

# Arklet<sup>news</sup>



THE NEWSLETTER OF ARKLET HOUSING ASSOCIATION

SUMMER 2018

## BIG NEWS FOR ARKLET

**Arklet and Hanover (Scotland) Housing Associations have agreed to enter into detailed discussions about a potential formal partnership between the two organisations.**

Leading up to this, Arklet had undertaken a strategic options review which resulted in an invitation to housing organisations to explore their interest in entering into a partnership arrangement. The selection process culminated in Arklet choosing Hanover as its preferred potential partner.

Importantly, the process highlighted benefits for all residents, along with a strong synergy of ideas and a shared vision for the future between the two organisations.

Arklet and Hanover will now begin the formal process of negotiation and due diligence with all partnership options being fully considered in detail before agreement is reached. Both are confident that progressing these discussions will be a positive step.

Residents of both organisations will be kept advised and engaged throughout, and their best interests will be firmly placed at the heart of any decision-making.

Mike Martin, Chair of Hanover Scotland, said: "I am excited at the



prospect of Hanover Scotland and Arklet working in partnership and feel there will be positive benefits for residents and staff of both organisations."

"We are at the very beginning of this process but discussions to date have shown that the organisations share common aspirations and I am confident that together we can improve and grow."

"There is a lot of detailed work and due diligence to be done to ensure any partnership that does emerge is robust and sustainable"

Iain Wallace, Chair of Arklet Housing Association said: "We are delighted that we have now entered formal discussions with Hanover Scotland regarding a possible partnership

which will improve the range and value of services for our tenants. We are particularly grateful to the members of our Tenants' Forum who have participated in the selection process and have represented the feelings of their fellow residents in a highly effective and constructive manner.

The strategic options review and call for expressions of interest that has got us to this stage has been an invaluable process and we would like to thank everyone who has been involved for their assistance. We now look forward to the discussions with Hanover Scotland and their team to explore what shape a partnership deal might take and believe this will lead to positive outcomes for our residents."

### Office Closures:

Please note that our offices will be closed on the following dates:

#### Glasgow fair weekend:

- Friday 13th July 2018
- Monday 16th July 2018

**Satisfaction Survey**

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**Technical Services**

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**Ways To Pay Your Rent**

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# REGULATORY ENGAGEMENT: PROGRESS

**Arklet was moved to "high engagement" with the Scottish Housing Regulator in February 2017. We wrote to all tenants in January of that year to explain that this was going to happen, and the reasons for it: the need to address serious weaknesses in governance and financial management.**

By June 2017 we had conducted a number of in-depth reviews into the various problem areas, and were satisfied we had a good grasp of what had gone wrong. We knew what changes and improvements needed to be made to restore Arklet to sound governance, and were determined to get these done.

We told you about this - the adoption of a substantial Governance Improvement Plan - in our Autumn 2017 Newsletter. It is now around 9 months since we agreed this plan, and we're making very good progress. By the end of March 2018 we had completed more than 50% of its 70+ tasks, and when you take account of the work we've already done on the remainder, we're more than two-thirds through the programme.

Some examples of what we have done as part of this work are:

- Adopted a new business plan preparation process; applied it in preparing a business plan for 2018/19; introduced systematic progress reporting
- Reviewed all existing governance policies, and strengthened governance arrangements by adding many new ones
- Took the decision to wind up Arklet's subsidiary company, Kol-Care - legal process almost completed
- Evaluated Arklet's four-year rent restructuring programme, and reviewed current rent affordability
- Improved arrangements for declaring and managing conflicts of interest
- Undertook a board member skills audit, plus individual and collective reviews of board effectiveness
- Improved the effectiveness of board meetings, including adopting a new approach to board reporting and minute-taking
- Undertook a massive board and senior management training programme, including four "away day" events



Probably the most significant task was the completion of a strategic options review, and the decision to seek a formal partnership with another housing association. We have written to you recently to let you know about the selection of Hanover (Scotland) Housing Association as Arklet's prospective partner, and of the appointment of the Tenants' Information Service (TIS) as the independent tenant advisor to help support, inform and involve Arklet tenants through this process.

