

# up close.

ISSUE 20: May 2018

Central Edition

## Investing in Young People



## Remember our Roxburgh House office is now closed to the public

### HOW TO CONTACT US

#### FIRST:

Call us for free to report any issue or repair, or call into one of our offices. If we can, we will deal with your issue there and then.

#### SECOND:

If you need more detailed advice and support we will try to resolve your enquiry that day and will keep you up to date with the progress. If you need advice about a complex issue, we may need to seek the assistance of an officer from one of our specialist teams. We will give them your contact details and have them call you back.

#### THIRD:

We can, if you wish, pass your details to one of our specialist team members and ask them to arrange to visit you in your home at a time that suits you.

### BY PHONE:

 **0800 013 2196** (free from a landline or mobile)  
For out-of-hours emergency repairs use this number only

### ONLINE:

 [customerexperience@riverclydehomes.org.uk](mailto:customerexperience@riverclydehomes.org.uk)

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

 @rivclydehomes

 @river.c.homes

### IN WRITING:

River Clyde Homes: Roxburgh House,  
102 - 112 Roxburgh Street, Greenock PA15 4JT

### SERVICE LOCATIONS:

We have offices close to you, where you can:

- Apply for a new home
- Bid on properties
- Receive financial advice
- Access factoring services
- Discuss housing options & support services
- Report repairs
- Report antisocial behaviour.

#### Clyde Square, Greenock

Mon 9:00am - 5:00pm

Tue 9:00am - 5:00pm

Wed 9:00am - 5:00pm\*

Thu 9:00am - 5:00pm

Fri 9:00am - 4:00pm

*\*We are closed on the fourth Wednesday of the month from 1pm for staff training*

#### Broomhill Way, Greenock

Mon 8:45am - 12:30pm & 1.30pm - 4.30pm

Tue 8:45am - 12:30pm

Wed 8:45am - 12:30pm & 1.30pm - 3.30pm\*

Thu 1.30pm - 4.30pm

Fri 8:45am - 3.45pm

*\*We are closed on the fourth Wednesday of the month from 1pm for staff training*

Up Close is available in other formats, on request.

Please contact: Keith Moore

 01475 788800

 [communications@riverclydehomes.org.uk](mailto:communications@riverclydehomes.org.uk)



# Welcome

to the first edition of Up Close for 2018.

We have quite a year planned with hundreds of new homes being constructed across Inverclyde and a £17m investment to improve existing properties. As well as replacing outdated and inefficient systems, we will, for the first time, be installing solar panels in an effort to help reduce fuel poverty.

But as always, River Clyde Homes is concerned with more than just the bricks and mortar. All customers should have recently received a copy of Money Talks, our financial advice magazine that specifically aims to help people navigate the ever changing seas of welfare reform. We know these are challenging times for customers and we were pleased with all the feedback we received on last



Albert Henderson MBE, Chair of the Board

year's rent consultation on the way you would like to see services improved and delivered. To that end we are reviewing our caretaking services and looking to improve upon our recently praised sheltered housing services. We hope you enjoy this edition of Up Close, in which we look at how our emergency plans helped customers during the severe weather in March and our empty homes initiative to make more much needed homes available. As always we welcome your feedback on the magazine and welcome your suggestions for improvement. You can contact us on [communications@riverclydehomes.org.uk](mailto:communications@riverclydehomes.org.uk)

**river clyde homes**

## JOBS FAIR

**JOBS FAIR, TUESDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> MAY**  
**10am – 12noon**  
 Larkfield Community Hall  
 Lothian Road, Greenock.

**ON OFFER**

- ✓ Benefits Advice
- ✓ Training
- ✓ Volunteering
- ✓ Apprenticeships
- ✓ Work Experience
- ✓ Jobs

Up Close is produced by River Clyde Homes and delivered to 5,600 customers. Designed by: Solo Creative.

River Clyde Homes is a company limited by guarantee, registered in Scotland (SC329031) and a Scottish Charity (SC038584). Property Factor Registration Number: PF000152.

