
Argyll Community Housing Association – Annual Update

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Mid Argyll, Kintyre & Islay Area Community Planning Group (CPG) with Argyll Community Housing Associations (ACHA) Annual Update.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Area CPG are asked to note the content of this report.

3. Background

3.1 ACHA have given a commitment to provide an annual update on the work being undertaken by the Association and to attend the local CPG meetings on an annual basis.

4. Detail

Stock

4.1 ACHA have a total of 5158 properties. For the Mid Argyll, Kintyre & Islay (MAKI) Area this is broken down as follows:

- Mid Argyll – 604
- Kintyre – 825
- Islay – 360

We also have 8 allotments in Campbeltown and a total of 72 garage sites available for let (48 in Kintyre and 24 in Mid Argyll).

ACHA also have a Travelling Persons Site at Duncholgan, Lochgilphead which has 14 pitches available to let to the Gypsy Traveller Community.

Regeneration Programme

4.2 To date, ACHA have built 365 homes throughout the Argyll & Bute area. Within the MAKI Area ACHA have built 193:

- **Mid Argyll – 48 properties:**
- Relief Land (refurbishment) – 5 properties
- MacMillan Court, Ardrishaig – 18 properties
- Oakhill, Tarbert – 8 properties

- Tayvallich – 2 properties
- Heatherbank, Cairnbaan – 3 properties
- Tower View, Inveraray – 12 properties
- **Kintyre – 84 properties:**
 - New Parliament Place – 52 properties
 - Park Terrace Area – 32 properties
- **Islay – 61 properties:**
 - Highfield, Bowmore, Islay (refurbishment) – 3 properties
 - Church Way, Port Ellen, Islay – 8 properties
 - Sealladh Na Mara, Bowmore – 20 properties
 - Ceol A Chuain, Bowmore – 10 properties
 - Sealladh Loch Na Dala, Bowmore -20 properties

4.3 ACHA have also re-modelled existing stock to tackle low demand and meet the housing need within the area. The following properties have been re-modelled:

- Millknowe Terrace, Campbeltown
- Dalaruan Street, Campbeltown
- Relief Land, Inveraray

4.4 Future Interests:

We are considering building in the following areas, subject to the outcome of feasibility studies, planning permissions and funding:

Cairnbann – 3 units
 Kilmartin – 4 units
 Oakhill, Tarbert – 4 units
 Inveraray – 12 units
 Bowmore, Islay – 20 units

4.5 Low demand strategy – demolition of 27 properties

ACHA has experienced difficulties in letting properties in parts of Campbeltown for a number of years due to low demand issues.

Following consultation with tenants and the local community, ACHA's Board of Management agreed in May 2017 to demolish properties in Queen Street (15), Princes Street (4) and Saddell Street (8), Campbeltown. We had no applicants on the waiting lists who wanted to live in these areas.

The demolition of these properties is due to take place by the end of this year.

4.6 Low demand strategy – consultation with residents in the Dalintober area

ACHA continue to work on our low demand strategy for Kintyre, where we still have a number of properties in the Dalintober area that cannot be relet due to lack of demand.

A Feasibility study was undertaken, to investigate the future of the estate, and this highlighted issues around the layout of the flats, the external environment and the costs to upgrade the properties to meet the Energy Efficiency Standards for Social Housing set by the Scottish Government.

ACHA's Board of Management made a decision to investigate the possibility of being able to gain permission from Historic Environment Scotland (HES) to get the building de-listed and to then apply for permission to demolish the buildings. There are 46 properties affected in this area.

ACHA staff are currently consulting with tenants and owners who are affected.

If permission is granted to de-list and demolish the buildings, ACHA intend to build new properties on the site that meet the needs of the applicants on the HOME Argyll waiting list.

Investment Programme

4.7 The key elements that we are installing in our homes throughout the Argyll & Bute area during 2018/19 are shown in the table below up to the.

Element	
Windows & Doors	300 properties
Kitchen & Bathrooms	40 properties
Heating & Rewire	210 properties
Roof & Roughcast	212 properties
Refurbishments	168 properties
Total	930 properties
Total Expenditure	£10 million

4.8 We are almost complete in terms of our upgrades to kitchens and bathrooms, with only a few left to install.

We have ongoing works in terms of windows and doors and heating and rewiring.

