



TENANTS *and* RESIDENTS
EAST AYRSHIRE

WORKING TOGETHER FOR BETTER COMMUNITIES



2017-2018 Annual Report

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East Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir an Ear

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Chairperson's Welcome

Hello and welcome to our Annual Report. When starting to write this update, I thought we had a relatively quiet year, until I had a few conversations with other tenants groups across Scotland who could rattle off the many projects that we carry out on an almost daily basis but they see as major work, so maybe it's not been such a quiet year after all.

We are still finishing off our **Participatory Budgeting (PB) Project**, getting reports from all the groups we supported with the grants, **£80,000 across East Ayrshire**, in case you forgot. We are really looking forward to hearing all about their successful ventures and hope to keep in touch with all of them to find out more about what they are up to and hear their opinions on the various projects we are working on and what is important to their communities.

We have continued to work extremely hard on this year's **Scrutiny Projects**, in particular Housing Options and Homelessness and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which is where all your rent money paid into. Both these projects are quite complex and the HRA in particular will take some considerable time to work through. All a big learning curve for everyone involved.

We have made a few changes to our Outreach Project, to focus our efforts on attending events that tie in with our groups, our networking partners or where we think we can start a new group. This year has seen us further develop the **"Conversation Café"** model with Housing and other services across the Council to give local people an opportunity to come along and have a chat to staff and Federation members, find out what's going on or planned for their area and give their views and priorities. Look out for one in your area soon, or if there isn't one planned and you would like to see this in your area, get in touch and we will sort something out.

Nationally we have worked hard within the new Reginal Network setup. The **Regional Networks** are made up of Tenants and Residents Groups and Federations from across Scotland to influence Scottish Housing and related policies. East Ayrshire is part of Region 3, along with Dumfries and Galloway, East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde, North Ayrshire, Renfrewshire and South Ayrshire.

We also work closely with the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) and are the only Federation that meets with them regularly. We are often asked our opinion in Consultations with the Scottish Government on numerous subjects including Fire and Safety in the home. I was also part of a group of 4 tenants, who along with housing staff, the Scottish Government and Scottish Housing Regulator, that met with Dame Judith Hackett who is looking to building regulations in England and Wales on the back of the Grenfell fire. When we concluded our discussion Dame Judith thanked us and said that our system in Scotland of Tenant Participation should be applauded and be adopted elsewhere.

You probably noticed in our last Newsletter we celebrated our **10th Anniversary** at the end of last year. This event brought together old friends, both tenants and officials, and started many conversations

about the changes that have come about over the years, we also announced our new name the **East Ayrshire Federation** of tenants and residents (EAF). The name now reflects the changes we have undergone and the role we now play with various partners. We also had our own version of the Oscars thanking individuals and groups for their hard work over the year, look out for the this nomination forms coming out, this year the ceremony will take place at our Joint Annual Conference, invites will appear in our newsletter due in the Autumn.

Our friends out with East Ayrshire were correct to say we were busy, and I am sure this year will be too. If you would like to get involved or just come along and meet our members to find out more, please give us a call on 01563 524073 or we could come and meet you in your own community.

On behalf of the Federation and myself I would like to thank the Chief Executive, the Provost and Depute Provost, all the Elected Members, EAC Officers, the Customer Liaison Team and the Tenants Information Service and of course all the tenants and residents and groups who give their time freely to make the Federation a strong and effective organisation.

Bruce Cuthbertson, Chairperson, EAF

A fond *Farewell*



This year we are sad to say goodbye to two people, without whose support and dedication, Tenant Participation and Scrutiny in East Ayrshire would not be an example of excellent practice acclaimed across Scotland. Chris McAleavey, Depute Chief Executive has been a stalwart of support to tenants and residents groups and the Federation since his time as Head of Housing, through to his current post. Chris is setting off into the sunshine of retirement and the Federation members wish him the very best in this new chapter of his life.

Our administration officer, Caroline Harte has moved to pastures new, within the Council's Education Department. Caroline has been a fantastic support to the Federation, all tenants and residents groups, as well as being an integral part of the Council's Customer Liaison Team. Her support and dedication has been invaluable in working with us to help us achieve our many goals and projects. We wish Caroline the very best of luck in her new job.