## Do you need help to...

Use a computer?

Use the internet?

Use a smartphone or tablet?

Understand benefit changes?

Manage your money?

Get a bank account?

For further information about the full range of services offered by Future Skills, visit our website [www.futureskillsinverclyde.com](http://www.futureskillsinverclyde.com) or contact us on **01475 788915** to make an appointment.

Set up an email address?

Remember, technology doesn't need to be scary. Whether you are a total beginner or just want to refresh your IT skills, Future Skills can help!

SUPPORTING INVERCLYDE

futureskills



# RIG Arts SURF their way to awards success

RIG Arts, a Greenock based arts charity which runs activities from the River Clyde Homes Art Flat, has scooped a major national award for its Broomhill project.

The creative and cultural activities run by RIG Arts have been key to the three year, £26m regeneration project of the area and it was this work which secured the Creative Regeneration award at the annual SURF (Scottish Urban Regeneration Forum) Awards for Best Practice in Community Regeneration. The judging panel commented: *"The Broomhill Project demonstrates a truly integrated approach to embedding creativity into the heart of the revitalisation of an often overlooked area of Greenock. The project gives a voice to those living in, and connected to, Broomhill, nurturing their creativity and celebrating their strong industrial and cultural heritage through stories songs and art."*

The community came together recently to celebrate just that with the unveiling of a mural created by local artist Jim Strachan as part of the Heid O' the Hill Heritage project. As well as providing the space for the mural, River Clyde Homes helped prepare the site for the mural which is inspired by the area's rich history and heritage. More widely, the project has celebrated the area's rich industrial and social history and now comprises artist residencies, films, community events, murals, community gardens, and heritage projects. Local residents have benefitted from workshops on songwriting, photography, film making, painted, stained glass, stone carving, ceramics, textiles,



and furniture upcycling. River Clyde Homes provided the project with a dedicated community art flat that has become a cultural hub and a place for people to meet.

Karen Orr of RIG Arts said: *"We are delighted and honoured to receive this prestigious award for our work on the Creative Regeneration of Broomhill. Our success is thanks to our strong partnership with River Clyde Homes and the enthusiastic Broomhill community. It is great to see the hard work of residents, artists and project workers being recognised. We look forward to continuing our work on The Broomhill Project."*



The

## DARK SIDE O' THE CLYDE: BROOMHILL

Until Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> May

**The Beacon Arts Centre, Greenock**

A photographic exhibition capturing the dark nooks and crannies of a shadowy, alternative side of Inverclyde.

 river clyde homes

[www.facebook.com/darkinverclyde](https://www.facebook.com/darkinverclyde) 

# Project breathes new life into empty homes

River Clyde Homes is part of a new project which has been launched to tackle long-term privately-owned empty homes in Inverclyde.

The project, a partnership between River Clyde Homes, Inverclyde Council and The Scottish Empty Homes Partnership (SEHP), aims to address the wasted resource of properties that have been empty for more than six months.

A new Empty Homes Officer, Barbara Crichton, has been appointed as part of the initiative. She is based within Inverclyde Council's Public Health and Housing Team at Safer and Inclusive Communities.

The number of long-term privately owned empty homes in Inverclyde is estimated at 560. The common definition is of a property that has been empty for over six months but many have been empty for years. Empty homes are both costly and wasteful for owners and impact on the surrounding area if the home and garden are not regularly maintained. These homes can accumulate repair issues and attract antisocial behaviour.

Barbara is working to identify these homes and their owners and assist them to bring the home back into use. Primarily, offering an advice and information service to help owners to either sell or rent-out their property, she can provide additional incentives



Barbara (left) with Elspeth Ahlfeld

to encourage action to bring these properties back into use.

Indeed, Barbara has already achieved several successes in her new role. Greenock resident Elspeth Ahlfeld felt overwhelmed at the prospect of trying to sell her property which had been empty for nine years after poor health forced her to move out but, with Barbara's support, her property sold at auction for more than the home report valuation.

