Earnhill Primary, Sacred Heart Primary, Saint Gabriel's Primary and The Garvel Deaf Centre and this year for the first time Glenburn School have joined in the project. The children have been working

exceptionally hard with the help of art consultant's Impact Arts and the official opening of the exhibition is due to be held on the 26th March 2008.

The winner of the £20 TESCO voucher for Dec/Jan is Ms P Mulholland of 4 Suffolk Road **Congratulations** Please remember to return your repair receipts to ensure your entry to the next prize draw.

Repairs Prize Draw

Repairs Focus Group

To help review the Association's repairs policy we have now set

up a Repairs and Maintenance focus group to review different aspects of the policy over the next few months. If you have any suggestions about how we can improve any aspect of our repairs service and or policy, please contact a member of the Housing Management Staff on 01475 630930.

Office Closure

Friday 23rd May 2008 & Monday 26th May 2008.

Our Office will be closed for Easter on **Friday 21st March 2008 & Monday 24th March 2008**. Our office will also be closed on **Monday 5th May 2008** and

Reporting a Repair

From time to time it is necessary for all tenants to report a repair to the Association. When you call us or come in

to the office to report a repair here's a few things you should tell us:

- Your name, address and a contact number – a phone number is very important to make access arrangements and keep you informed about the progress of your repair.
- As much detail as possible about the repair – when did the problem occur, have you reported the problem before, where is the problem exactly, etc.
- When there will be someone at home to give access to the contractor if required. This is very important, if our contractors attend your home and there is no access you may be recharged for their call-out charge.
- Anything else you might think we need to know to help us decide how urgent your repair is and which contractor would be best to deal with your repair.

we will help as much as possible in assisting you with your repair.

Here's a reminder of the Association's Repair Response Times:

- **Emergency** within 2 hours and complete within 24hrs,
- **Urgent** within 2 working days please note Gas repairs are 24hrs.
- **Routine** repairs: re-glazing & Plumbing work is 10days General repairs are 15days and Electrical Work is 5 days.

Annual Rent Increase

The rent increase will be effective from the first Monday in April 2008. The increase for the next financial year is inflation of 4% plus 1% equating to an increase of 5%.

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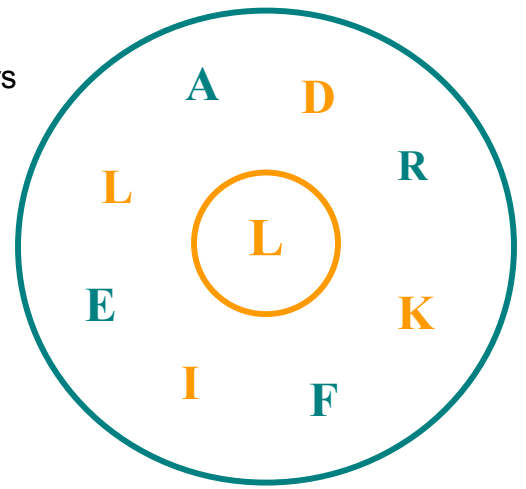
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Puzzle

How many words can you make from the letters in LARKFIELD? Every word you make must include the letter in the middle of the Letter Circle, i.e. L. Write down all the words you can make of 4 letters or more 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.



How to sort your Household Waste

Approximately 28,000 households in Inverclyde now have blue and brown bins to supplement their existing black bin. In this edition we will focus what you should and shouldn't put in your blue bin.

Blue Bin

- **Paper:** Newspapers, Magazines, Flyers, Brochures, Junk Mail, Envelopes, Computer Paper, Telephone Directories, including Yellow Pages
- **Small pieces of Paper and Shredded Paper:** Please put these in an envelope if you have one or in a secured polythene bag. Avoid putting these loose into your blue bin
- **Card:** greetings cards, cardboard
- **Plastics:** Bottles - please crush and remove lids, food containers
- **Metals:** Food & Drinks Cans, Aluminium carry-out containers

Please **DO NOT** place the following items in your **Blue** bin:

Polythene bags (except to contain small scraps or shredded paper), cellophane wrappers, plastic-coated or wax-coated Cardboard Household Cleaning Containers (e.g. Bleach Bottles)
Aerosol Cans Stripped Wallpaper.



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.