The Federation welcomes Kevin Hamilton to his new post of Customer Liaison Officer (CLO) within the Council's Housing Service, we are already all getting to know each other and work together on our tenant participation and scrutiny projects and are sure we have many adventures to come....

We also have a new member group, **Shortlees and Riccarton Tenants & Residents Association**, and were delighted to work with local people to set up the group in April this year. We are sure they will make a big difference to their areas, working with the Council's Housing and other services, the police, Atrium Homes and Link Housing Association.

A few new individuals from areas with no tenants and residents groups have also recently joined the Federation and are already involved in our scrutiny projects, working groups and information & consultation events. It's always great to see new folk get involved and new groups set up. We are also working with folk in Drongan, the Castlevie area of Galston, and Darvel in the hope of getting a few more groups set up in these areas as well.

So, what are you waiting for? Get in touch if you would like to set up a group or join the Federation as an individual or just sign up to our mailing list.

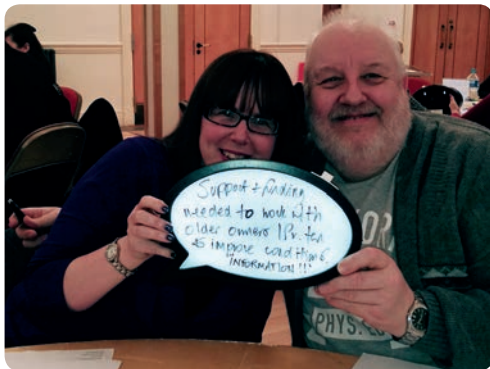
Here's what others have to say?

“ Like many tenants I got involved because of “Antisocial Behaviour” in my neighbourhood. Some like - minded people got together and with help from Tenants Information Service (TIS) and the Council's Housing Service, the Campbell Street Tenants and Residents Association was formed. We later changed our name to take in surrounding streets and became Campbell Area Tenants and Residents Association (CATARA). Into our Eleventh year we are still going strong and have made a big favourable impact on this small part of Newmilns. We look forward a bright future and helping the “FEDERATION” achieve its goals with our support. It Can Be Fun as well as hard graft, so why not set up a group in your own area? ” **John McKenzie, CATRA**

“ Being involved in my local group and the Federation means getting invited to different events around the country, where you get to meet new people as well as old friends and learn how others go about their participation and scrutiny programmes. It's a great opportunity to learn from others and tell people how well we are doing too. There is always a friendly tea or coffee with some biscuits and even a sandwich or two when we are further afield, to keep our brains in gear. ”

CONVERSATION CAFÉ

You may recall, after learning about the idea from our friends in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, we held our first Conversation Café in Stewarton in May 2017. We saw this as a good way to get into communities, meet local people, and have various departments and services all in the one place at the one time. It's a great way to find out what's happening in your area, ask questions, raise issues and concerns or simply get out of the house and enjoy a cuppa, a biscuit and a chat.



Over the last few months we have been on tour with the Conversation Café's in Catrine, Darvel Muirkirk, New Cumnock and Shortlees.

And coming soon...

- **New Cumnock:**
14th June, New Cumnock Town Hall, 2pm – 6pm
- **Dalrymple:** 21st June, Community Centre, 3pm – 7pm

If you would like a **Conversation Café** in your area, give us a call on 01563 524073....

Out and About in East Ayrshire and Beyond...



As well as the Conversation Café's, Federation members have been out and about meeting tenants and residents across East Ayrshire, along with staff, Elected Members and other organisations.

The annual Kay Park Fun Day, is a great opportunity to meet old friends, make new acquaintances find out folks views and priorities. This year we will be in the **Kay Park on 1st August**, why not come along and say hi?

It's always a pleasure to get involved in local events, and this year we have been at Newmilns and Hurlford Gala Days, the Mosque Open Day, Shortlees Community Safety Day, Vibrant Communities Event, Catrine and Open Meetings with Housing Asset Services on local housing investment projects in Bellsbank, Dalmellington and Hurlford.

Over the next couple of months you could pop by to say hi and let us know what is good and working well in your area and what you would like to see improved or just join in the fun!!