Barbara spent time with Mrs Ahlfeld to understand the obstacles to selling and offered practical assistance by identifying an auction house which was willing to change the locks, clear the garden and carry out a home report in order to get the property ready for sale, in return for recouping their costs once the property was sold.

"I was suffering from poor health and had no idea about how to go about

selling my house", explained Elspeth, "The longer it went on the bigger burden it became, but meeting Barbara was the best thing that could have happened. The house is now sold and it's such a relief not to have to pay bills for it anymore. It really is a weight off my mind."

Jenny Speck, a River Clyde Homes Board member, said: "There is demand for homes in Inverclyde across all sectors. The reasons for empty homes are numerous and include sentimental attachment, lack of time, skills or finance; with a bit of support and advice these homes can be transformed. The benefits of bringing empty homes to the market place include adding to the housing supply, contributing to area regeneration and creating safer neighbourhoods."

If you know someone who would benefit from Barbara's help, she can be contacted on 01475 714273

# Praise for RCH Sheltered Housing Service

River Clyde Homes' Sheltered Housing Service has received its most positive report following a recent unannounced visit from the Care Inspectorate.

We manage eight sheltered housing complexes, totalling 254 homes, providing accommodation for service users who are frail and/or mobility impaired. The Care Inspectorate gave the service the following grades:

**Quality of Care and Support:** **6 Excellent**

**Quality of Management & Leadership:** **6 Excellent**

The report states: "The tenants we spoke to expressed high levels of satisfaction with the service and told us about the positive benefits they had experienced since coming to live in one of the River Clyde Homes' sheltered housing complexes... Tenants told us that staff would often 'go the extra mile' for them and it was pleasing to see that the manager actively promoted this."

In conclusion, the Care Inspectorate said: "Tenants told us they trusted staff and could rely on them, consistently describing them as 'excellent', 'caring' and 'dependable'. We observed staff interacting with tenants using genuine warmth, respect and good humour."

Jillian Moffat, Vice-chair of the River Clyde Homes Board, welcomed the report, saying: "This is a well-deserved report for our much valued sheltered housing service. The grades show an improvement on the previous inspection of 2015 and underline the focus, energy and drive of our staff to meet the support needs of residents and build meaningful relationships. This is just one example of how River Clyde Homes is improving services to meet our customers' expectations."

Whilst we are delighted with this report we are always striving to further improve our services to customers. You will be invited to share your thoughts on sheltered housing in our forthcoming customer consultation, please contact Angela Montgomery, our Sheltered Services Team Leader at

[Angela.Montgomery@riverclydehomes.org.uk](mailto:Angela.Montgomery@riverclydehomes.org.uk)

## WHAT OUR RESIDENTS SAID:

"I have lived at John Galt House for almost 10 years now and feel safe, secure, valued and respected. The service received from the wardens and cleaners is exceptional. I am encouraged to be involved in many aspects of sheltered housing and was recently asked by management to be involved with recruitment of new staff under 'safer recruitment and selection' and felt privileged to be asked. I am supported to make informed choices that suit me and wardens and management are always going the extra mile to ensure I lead a quality life with lots of social inclusion. I liaise with the wardens and cleaners on a daily basis and my son will often communicate with management via email on my behalf, he always receives positive feedback in a timely manner. I honestly could not choose a better place to live!" - J Grant

"If I had won the lottery I could not find a more suitable home to live in. Since moving into Stewart House, I have regained my independence and feel supported. The people who live here and staff working for River Clyde Homes have helped to make mine a 'loved home'. I was initially wary of moving to sheltered housing as my perception was that it was only for old people that needed looking after. However, I now realise that sheltered housing is all about supporting people to maintain their independence and improve their quality of life and is a wonderful place to live." - K McDade

# An East End Oasis

## The Belville Biodiversity Garden has won a Scottish Civic Trust 'My Place' Award.

The garden has created a 500 square metre oasis of calm and wildlife, in an area where many residents have little access to quality garden space. The design was inspired, influenced and built by the community on the most minimal budget, by using reclaimed and recycled materials from the local area and home grown or donated plants. The lack of budget was no bar to creativity. Huge hexagonal bug hotel sculptures were made using recycled wood along with a stumpery, a nectar bar and log piles sitting amongst swathes of bold, native wild flower planting. The artist Wayne Darnell incorporated many creative interventions within the design, such as oak leaves carved on a tree trunk seat. Volunteers built a stunning viewpoint cairn using reclaimed stones from the site.