The heating and rewire programme is more difficult as the work is more disruptive and tenants are not as keen to have this type of work carried out.

In terms of the roof and roughcast programme this continues to be very challenging for us. A lot of our flatted and tenemental blocks are in shared ownership and we must have the consent of the owners before we can proceed with this type of work.

Allocations & Reletting of Properties

4.9 ACHA are part of the HOME Argyll partnership (Housing Options Made Easy), along with Argyll & Bute Council, West Highland Housing Association, Fyne Homes and Dunbritton Housing Association. We currently have just under 3,000 applicants on our house waiting lists.

4.10. The HOME Argyll allocation policy is currently under review, primarily due to the changes brought about by legislation introduced by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014. A consultation exercise will be carried out with stakeholders in the near future on the proposed changes to the Policy.

Welfare Reform

4.11 ACHA continues to deliver a Welfare Rights Service and is a partner with Money Skills Argyll.

The primary objective is to assist vulnerable tenants in terms of maximising and stabilising income, and to assist them in maintaining their tenancies.

Across the Argyll & Bute area the following residents are now on Universal Credit following the first month of roll out:

- Mid Argyll & Lorn – 114 claimants
- Campbeltown & Islay – 39 claimants
- Dunoon – 62 claimants
- Lomond – 65 claimants
- Bute – 55 claimants

Figures provided by DWP

Examples of Community Support

4.12 Your Voice is a group of tenants who scrutinise the performance of ACHA and make recommendations based on their findings about how services to customers might be improved. They have so far made recommendations to improve the following services that ACHA deliver:

- Void and Relet Standards
- Repairs & Maintenance
- Estate Management

The Group were voted the “Most Inspiring Scrutiny Newcomer” at the Tenants Information Service (TIS) National Excellence awards this year.

The award recognises excellence in scrutiny practice that others can learn from and ACHA are delighted that the Group’s hard work and commitment to improve services for ACHA tenants has been recognised at this level.

4.13 – ACHA's 10-10-10 is an initiative to assist local schools in the Argyll & Bute area. This initiative was launched in November 2016 to commemorate ACHA's 10 years as a housing association with a 10-year bequest of up to £10,000 per year to support projects and initiatives in Argyll and Bute schools.

A panel made up of staff from Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA), and Argyll and Bute Council has just completed an evaluation of applications.

Eight schools in Argyll and Bute have been successful in this round of applications, 2 of which were from the MAKI area:

- Carradale Primary School, Campbeltown,
- Drumlemble Primary School, Campbeltown

Each school has been given £1,000 towards their project.

The awards have been made to support a number of different initiatives such as provision of interactive smart boards, running an after school club, outdoor learning area enhancement, swimming lessons and nurture room kitchen facilities

4.14 Community Action Funds

ACHA has a small fund from which we are in a position to make donations of up to £500 to registered charitable organisations which are worthwhile causes and which have some housing connection or follow our mission statement.

So far this year the following 9 charities in the MAKI area have received a donation:

- People & Agencies Coming Together – Mid Argyll & Kintyre
- Kintyre Youth Forum
- Tarbert Youth Group
- Tarbert Soup Group
- KADAS
- Kintyre Food Bank
- Men's Shed, Lochgilphead
- Islay & Jura Community Enterprise Ltd
- Islay & Jura Highland Dancers

4.15 Best Garden: ACHA continue to run the best garden competition for our tenants in each area, along with the largest sunflower competition for all pre-five nurseries in the Mid Argyll & Kintyre areas.

4.16 Tenants & Residents Associations (TRA) – ACHA actively promote tenant participation through a wide range of methods. We have one registered tenant & residents association in Campbeltown – Dalintober & Millknowe TRA, and an informal group at Duncholgan Travelling Persons Site.

We promote Tenant Participation through our Area Committee's, Board of management, regular consultation and the Your Voice Group.

Tenant Satisfaction

4.17 We carried out a Satisfaction Survey on our tenants during August 2018. 400 tenants were contacted and asked questions that are based on the Indicators required for the Annual Return of the Charter (ARC) for the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR). We are currently analysing the results.

5. Conclusions

5.1 ACHA is continuing to meet its targets and priorities within local strategies.

6. SOA Outcomes

6.1 Reference to Outcomes 5 – People Live Active, Healthier and Independent Lives

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Supplementary Papers

- none