- **Hurlford Gala Day – 23rd June**
- **Diversity Event – 23rd June, St. Joseph's Campus**
- **Kay Park Fun Day, 1st August, Kilmarnock**

Community Safety in East Ayrshire....what do you think?

As part of a wider review of the Council's Antisocial Behaviour Strategy, we are working in partnership with the Council's Housing Service in preparation for seeking views on what local people think about community safety in their neighbourhoods.

A survey, coming out soon will seek your views on everything from environmental issues such as dog fouling, litter and fly tipping to annoying and nuisance behaviour through to more serious antisocial behaviour that "causes alarm or distress" and "criminal behaviour".

How to have your say... look out for and respond to the survey in the next few months....





Fire and Smoke Alarms in Scottish Housing Consultation Update



Federation members, along with many others in the social housing sector took part in the Scottish government's Fire and Smoke Alarm's Consultation in 2017 and in April 2018, the **Housing Minister, Kevin Stewart, MSP**, outlined plans to make fire & smoke alarm regulations safer for all homes in Scotland saying:

"I recently announced that the Scottish Government would be strengthening the current standards we have in place for fire and smoke alarms to ensure all homes have the highest level of protection by the end of 2020.

Fire alarms are proven to save lives and are one of the most important investments you can make to protect life and property and if you are a tenant in the private rented sector then you will already be used to this protection. We want that to be extended to everyone, whether they own their homes or rent; and our recent consultation on fire and smoke alarms showed strong support.

One of the new improvements for owner occupiers and tenants in the social housing sector is the increased alarm coverage. The new guidance specifies the following requirements:

- One smoke alarm installed in the room most frequently used for general daytime living purposes,
- One smoke alarm in every circulation space on each storey, such as hallways and landings,
- One heat alarm installed in every kitchen,
- All alarms should be ceiling mounted, and
- All alarms should be interlinked.

Having an interlinked system means you will be alerted immediately, regardless of the room in which the alarm is triggered, increasing the chance to escape."

For more information please go to www.gov.scot/Publications/2018/03/9509

The Federation urges you to protect yourself and your home...

Do you have smoke and heat alarms?

Smoke and heat alarms could help save your home, and your life.

- ✓ Test them WEEKLY and never remove the batteries
- ✓ If an alarm doesn't sound, get a new battery
- ✓ If it still doesn't sound, buy a new alarm.

Every year:

Smoke and heat alarms could help save your home, and your life.

- ✓ Replace the battery (unless you have a special 'long-life' alarm with a built in battery or your alarms are hard-wired to the electrical system). Choose a date you'll remember, like a birthday or anniversary.
- ✓ Gently vacuum the inside and outside casing. If you're decorating or creating a lot of dust, use an elastic band to secure a plastic bag over the smoke alarm casing – don't forget to take it off when you're done.
- ✓ If your home is on one level – a flat or bungalow – you need to have at least one smoke alarm in the hallway. You may also consider a heat alarm in the kitchen. If your home has more than one level, you'll need at least one smoke alarm on each floor.
- ✓ You may also consider a heat alarm in the kitchen. If you have more than one alarm, they should preferably be linked up to each other, however stand-alone detectors are sufficient.

Night-time routine

Follow this **checklist** as part of your night time routine to reduce the chances of fire happening in your home and help protect your escape route if there is a fire.

- ✓ Switch off and unplug all electrical appliances not designed to be left on overnight.
- ✓ Stub out all cigarettes and always empty ashtrays. Pour water over cigarette ends before putting them in the bin outside.
- ✓ Put fireguards around open fires. Don't build up the fire before you go to bed.
- ✓ Switch off portable heaters.
- ✓ Close all doors – it can keep your escape route free from smoke and may stop a fire spreading.
- ✓ Make sure the main door keys are to hand.