The garden design previously won a Greening Grey Britain Award from the Royal Horticultural Society in 2017. River Clyde Homes contributed initial groundwork and laid a path, but the teamwork between community groups such as TCV Green Gym group, Belville Garden Club, Greenock Scouts and volunteer staff from a local Tesco did all the rest, resulting in a garden that is attractive, creative and educational.



### Soup, Sandwich & a Blether

The Garden has been running a Friday lunchtime session between 12pm – 1pm where people can drop into their offices at 53-57 Belville Street for free soup, a sandwich and a chat. The idea is to bring together people from the local community who perhaps feel a bit socially isolated to help them meet other people and get involved in the garden's activities. If you, or someone you know, would benefit, just drop by!

### Broomhill Clothing Sale

A children's clothing drive was a hit as people descended on the new Broomhill Community Hub to bag themselves some fashion bargains.

An amazing £215 was raised which River Clyde Homes has matched and a further donation has brought the total to £500. The money will be distributed between two local primary schools, Whinhill and St Patrick's.

On her first visit to the new community hub, Emma Holmes (pictured with her daughter), said, "This is such a good event, 100% a good idea. All the clothes are lovely and in really good condition. And it's the first time I have been to the community garden and hub. It's a great wee place."

The community event, organised by the River Clyde Homes' Broomhill Team, relied on generous donations of children's clothing and shoes from local people. All items left at the end of the sale were donated to Barnardos for a sale this year.



## Residents' and Tenants' Organisations

At River Clyde Homes we work with Registered Tenants' Organisations (RTOs) – consulting them on key policy matters which will affect all of our customers. It's a great way to have your say on the way River Clyde Homes delivers services specifically in your area and across the whole of Inverclyde.

We also offer grants to registered RTOs to help them with running costs and to improve their local areas. Up to £500 per group is available for help with administration costs and meeting rooms, and a further £1,000 each year is available from community projects. Accessing a grant is easy, so get your thinking caps on for projects we could help you with.

To apply for a grant you must be registered with River Clyde Homes. It's easy to register and our Governance Officer, Anne Ross, will be only too pleased to help (see contact details below).

**For more information on any of the groups, or to register an RTO, contact Anne Ross, Governance Officer, on 01475 788851 or email [anne.ross@riverclydehomes.org.uk](mailto:anne.ross@riverclydehomes.org.uk)**

The following groups are already registered in the Central area with River Clyde Homes.

- **Weir St Residents' Group**
- **Greenock Central**
- **Broomhill Tenants' & Residents' Association**
- **Stewart House**
- **Royal Court**



## James Watt Dock

One of our most ambitious new build developments to date has been given the go-ahead.

The £19m investment at James Watt Dock will see 134 flats constructed at this historic Greenock site and marks our first riverside development.

Four-storey blocks of apartments will be built on disused land beside the dock access road, between the A8 East Hamilton Street and Great Harbour.

There will also be a 'village green' and a children's play park. The development is expected to take up to two years to complete.

Fifty of the flats will have one bedroom and 76 will have two bedrooms. There will also be eight wheelchair-accessible two-bedroom flats.

Gary Wilson, executive director of Property Services at River Clyde Homes said: "This is a major investment in much-needed modern homes in Inverclyde and contributes to our ambition to be a major developer of housing in Scotland."





## Meet the neighbours

### Chris Smith, Prospecthill Court, Greenock

Chris Smith moved into Prospecthill Court in the Broomhill area of Greenock in January 2018. By his own admission, he loves his flat.