The Scottish Housing Regulator made appointments to the board, and also appointed a Manager, under current legislation, to provide support for Arklet as it works its way through this programme. Arklet's board has found the advice and guidance of the two current appointees - John McMorrow, Director of Easthall Park Housing Co-operative (pictured above) and Stewart MacKenzie, Chief Executive of Partick Housing Association - to be invaluable. Both these and the Manager appointments have been extended until December 2018, to support the partnership process and the delivery of the necessary governance improvements. By then, it is expected that the Governance Improvement Plan will be substantially completed.

# Satisfaction Survey

**Arklet Housing Association recently commissioned Research Resource to carry out its tenant satisfaction survey. The survey included interviewing 180 tenants, representing a 50% response rate.**

We are delighted to report that there is a notable increase in satisfaction on every Charter question when compared to the performance recorded in the last survey carried out in 2013. The results of this survey illustrates

Satisfaction with Arklet's overall service increased from 92% to 96% and tenants who said they were satisfied with the quality of their home rose from 95% to 98%.

Specific areas of notable improvement include satisfaction with the management of neighbourhoods, up from 87% to 99% and, the extent to which tenants felt properties represented good value for money, up from 65% to 96%.

Satisfaction levels also increased considerably from 90% to 97%,



in response to questions on how tenants felt the Association kept them informed about services and decisions. This is a particularly important indicator for the Association in its current circumstances; ensuring tenants continue to be satisfied with the information and decisions made in respect to the Association's

proposed partnership with Hanover (Scotland) Housing Association.

We would like to say a very big thank you to those tenants who took the time to complete the survey. Below is a summary of the seven key indicators that form part of our return to the Scottish Housing Regulator, a full copy of the survey is available upon request.

		2013	2017	trend
Q1	Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall service provided by Arklet Housing Association? (% very/ fairly satisfied)	92%	96%	Up 4%
Q3	How good or poor do you feel Arklet is at keeping you informed about their services and decisions? (% very good/ fairly good)	90%	97%	Up 7%
Q13	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the opportunities given to you to participate in Arklet's decision making process? (% very/ fairly satisfied)	78%	95%	Up 17%
Q28	Thinking about the LAST time you had repairs carried out, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the repairs and maintenance service provided by Arklet? (% very/ fairly satisfied) Those who have reported a repair in the last 12 months	80%	88%	Up 8%
Q35	Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of your home? (% very/ fairly satisfied)	95%	98%	Up 3%
Q37	Taking into account the accommodation and services Arklet provides, to what extent do you think that the rent for this property represents good or poor value for money? Is it... (% very good value/ fairly good value)	65%	96%	Up 31%
Q45	Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Arklet's management of the neighbourhood you live in?	87%	99%	Up 12%

# Thank You

## FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

### Rent consultation for the year 2018-2019

The association consulted all of our tenants and sharing owners about our proposals for this year's rent and service charge review.

We would like to thank those who responded to our rent consultation for the year ahead. It is important to receive your feedback and we have considered all the comments you provided in taking forward our rent review for the year ahead.

### How did we consult with you?

We undertook a full postal survey to contact all tenants and shared owners, which included a pre-paid return envelope in order to get as many responses as possible.

We wrote to 367 tenants and we have received 76 replies making a response rate of 20.7%

We understand that the current financial climate is challenging for tenants and the Association and as such we have taken careful consideration in determining what rent increase we feel is suitable and affordable for tenants and the Associations ability to deliver investment and essential quality services.

The Board agreed that a rent increase of 3.5% would be sufficient to meet the demands on the Association and deliver our services and investment set out in our budget for 2018-2019.

	Number of returns	Percentage return
Option 1 3.5%	40	53%
Option 2 4%	10	13%
Option 3 4.5%	13	17%
No answer	13	17%

Congratulations to the winner of our Morrison's Vouchers, Chelsea Hatcher from East Kilbride who returned her consultation questionnaire and was entered into the prize draw.

## Association Membership



### Would you be interested in becoming a member of Arklet Housing Association?

Membership of the Association is open to all tenants and residents, individual members of the public, community organisations, as well as other stakeholders and partners who have an interest in Arklet Housing Association.

All you need to do is complete an application to the Management Board along with a one off payment of £1.00. On acceptance of your application you will become a life time member of Arklet Housing Association.

The Association maintains a Register of Members and this is available for inspection.

### What does this membership give you?

Membership allows you to participate in all our activities and attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM). You will also have the opportunity to stand for election at the AGM and vote to appoint the members of the Arklet Management Board.