For further fire safety advice please visit: www.firescotland.gov.uk



TENANT SATISFACTION



During 2017 the Tenant Satisfaction survey was carried out in East Ayrshire by independent company, Knowledge Partnership. The Federation was delighted to be involved in procuring this service and agreeing and piloting questions to be asked. We would like to thank the 1,200 tenants who got involved and were really pleased to announce winners of the free prize draw that all participants were entered into at our Open Meeting on 19th March in the Railway Inn, Auchinleck. The winners, each receiving a £50 shopping voucher were Mr. R Reid, Dalmellington, Mr. Lawrence, Mauchline, Mr. P McCloskey, Kilmarnock and Ms. E Kirwood, Kilmarnock. Well Done to You All!

Key highlights shown since the last survey in 2014 are:

- **87%** of tenants are satisfied with housing services overall, compared to the Scottish Council Average of 83%
- **89%** of tenants are satisfied with the quality of their home, compared to the Scottish Council Average of 83%
- **88%** of tenants are satisfied with how the housing services keeps them informed, compared to the Scottish Council Average of 83%
- **86%** of tenants are satisfied with opportunities to participate, compared to the Scottish Council Average of 74%
- **84%** of tenants consider the rent they pay is value for money, compared to the Scottish Council Average of 81%
- **87%** of tenants are satisfied with how their neighbourhoods are managed, compared to the Scottish Council Average of 82%

We are pleased to see that these satisfaction levels are higher in East Ayrshire than the average for all Council's in Scotland, however, we and the Housing Service, want to see these figures continue to improve. To help the Federation work with the officers to improve service and on what is most important to tenants, we want to hear your views:

- Please complete the enclosed short survey or
- Respond on line at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/QPSDCSL> or
- Email chair.eaf@yahoo.com to receive a copy you can complete and return via email

To find out more and read the Executive Summary and full Report please go to <http://test.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/Preview/1/Housing/CouncilHousing/Support-for-tenants/Tenantsatisfaction.aspx>

East Ayrshire Council Rent Increase Consultation

Once again, the Federation worked with the Council to develop the annual rent increase consultation briefing paper sent to all tenants. You will recall that you were asked to let the Council know your preferred option of a 1.5% or a 2.5% increase. The majority of tenants, 70.75% who responded to the survey preferred the **1.5%** option and this was duly applied to tenants rents in April 2018. The Federation thinks it is very important that tenants give their views on proposed rent levels and would urge everyone to respond to the next consultation due out at the end of 2018 to allow new rents to be set for **2019 – 2020**.



The Local Housing Strategy

This year, Federation, local group and individual members joined the Councils housing Service and the Tenants Information Service along with local people and the Council's other services and partner organisations to discuss the development of the East Ayrshire Local Housing Strategy 2019 - 2023

The LHS is the overarching strategy for housing in East Ayrshire and following from the consultation and development sessions the strategy Vision Statement and Priorities have been drafted.

Vision Statement

Working together to ensure that everyone in East Ayrshire has access to good quality, energy efficient housing within safe, healthy and vibrant communities"

Priority 1

East Ayrshire has a supply of good quality affordable housing across all tenures based within vibrant empowered communities.

Priority 2

People have access to a person centred housing options service and where possible, homelessness is prevented.

Priority 3

People are supported to live independently for as long as possible in their own homes and communities.

Priority 4

People in East Ayrshire live in high quality, energy efficient homes and fuel poverty is minimised.





Applying for a house in East Ayrshire

In our 2017 Newsletter, you may recall we told you about our work with the Council's Housing Service and partner landlords on the review of the Common Housing Allocation's Policy. Well, January 2018 saw the new policy introduced and here's a quick recap of the changes:



<p>Care and Support Points</p> <p>Introduction of an additional award of 15 points relating to care and support, for example, where an individual requires to move to be closer to a family member in order to provide or receive care and support.</p>	<p>Sharing Points</p> <p>Sharing points to be awarded to all eligible applicants regardless of their tenure. This would include owners, tenants, private tenants and those without their own homes.</p>
<p>Applicants being discharged from the Armed Forces</p> <p>Applicants who are being discharged from the Armed Forces to receive priority for re-housing by being placed on the Strategic Needs Group for 6 weeks before and 6 weeks after they are discharged from the services.</p>	<p>Kinship Carers</p> <p>Kinship Carers to get the same priority as Foster Carers. This will allow Kinship Carers, as well as Foster Carers to be considered for larger size properties and placement on the Strategic Needs Group.</p>
<p>Offers to Applicants on the Strategic Needs Group</p> <p>Applicants on the Strategic Needs Group who refuse two offers of housing will revert to the mainstream group applicable to their circumstances within the framework of the Allocation Policy.</p>	<p>Suspension from the Housing List after 2 Refusals of Offers of Housing</p> <p>A suspension period introduced where an applicant has refused two offers of housing (excluding those on the Strategic Needs and Homeless Groups). This means that applicants would be suspended for a period of 3 months once they have refused 2 offers of housing.</p>
<p>Applicants who Provide False Information</p> <p>Applicants who provide false information to be suspended from the housing list for a period of 6 months.</p>	<p>Appeal Timescales</p> <p>Timescales introduced for applicants who appeal against a decision in regard to their housing application. If an applicant wishes to appeal against a decision, they must do so within 28 days of the decision.</p>

The **SEARCH Common Housing Register** application form allows people to complete one form only and be considered for housing by the **5 SEARCH Partners of: Atrium Homes, Cunninghame Housing Association, East Ayrshire Council, Irvine Housing Association and Shire Housing Association.** To find out more, you can find a copy of the Policy and Common Application Form on the Council's website at: <https://www.eastayrshire.gov.uk/Resources/PDF/C/CommonAllocationPolicy.pdf> or alternatively contact the Housing Register Team for further information on 01563 554821.



Many thanks to all of you who took part in the **Vibrant Voices Campaign** either online, organising your own event or by attending a community event. We are very grateful for all the feedback we have received, and to everyone who took the time to share their views with us. Vibrant Voices was designed to capture views, ideas and suggestions on how we work together to shape the future of East Ayrshire.

This new way of engaging has brought together Elected Members, our workforce and our communities in a collective effort that has already instilled a sense of empowerment and ownership. This in itself is transformational and we have now embedded the Vibrant Voices brand, methods and values in our Transformational Strategy, ensuring that people and communities continue to be at the heart of everything we do.

We had over **3,500** responses, by far the biggest response to any Council-wide engagement and your views and ideas have already helped to shape how

we will transform East Ayrshire. A summary of your feedback and the initial actions in our 6 Transformational Workstreams is available in our Vibrant Voices Spring 2018 newsletter which can be viewed online at <https://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/Resources/PDF/T/Transformation-Team-Vibrant-Voices-Leaflet-Final-low-res.pdf>

Next steps - In terms of live engagement of the Vibrant Voices programme we are developing a Network of Community Transformation Champions that will champion transformation within their groups, community or the wider sector. If you are interested in being part of the network, please contact the Transformation Team by sending an email to transformationteam@east-ayrshire.gov.uk or call 01563 576232.



Housing Asset Services – working in partnership with EAF

During 2017/18 Housing Asset Services has continued to work closely and in partnership with East Ayrshire Federation on a range of specific objectives to improve services provided and influence policy and procedures.

This year the 'conversation cafes' brought together key Housing Asset Service staff, community members and local groups, to discuss issues of shared interest, exchanging information, ideas and knowledge.

Based on key partnership working principles Housing Asset Services and EAF have communicated and collaborated on a number of shared goals, with improvements achieved throughout the repairs and maintenance service including;

- EAF's involvement in the Void Scrutiny Group; a group of officers from Housing and Communities and Federation members brought together to review and improve void and re-let processes,

timescales and lettable standards, this joint scrutiny has resulted in a number of changes, improvements and amendments to existing working practices,

- A further reduction in routine planned repairs target timescales, from 30, 60, 90 working days to 25 and 50 working days,
- Improvements to the Council's webpage and
- Advice on shared repair responsibilities for homeowners living in mixed tenure blocks.

Currently Housing Asset Services is working with EAF to produce a helpful information and advice leaflet for householders on how to avoid and reduce atmospheric moisture production within their home.

Housing Asset Services looks forward to another year of joint ventures, working with EAF together to achieve more effective results than could otherwise be achieved.



In the wake of the Grenfell Tower tragedy, **East Ayrshire Council** redoubled its efforts on the importance of building and fire safety and, as a priority, precautionary measure, established a risk based audit programme to review its flatted buildings.