He had been living in a private let in the East End of the town for 10 years in what he describes as 'pretty poor conditions'. He says: *"I had noisy, troublesome neighbours and my flat was continually getting broken into."*

His friend had read about the refurbishment of the Broomhill flats and encouraged Chris to make enquiries. *"I spoke with Joyce, one of the housing officers, who took me through the process of applying and within three weeks, I had moved in to a flat with a great view up the river. I never thought I'd say this, but it's now a pleasure to do the dishes as I stare out the window."*

Coming from a private furnished let, Chris had very little by way of furniture but River Clyde Homes was able to help him out with a couple of couches and a cooker from a flat that had been used as temporary accommodation during the regeneration works. *"The flat was already carpeted,"* says Chris. *"And Joyce put me in touch with a local voluntary organisation called Starterpacks Inverclyde who helped me with some bedding, kitchen equipment and towels. They were brilliant and I can't thank them enough."*

Chris really does love his flat: *"I feel safe and secure here; with the cladding and new heating system, the place is really cheap to heat, I have fantastic neighbours who have made me feel welcome and it's only a short walk to the town. I feel as though this is the start of a new chapter in my life."* **If you're interested in a home in Broomhill contact us on 0800 013 2196.**



If you're passing through Broomhill, take 5 minutes to look at the fantastic new mural on Ann Street. Created by local artist Jim Strachan (pictured) it celebrates the area's rich heritage. With the regeneration works to the buildings in Broomhill nearing completion, improvements to the local environment will begin soon. The mural is a just a taste of things to come. **Photo: Duncan Bryceland**

## Your Area



## Holiday Football

### The Clyde 1 Superscoreboard team stopped off in Inverclyde for the River Clyde Homes and Morton in the Community free Easter holiday football sessions.

Clyde 1 handed over a cheque for £1,000 from the radio station's Cash for Kids charity, which was used to help pay for the football camp.

River Clyde Homes had applied for the funding to give customers' children something special to do over the holidays.

The sessions have been led by Morton in the Community coaches and the youngsters attending them have had a ball.

Heather McLaughlin, Tenancy Sustainment and Support Manager at River Clyde Homes, said: "We are over the moon

to have received this money, which we have decided to use to further our partnership with Greenock Morton and provide our customers' children with some welcome physical activities during the Easter break."

The camps also included lunch for those taking part.

Debbie Fraser, Clyde Cash for Kids regional charity manager, said: "We are delighted to be able to support River Clyde Homes' Easter Football Camps.

"It is important that children have activities during the school holidays and an opportunity to learn new skills."



## Caretaking review

River Clyde Homes has achieved a great deal since it was established in 2007. However, we are ambitious and always strive to improve our performance and customer satisfaction. In order to deliver the high standard of services that our customers expect, we must adapt the way we work.

We are currently carrying out a review of our Caretaking Service and we are keen to hear the views of customers to help us shape the new service. This feedback along with feedback from the caretakers will help develop a new model. The consultation has begun and, if you currently receive a caretaking service, you can leave your feedback via our website at [www.riverclydehomes.org.uk](http://www.riverclydehomes.org.uk) or respond using the freepost card that will be delivered to your home.

## Investing in Young People

River Clyde Homes has achieved the prestigious Investors in Young People (IYYP) Silver Accreditation in recognition of its commitment to the training and development of young people. The award is testament to the Inverclyde-based housing association's effective practices around youth employment.

Albert Henderson MBE, Chair of the Board and a former head-teacher, said: *"Our young colleagues, apprentices and trainees are the future of our organisation. They bring passion, ambition and fresh ideas and we want to make sure they have a nurturing and supportive environment to work in."*

He added: *"This accreditation shows that we are truly committed to the training and development of young people and demonstrates that River Clyde Homes is an employer of choice both locally and in the wider area."*

Tasmin Ross, Human Resources Assistant said: *"I really enjoy working at River Clyde Homes and I think it's a great company for young people to work for."*

*"It is hard for graduates to find good jobs that will give them the experience they need to move forward in their career."*

She added: *"River Clyde Homes has given me the opportunity to work on a wide range of projects and has enabled me to expand my skills and experience – all of which will serve me well in the future."*



## Investing in your home and neighbourhood

We recently announced the details of our multi-million pound investment plans for housing in Inverclyde.