The Association is very keen to encourage membership and puts participation at the forefront of everything we do.

For further information or to express an interest, please contact Arklet Housing Association on 0141 620 1890.

# Getting Independent Advice

**The Tenants Information Service (TIS) are delighted to be providing independent information and advice to all Arklet tenants during this important consultation period. We look forward to hearing from you. Please contact us on our Freephone number 0800 731 3772 if you have any questions about Arklets's proposal to join in a partnership with Hanover (Scotland) Housing Association. Our Freephone is available from 9am to 5pm weekdays.**

**About TIS** - TIS is a national voluntary organisation with over 28 years experience of providing independent information, advice and training to tenants. Our head office is based in Glasgow and we have a dedicated team of staff who will be working with you over the coming months. Ilene Campbell and

Susan Morris will be your tenant advisors. For more information about TIS visit our website [www.tis.org.uk](http://www.tis.org.uk)

**Independent Information** - At TIS it is our job to make sure that you understand the proposal and have an opportunity to influence how this develops. TIS will be carrying out an independent assessment of the proposal and will report this to all tenants, highlighting how this could affect you.

**Give your views** - You will have an opportunity to get involved and give your views. We will be holding local roadshows and we will be there to explain the proposal and how this could affect your housing services. We look forward to hearing from you and meeting you over the months ahead.

## Tenancy Support Service

**You may be aware that Arklet offers a Housing Support Service to tenant, which is designed to help provide practical support and advice to them in relation to their tenancy.**

Until recently, Ann Black from The Mungo Foundation provided the service to tenants however Ann has started in a new role with The Mungo Foundation and we would like to take this opportunity to thank her very much for her support and would like to wish her well for the future.

The service will now be provided by the Simon Community Scotland who were awarded the contract following a procurement exercise with

partnering housing associations.

We would now like to introduce you to Shona Redmond who has replaced Ann. Shona has worked for Simon Community Scotland for over 8 years and is available 2 days per week on a Tuesday and Thursday from her base here at Arklet's office.

The support Shona will be able to provide is almost anything that affects the tenancy or puts it at risk. Below is some general headings were she can help tenants with:

- Home safety and security
- Managing your mail
- Income and debt management (including benefit advice and

signposting)

- Shopping and cooking advice and support
- Advice and support with health issues
- Support in dealing with other professionals (such as the housing association)
- Employability support and advice
- Confidence building in getting out and about

If you feel you could benefit from Shona's assistance please do not hesitate contact her or your Housing Services Officer on 0141 620 1890 (Option 2) to discuss what help and support you may need.

## Barrland Court - Sheltered Housing in Giffnock

**Do you currently live in a property that is too large for you to manage, do you feel lonely at times and could benefit from that extra feeling of security and of well balanced meals being provided to you? If so come and visit Barrland Court to see what Arklet Housing Association has to offer.**

Barrland Court is a lovely sheltered development centrally located in Giffnock with excellent shopping and transport links. The building has beautiful communal

areas and gardens with the added provision of lunch and evening meals being provided 7 days a week. There are a number of social activities on offer for tenants to enjoy. Barrland Court is an ideal bridge between independent living and nursing home care.

If you would like have a look around or speak to someone to find out more about Barrland Court please contact us on 0141 620 1890 or email [arklet@arklet.org.uk](mailto:arklet@arklet.org.uk).

# Technical



## Reporting repairs

**Remember if you need to report a repair please telephone us on 0141 620 1890 and select option 2 for the maintenance department or you can call into the office to speak to someone in person.**

When you are reporting a repair we will ask you for the following information:

- Your name
- Your address (including flat position)
- Your telephone number
- Details of the repair
- When you will be available for the repair to be carried out.

We will try to accommodate a morning or afternoon appointment, although this is not always possible. Please be aware that we will not be able to give you a specific time when the contractor will call at your home. Emergencies can and do arise which will take precedence over standard repairs and we ask for your understanding in this matter.

## Emergency repairs

**Tenants who live in a development with a pull cord alarm system can pull the cord to speak to Beild and they will be available to assist.**

Our telephone system also gives tenants the option to report emergency repairs when our office is closed.