In keeping fire safety in our housing stock to an appropriate standard, working together with **Scottish Fire and Rescue Services (SFRS)**, East Ayrshire Council decided to go above and beyond legislative requirements by introducing a common standard to review building and fire safety of flatted premises with a communal area.

Almost **500 blocks** with a communal entry have now received a fire safety assurance visit, with further safety measures and improved

standards implemented in order to not only better protect flatted buildings against fire and smoke, but also provide reassurance for tenants and residents. As part of our continued efforts, these robust checks of fire and building safety will continue to be carried out annually to ensure we have the highest possible standards in place.

The checks of building and fire safety measures include;

- the standard of compartmentation within communal areas in relation to surrounding dwellings,
- identifying any unstopped breaches of compartmentation between levels i.e. pipe chases, cable runs among others,
- cladding all communal loft hatches with fire resistant material to improve fire resistance, thus giving the fire service a greater chance of extinguishing any fire incident before fire or smoke travel has had a chance to spread into the roof space and any neighbouring premises,
- encouraging residents to protect escape routes and reduce the risk of deliberate fires by keeping clear the common means of escape. This also makes it safer for firefighters should they attend during any fire/rescue incident.

East Ayrshire Council remains committed to ensuring it has stringent building and fire safety measures in place, and through this approach identify and take any action needed to ensure a high level of fire safety compliance, giving a great deal of comfort not only to those living in flatted premises, but also our partners in **SFRS**.

Property Factoring & Common Works

The organisation of **common repairs and general property maintenance** matters within any multi-owned property is based upon the shared legal obligations that fall from ownership. Within any block of flats, or other multi owned property, there are communal parts such as roofs, stairs, garden area and external walls, which are normally the **joint responsibility of all owners**.

It is in every property owner's interest to ensure their property is repaired and well maintained, the **Factoring Service and the Common Works** team aims to deliver a prompt repair and maintenance service for common areas; making it less problematic for those living in shared ownership buildings and those in properties that have shared elements.

The Factoring Service and Common Works Team provides a shared repairs service to owners within mixed tenure blocks of flats as well as terraced, detached and semi-detached properties.

In the last financial year the Factoring Team issued 1317 jobs at factored blocks and the Common Works team issued 739 at non-factored properties.

In order to assist any owners within mixed tenure properties the Council, where appropriate, can put a payment plan in place to help owners budget for shared repairs.

For further advice on carrying out repairs to shared parts, homeowners should contact the Solicitor who carried out the conveyancing at the time of purchase or, any solicitor who deals with residential property. In addition private owners can get free and impartial advice to help understand legal obligations, establish good maintenance arrangements and carry out repairs from the Scottish Government website Under One Roof; www.underoneroof.scot

For any further information on the service, the Property Factoring Team and Common Works Team can be contacted on (01563) 555503 or e-mail factoring@east-ayrshire.gov.uk Or CommonWorks@east-ayrshire.gov.uk





Universal credit is a new scheme, administered by the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP), which aims to simplify the welfare system by merging six benefits into one, with a single monthly payment. Universal Credit will replace:

- Housing Benefit
- Job Seekers (Income Based)
- Employment Support Allowance (Income Related)
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Income Support

How to make a claim on line:

Arrange:

- Access to a computer / device with internet access
- Obtain help using the device - if required

Have the following information ready:

- Your post code
- National Insurance Number
- Details of the bank, building society or credit union account you want Universal Credit paid into
- Your e-mail address and password if you have one
- How much rent you are charged and the name of your landlord
- Details of all your savings and any other capital (e.g. ISA)
- Details of any non –work income (e.g. from an insurance plan or private pension)
- Details of any other benefits you already receive (e.g. PIP)
- If you have a partner, you will need their details
- If you have children, you will need their details (including Child Benefit Reference)
- If you pay for childcare, you will need your childcare provider's details, including their registration number

Apply:

- Online at <https://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit>

Notify:

- Tell East Ayrshire Council that you have made a claim for Universal Credit and make a separate claim for Council Tax Reduction

Paying rent – Council Tenants:

- Paying your rent on time and in full is the most important part of your Tenancy Agreement. You need to pay your rent yourself.
- **The DWP will no longer pay your rent to the**

Council if you are in receipt of Universal Credit as they did under Housing Benefit.