Just over £17m will be spent in the coming year to upgrade homes and make them more energy efficient.

£10.6m will be spent on major works to improve the housing stock. In a first, solar panels will be installed in 150 existing properties as part of a £3m drive to improve energy efficiency for customers. A total of 310 additional homes will be converted from inefficient electric storage heating to gas central heating and a £400k programme to improve insulation of lofts and wall cavities will take place. The previously announced major works to replace an ageing heating system at the apartments in Kilblain Court, Greenock will begin soon.

Over £1m will be spent on planned maintenance works as a new roof replacement programme begins, 45 properties will receive new kitchens, bathrooms and electrics, and £250k will be spent on replacing windows and doors.

In response to customer feedback, £3.2m will be invested in improving the built environment in neighbourhoods and £450k to improve and paint communal areas in flatted accommodation.

To help customers stay in their own homes, a budget of £300k has been set aside for aids and adaptations to properties.

Albert Henderson, Chair of the River Clyde Homes Board welcomed the news, saying: *"Our fundamental aim is to help improve lives and places and these plans go some way to doing that, particularly in the area of energy efficiency and tackling fuel poverty. Throughout last year we consulted with customers over what mattered to them and I'm pleased to see additional investment in neighbourhood environments and communal areas within blocks."*

He added: *"This £17m investment in existing properties, coupled with 89 new build coming on to the market and the demolition of unpopular properties in Banff Road, Cumberland Road and Slaemuir shows that River Clyde Homes is committed to the continued regeneration of Inverclyde."*

Full details of the investment plans will be communicated to customers in advance of the programmes commencing.

## Meter Tampering

## Eviction sends warning over meter tampering

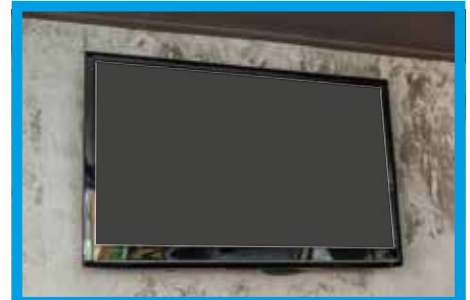
In March a Greenock man was evicted from his home after tampering with his electricity meter.

Due to the seriousness of the risk his actions presented, the Sheriff agreed to the housing association terminating the tenancy and River Clyde Homes have warned other customers about the dangers of tampering with electricity meters and energy theft. Energy theft is a criminal offence, costs the energy industry over £400million per year and is punishable by a fine or imprisonment.

Tampering with a meter can cause a significant fire risk which can be potentially devastating to the home and those around it and, in some cases, can be life threatening. River

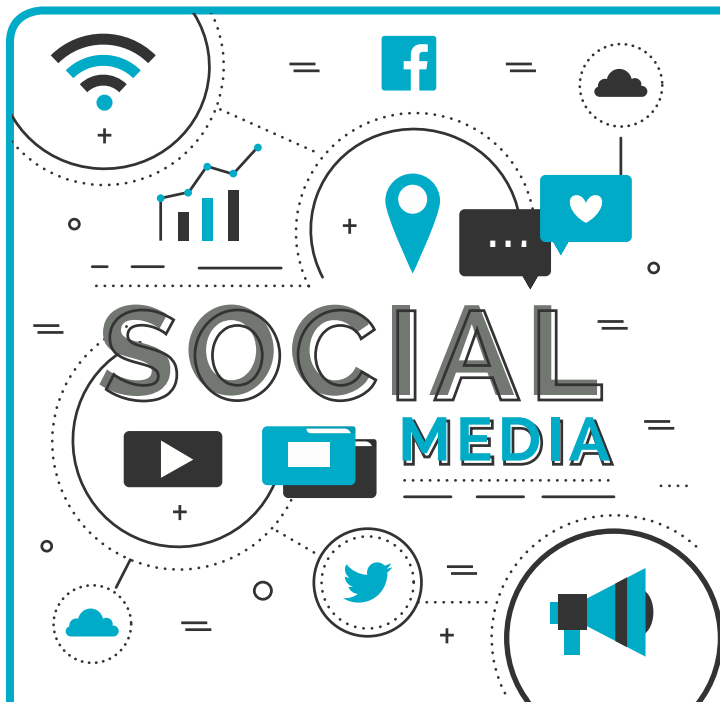
Clyde Homes urge any customers who are aware of this activity to contact us anonymously on 0800 013 2196.