Alternatively, you can call the contractors directly on the following numbers:

Gas Central Heating/ Hot water emergencies (Gas Sure) 01294 468 113

All Other emergency repairs (City Building) 0800 595 595

Please only use the emergency repairs service for genuine emergencies. If you call out a contractor to carry out a repair that is not an emergency, we will charge you for the cost of the repair.

# services

## Right to repair

**As a tenant you have the right to have small urgent repairs carried out by your landlord within a certain time. The Right to Repair scheme covers repairs up to the value of £350. If the repairs are not carried out within the time limit you may be entitled to compensation.**

These repairs include (maximum time in working days from notification shown in brackets):

- Blocked flue to open fire or boiler (1)
- Blocked or leaking foul drains, soil stacks or toilets where there is no other toilet in the house (1)
- Blocked sink, bath or basin (1)
- Electric power- loss of power (1) and partial loss of power (3)
- Insecure external door, window or lock (1)
- Unsafe access to a path or step
- Leaks or flooding from water or heating pipes, tanks & cisterns (1)

- Loss or partial loss of gas supply (1)
- Loss or partial loss of heating, where no other is available (1)
- Toilet not flushing where there is no other toilet in the house (1)
- Unsafe electrical fittings (1)
- Water supply - loss of water supply (1) and partial loss of water supply (3)
- Loose or detached banister or handrail (3)
- Unsafe flooring or stair treads (3)
- Extractor fan in internal (i.e. no windows) kitchen or bathroom not working (7)

For further information, please either contact the association office or refer to the Scottish Government website [www.gov.scot/Publications/2002/09/15485/11211](http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2002/09/15485/11211)

## Annual Gas Safety Check - Please let us in!

**Arklet Housing Association takes gas safety extremely seriously and all properties with a gas supply must have an Annual Gas Safety Check completed at least once every 12 months, by law. It is vital that we gain access to your property to carry out this check. You will be contacted by our contractor, Gas Sure, with an appointment in the first instance and thereafter by Arklet.**

If you have not provided access to your property by the time the 12-month period is up, we will force access to disconnect the gas supply. If we need to do this, you will be invoices for the cost so it would be easier and cheaper for you to provide access to us. If you cannot attend the first appointment, please contact us to rearrange to a suitable time.



# Summer Garden Maintenance

We would like to take this opportunity to remind you that our Garden Maintenance Contractors have started their summer programme again and visits to your Development will become more regular.

If, however, you have your own individual garden area please remember that it is your responsibility to maintain this. The Housing Services Officers will be carrying out regular inspections of

both our Developments and individual gardens throughout the summer months to ensure that they are being adequately looked after. If you want to talk to someone about this matter, either to raise an issue regarding our Contractors, or if you are having problems looking after your own garden area, please do not hesitate to contact your Housing Officer on 0141 620 1890. Happy gardening.

## WAYS TO PAY YOUR RENT

There are a number of options available to make it easier for you to pay your rent:

**Paying by Cash** If you have an allpay card, you can pay your rent in any Post Office, shop or garage which displays the Paypoint, E-pay, Payzone or allpay Logo. This is a free service. Any payments you make are posted to your rent account within 24 hours and you will be given a receipt.

**Paying by Direct Debit** This is similar to a standing order but you don't need to contact your bank every time there is a change in your rent - Arklet will do it for you. If you have standing orders set up already and would like to change these to a Direct Debit or want to set up a brand new Direct Debit then just call Arklet on

0141 620 1890, and selecting option 2 and speak to the Housing Officer.

**Paying over the internet** Pay over the internet using your allpay reference number at [www.allpayments.net](http://www.allpayments.net) you can use either a debit or credit card.

**Paying over the Telephone** You will need your allpay reference number to pay over the telephone using a credit or debit card. Just call allpay on 0870 243 6040.

**Payment by Cheque or Postal Order** Cheques or postal orders should be made payable to Link Group. If a cheque is returned unpaid, we may make a charge against your account to cover bank charges plus handling costs.

## Contact us...



### By Post or Visit

Barrland Court  
Barrland Drive  
Giffnock  
Glasgow  
G46 7QD



### By Phone

0141 620 1890  
Available Mon - Thurs 9am  
to 5pm  
Fri 9am to 4 pm



### Website

[www.arklet.org.uk](http://www.arklet.org.uk)



### By Email

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### Opening Hours:

Monday to Thursday 9am to 5pm  
Friday 9am to 4pm



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