- It is your responsibility to make sure your rent is paid on time.
- There are different methods available for paying your rent: e.g. Direct Debits, Standing Orders, On-line, Telephone (01563 554400 – Option 1), PayPoint and Cash Payment at selected Customer Service Centres.
- If you are not able to pay your rent, contact your local Housing Team: by e-mail at housing@east-ayrshire.gov.uk or Neighbourhood Coach: on 01563 503280 within 3 days to avoid further action and so that we can provide you with advice and support.
- You can request that the DWP make rent payments directly to your landlord. Landlords can also request to have your rent paid directly if you have arrears owing on your rent account or if you are vulnerable.
- You will be paid monthly in arrears so you will need to budget your money through the month.

Support and Advice is Available:

- If you have difficulties managing your UC claim get in touch with the Benefits and Changing Team on 0303 123 1012.
- If you need help on welfare benefits, you can: contact East Ayrshire Money at www.eamoney.co.uk or call 0800 389 7750 between 10am and 4pm or
- Contact Citizens Advice Bureau on 01563 543379 to make an appointment
- If you need Personal Budgeting help or help getting online then call Neighbourhood Coach Team on 01563 503280

PLEASE NOTE!

It can take up to 6 weeks to receive the first payment and waiting time can vary.

PLEASE NOTE!

You may be entitled to Universal Credit to help pay your rent. You apply online with the DWP and you may be entitled to your Housing Costs as part of your claim. This will be paid directly to you as part of your claim and you must then pay your rent direct to the Council.

Apply via www.gov.uk/universal-credit
Contact Job Centre Plus 0800 169 0310

LOCAL NEWS

Gauchalland East Tenants and Residents Association (GETRA)

This year we are delighted to have been able to continue with our Bio Dome Project, growing fresh fruit and vegetables, right here in the heart of Galston. Our wee shop does a roaring trade and everyone is welcome to come along to buy some of the best fresh produce in the area, Monday to Friday 9am – 12.30pm. Come along and see for yourself at Catherine Drive, Galston – you can't miss us, our bio domes are now an iconic feature of our neighbourhood. If you fancy developing your "green fingers" or finding out more about what to grow and when, we are always looking for volunteers of all ages, why not pop in to find out more?

Our annual McMillan Coffee Morning in September raised £1175.00 for this fantastic charity and we are now planning this year's event. The delicious home baking, fantastic tea and coffee as well as the fun banter are good enough reasons for everyone to come along and get involved, but there's also a chance to be a winner in the raffle too, so look out for the date of this year's event coming soon!



Campbell Area Tenants and Residents Association (CATRA)



It gives me great pleasure to report on Campbell Area Tenants and Residents Association (CATRA) wonderful last year or so and be able to tell all members how proud I am to be part of this group.

We eventually finalised our lease for the plot of land which has become the memorial garden to Kathy Brown MBE. Thanks to all who helped clear and prepare the ground!

Members have attended all Federation events and been involved in consultations with TIS throughout the last 12 months and had fun despite the serious nature of the work carried out.

Our group has members on the Local Community Council, Region 3 of the Regional Networks Scotland, The East Ayrshire Federation Executive Committee and work with other groups in the Irvine Valley

We were very pleased to win the most inspiring tenants and residents association in October 2017 at the Federation 10 year anniversary Celebration. A big thank you to TIS and EAC's Housing Service who helped us set up our group and have supported along the way. We are looking forward to attending the Federation AGM on 21st May at the Fenwick Hotel and the TIS conference on 15th-17th June. Hope to see you there!!

This year we also entered the Valley Participatory Budgeting event in the Morton Hall, Newmilns on 15th March and were overjoyed to collect £190.00 towards our hanging baskets and planters. Thank you to Eddie Bulik and the staff from Vibrant Communities for a well run event.

Finally thanks to the group members and welcome to the two new members, you have worked very hard and deserve the praise and accolades.