If you are struggling with energy bills, please get in touch with your Housing Officer. There are a number of local organisations who can support you with the cost of energy and with any debt accrued.



### Flat screen televisions

After a number of recent incidents it has come to our attention that some customers are putting large flat screen televisions on walls that are unable to bear the heavy load. We would remind everyone that if you wish to carry out any internal alterations to your home you must first have permission to do so. Call us at any time of the night or day and talk to one of our team: **0800 013 2196**. Remember: if you cause damage to your home, you are liable to pay for the repair costs.



Did you know you can connect with us on **social media**?



Find us on Facebook at [facebook.com/river.c.homes/](https://www.facebook.com/river.c.homes/)



Or on Twitter at [@rivclydehomes](https://twitter.com/rivclydehomes)

Follow us for newly available homes, events, customer offers, service announcements and more!

You can also find out more about River Clyde Homes and the services we offer by checking out our website at [www.riverclydehomes.org.uk](http://www.riverclydehomes.org.uk)

10 Years

# Now we are 10

In December we celebrated ten years since River Clyde Homes was established following a unanimous vote by Inverclyde Council tenants for a stock transfer from Inverclyde Council.

**10<sup>th</sup>** anniversary  
river clyde homes

We marked our first decade with customer celebrations including our '10 days of Christmas' give away, panto outings and cake; and with an event at the Scottish Parliament hosted by MSP Stuart McMillan and attended by the Cabinet Secretary for Communities, Social Security and Equalities Angela Constance.

The last ten years has seen housing in Inverclyde, as well as the skyline, change as thousands of homes have been improved, 500 new properties built and unpopular blocks demolished.

At the event in Edinburgh, Mr McMillan spoke of the difference 10 years has made to housing and the progress River Clyde Homes has made to become a customer focussed association that leads the way in Scotland for its customer involvement activities.

He said: "There are still some challenges when it comes to housing in Inverclyde, but without RCH many of my constituents would still be living in cold homes with sub-standard heating, insulation and windows, and those living in RCH's residential accommodation can enjoy being independent whilst feeling secure in their own home.

"I therefore thank RCH for all their hard work over the last decade and look forward to making Inverclyde the best place it can be alongside them in the future."

Albert Henderson MBE, Chair of the River Clyde Homes Board, welcomed guests and outlined the exciting plans for the next five years to build 750 new homes.

Albert said: "It was a privilege to be invited to the Parliament Buildings for this event and we thank Mr McMillan for the opportunity to reflect on the last 10 years, but more importantly, to look forward to the future and the ambitious plans we have, the challenges we face and how we can continue to help improve lives and places."



Stuart McMillan, MSP



Albert Henderson



Christmas Party



Customers at Greenock Morton

24/7

## Customers experience the benefits of 24 hour service

Our local, 24-hour a day contact centre is proving to be a hit with customers.

Since the shift to offering a 24 hour service, 7 days a week local service, over 93% of queries are now resolved on first contact. Our Customer Experience team offers a seamless service with no passing of customers to outside agencies. This has resulted us exceeding the 90% goal we had set for ourselves.

In the last year the service has also seen a dramatic decrease in complaints about repairs, with staff able to use their local knowledge to assist customers quickly and efficiently with a whole range of queries, whatever the time of day, or night.

*"The fact customers can now contact our local team 24-hours a day as well as coming in to see us face to face in one of our hubs has undoubtedly helped us exceed*

*our targets for giving customers the outcome they are looking for first time," explained Joe Deegan, Customer Experience Manager at River Clyde Homes. "But credit needs to go to staff both on the phone lines and those who meet customers face to face for their hard work in helping us achieve this result."*

*"We're always striving to reach our goals of 'every customer happy' and 'every person positive' and the team have certainly shown that they are living these values. We are continually working towards these goals to make sure we are providing the best service possible to all our customers."*

You can call the local call centre with any query, any time of the night or day, for free on 0800 013 2196 or pop in to our hubs at Clyde Square and Broomhill during opening hours.



## Winter weather in Inverclyde

Early March brought difficult adverse weather conditions to Scotland.

Despite the many challenges we faced our staff were on the streets of Inverclyde to provide much needed assistance to those customers who needed help the most.

- Our Customer Experience team managed to run the 24/7 service contact service from their homes;
- Staff were delivering temporary heating by foot;
- Joiners & electricians while having to abandon their vehicles walked in dangerous conditions to carry out essential repairs;
- Our repairs team dealt with 77 emergency call outs;
- Our staff cleared pathways at high-rise blocks, sheltered housing and even roads within snowbound areas;
- Our contractors helped to clear pavements in neighbourhoods;
- More than 500 elderly and vulnerable customers were contacted by phone to ensure they were OK and our staff carried out prescription and errand runs for those customers who needed help.

Chair of the River Clyde Homes Board Albert Henderson said: *"There were many stories of individuals lending a helping hand to people within Inverclyde and I very much appreciate everyone's efforts to not only keep things going as best we could, but for going the extra mile. It was an exceptional effort under what were exceptional circumstances."*





# New online service helps get people moving in Inverclyde

River Clyde Homes has teamed up with Inverclyde Council to launch a one-stop-shop for anyone looking to rent or buy a home in the Inverclyde area.

Free and simple to use, Your Housing Options Inverclyde provides information, advice and support for house hunters. This includes contact details for estate agents, private landlords and housing associations in the area, along with tips for their local search. Users are invited to answer some basic questions in order to create a personalised guide which provides them with key information for their search.

"Our aim is to provide a portal which gathers together all of the information you might need to find your perfect home in Inverclyde," explains Jonathan Grant, Head of

Customer Services (East) for River Clyde Homes, "We are delighted to work in partnership with Inverclyde Council to deliver this new facility. Our combined local knowledge can help users find housing options they may never have heard of before, increasing their chances of finding the perfect home quicker."

The new service, covering Gourock, Greenock, Inverkip, Kilmacolm, Port Glasgow, Quarrier's Village and Wemyss Bay, is aimed at those looking to relocate to Inverclyde, as well as those who want to move within the area.

Your Housing Options Inverclyde can be accessed at <https://bit.ly/2ichaha>

## BROOMHILL COURT RETIREMENT HOUSING

for customers who need an enhanced housing management service to live independently

Want to know more? Call us on:

**0800 013 2196**

### SERVICES WILL INCLUDE:

- All year round 24/7 help & support
- Increased CCTV
- Call points in foyers
- Guestroom facilities
- Access to fun activities at events



**CONTACT US ON  
YOUR LUNCH BREAK.  
EVEN IF THAT'S 2AM.**



**WITH OUR 24-HOUR LOCAL CALL CENTRE,  
WE'RE AWAKE WHEN YOU ARE.**

Pay rent or factoring fees, manage your direct debits, report antisocial behaviour, apply for a new home, request a repair or inspection, make a complaint, pay us a compliment.

Call us free on **0800 013 2196** 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, or email  
**[customerexperience@riverclydehomes.org.uk](mailto:customerexperience@riverclydehomes.org.uk)**