John McKenzie (Mac), Chairperson

Keir Hardie Hill Tenants and Residents Association

In March this year we had our AGM and are pleased to report that we have some new members on our committee. We will be working hard with the Council Housing Services, Police, Antisocial Behaviour Team, Outdoor Services, East Ayrshire Federation, Tenants Information Service and others to improve our area and deal with local issues. This year we were delighted with the work the Council carried out to render our homes and improve the play park and think it makes a difference to the look of the area. We will be working on organising some community activities over the summer and looking into ideas for improving the old red ash pitch. We really want the area to be a place we are all proud to live in and know that we need to work with other organisations and services to make it happen. So, watch this space!



Onthank Tenants and Residents Association

Once again we have had a busy year, making sure the hanging baskets and planters are looking lovely as always and are keen to see more improvements to the area. We have also been working with vibrant communities and other community groups to develop a Community Action Plan for the North West Area. If you haven't had time to fill in the survey to give your views, please do so, as this will help all the organisations develop a plan that covers everyone's ideas and priorities.

We are also pleased to see that after much campaigning by our group over a number of years that there are plans underway to redevelop the flats above the Tourhill Road shops. The flats have been sold to a private developer and we all hope that this will improve this part of Onthank immensely. We are delighted to be part of the Federation and get involved in training and information sessions, open meetings and events with all the other tenants and residents associations in East Ayrshire along with the Tenants Information Service and Council Housing Service. We plan to work with lots of organisations and services to improve the area over the next year. Look out for our Coffee, Cake and Chat session coming later in the year!



Kilmarnock and Loudoun Trades Union Council: Unity is Strength

Kilmarnock and Loudoun Trades Union Council brings together unions to work and campaign around issues affecting working people in their local workplaces and communities.

The main aims of Trade Union Councils are to:

- Raise public awareness of rights at work and the union role in enforcing those rights
- Promote organising and recruitment drives to build union membership
- Support union and community campaigns for dignity and respect in the workplace and beyond
- Support trade union and human rights campaigns across the globe

Trade Union Councils consist of trade unions or branches of trade unions which meet within the area covered by that Trades Union Council.

At the present time there are Trade Union Councils in Irvine, North Ayrshire and Kilmarnock and Loudoun but other areas of Ayrshire are not covered by Trades Union Councils at the present time.

A union branch can send a maximum of three delegates to trade union council meetings and they usually have to pay a small affiliation fee to do so.

Trade Union Councils have traditionally shown an interest in issues such as **housing**, the National Health Service (NHS) and public services generally. Given their interest in these issues - there is scope for working on joint campaigns with tenants and residents groups as well as other community organisations.

The Kilmarnock and Loudoun Trades Union Council meet on the 4th Monday of the month at 7.30 pm in the North West Kilmarnock Area Centre Western Road Kilmarnock.

For more details and to make contact with the Trades Union Council: phone or text Arthur West on 07826127759 or e - mail Arthur West on arthurwest7@hotmail.co.uk



TENANTS *and* RESIDENTS
EAST AYRSHIRE

Tenant & Resident Priorities Questionnaire



TENANTS *and* RESIDENTS
EAST AYRSHIRE

East Ayrshire Federation would like to find out your housing and related priorities to help us make sure we are working with the Council and other service providers to influence the decisions taken on behalf of us all.

Please tick how important each aspect is to you

		high	medium	low
1	Keeping my home well maintained and warm			
2	Providing a good repairs service, with repairs being fixed first time			
3	More investment in my home (such as bathrooms, kitchens, windows, doors)			
4	Cyclical maintenance programmes (such as gutter cleaning, close painting)			
5	Building new homes in the area for rent			
6	Keeping my neighbourhood well maintained			
7	Maintaining high quality customer service standards			
8	Improving communication and opportunities for participation and scrutiny of services			
9	Providing access to services on line, such as paying rent, reporting repairs			
10	Other (please specify)			

Our contact details:

Name				
Address				
Post code				
Telephone number				
Email address				
Age Range	16-24	25-44	45-65	65+

You can request a copy of the survey via email at chair.eaf@yahoo.com or complete on line at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/QPSDCSL> or fill out this form and return to East Ayrshire Federation, 19 Portland Road, Kilmarnock, KA1 2BT

