

TheChain

...linking people together

ISSUE 20 • SUMMER 2018



Above & Beyond Award - apply now!



Find out about the Alan Morrison Above and Beyond Award, celebrating those who go the extra mile.

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Be part of CaRTO



Join an independent team of tenants, have your say and get involved in making decisions about your home.

[Turn to page 4](#)

Tenants move in to Portstown Park



Castlehill welcomed tenants to our brand new, high specification development in Inverurie.

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Affected by dementia?



New award scheme available now for people with dementia or their carers, via Aberdeen Care & Repair.

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Two of our Customer Service Assistants, Emma Roberts (left) and Karen Spears (right) pictured celebrating the outcome of the mystery shopping report.

Celebrating our success!

North East tenants recently completed a mystery shopping project to help enhance the customer experience when visiting our office.

The group of tenants from Castlehill, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and Langstane Housing Association visited each other's offices, asking, "How do we go about applying for a home?" They made observations about accessibility, reception and information received.

The mystery shoppers recommended that Castlehill's office would benefit from better signage and sprucing up the reception area. Based on their recommendations, Castlehill will renew the exterior sign, repaint the front door and redecorate reception.

You can view the full report online at castlehillha.co.uk or you can request a paper copy from our office. If you would like to take part in future projects like this or to find out more about NETRALT, please contact our Tenant Participation Officer at catherine.coutts@castlehillha.co.uk or 01224 625822.

Feedback on our Customer Services Assistants included:

"...very approachable, polite staff...very helpful and welcoming"

"Every question was answered, they could not do enough for me"

Castlehill are delighted with the outcome of the mystery shopping project, especially with the positive comments about staff, and are looking forward to the group undertaking their next mystery shop. Special thanks to our tenant, Colin Stewart, who compiled the report.

The mystery shopping project was organised by the award-winning local group NETRALT (North East Tenants, Residents and Landlords Together).

Letter from our Chief Executive...

Later this year, it will be time for Castlehill's Management Committee to review our Strategic Plan which sets out the "direction of travel" and goals for the Association over the next three years. When we do this exercise, it's always important to remember the fundamental aims of the Association in providing and maintaining high quality housing that's affordable to live in and also providing support services to those tenants who need them. That's ultimately what we are here to do.

In carrying out the review, we need to look at the challenges ahead and how we can deliver our aims while meeting these challenges. The Scottish Government has a target of building 50,000 new affordable homes in the lifetime of the current parliament and has backed this up with considerable levels of grant funding. This has enabled Castlehill to have a healthy new build programme with recently completed developments in Inverurie and Bucksburn, Aberdeen and further projects now on site in Inverurie and Maidencraig, Aberdeen. The unknown at the moment is what funding may be available after 2021 to enable us to continue to build much needed new homes. Castlehill is working with other Housing Associations across Scotland to lobby parliament to maintain funding and sustain new building into the future.

The other main challenges we need to consider are on how we continue to meet new standards on energy efficiency, revised fire safety legislation and investment in our existing housing stock as it gets older. There is also considerable pressure on funding to provide housing support services and to carry our adaptations to properties for tenants with a disability or medical need.

We will be seeking input from CaRTO (Castlehill Registered Tenants Organisation) to the review of the Strategy and any thoughts or comments tenants can feed into this process will be most welcome.

As ever, I hope everyone finds this edition of The Chain informative and entertaining. I am particularly pleased to read about the award that has been created in memory of Alan Morrison. Alan was a tireless volunteer for Castlehill for many years both through tenant participation initiatives and on our Management Committee and is much missed by everyone who knew him.

David Lappin

Chief Executive



Back by popular demand!

The Sheltered Magazine is produced every year and is comprised of contributions from our sheltered and very sheltered tenants. There was a question mark over whether the sheltered magazine could continue due a decline in the number of contributions from our residents and some schemes. We discussed the future of the magazine with CaRTO (Castlehill Registered Tenants Organisation) who were very much in favour of the magazine continuing and knew that many people looked forward to reading it each year. CaRTO worked with Castlehill to resurrect the magazine, and two prizes were introduced (from CaRTO's budget) to encourage people to get involved.

After a slow start, there was an unprecedented amount of submissions! We had to increase the number of pages and have included as many articles as space allowed.

The standard of contributions was phenomenal and after much consideration, we are delighted to announce that the winners, chosen by David Lappin, Chief Executive, are:

Best submission: **"In Praise of Torry"** by Moira Strommen, St Peter's Court

Best photo: **"A Wintery View"** by Pam Gatt-Hall, Craigievar Court

(You can see the winning entries on the next page)

Congratulations to both winners who have won £50 for their schemes. We hope that everyone who contributed had some fun coming up with ideas for the new magazine.

Every sheltered and very sheltered tenant will have received their own copy of the Sheltered Magazine. It is also available on our website castlehillha.co.uk or from our office.





In Praise of Torry

Not long ago I came to stay
at St Peter's Court in Torry.
I would like to tell you,
I am not one bit sorry.

I soon found out that Torry
is a very fine place.
You always meet
a friendly face.

They greet you when they meet you,
and agree about the weather,
and usually they mention
that soon it will get better!

Sometimes Torry gets bad press,
which really isn't fair
because dog's mess and crime
are really everywhere!

Of churches around here,
you can take your pick
My personal favourite
is St Fittick's.

There is always something on
and they are a cheery bunch,
And once a month they serve us
with a really lovely lunch.

A hot and tasty three course meal
and cup of tea goes with.
At only £4 a head
that's what I call a gift.

St Peter's Court where I live
is a sheltered housing scheme,
and all of us who live here
are happy with the office team.

They call us in the morning
(but only if you wish)
It's very heartwarming to hear a
friendly voice,
and for us who live alone,
it's nice to know that someone cares
that we are still going on!

Some of us who live here
are often not so well
And it helps a bit to have
someone you can tell.

Our warden here has been very clever
with social events that pull us together.
We try to have fun, we don't like sad.
What we'd like is a bit more glad.

Castlehill tenants from other schemes
Could you give us inspiration?
Can you come and visit us?
Take this as an invitation.

Changes are afoot I fear
And we need a plan for the coming year.
A party, a picnic or a jamboree
Let's get together and then we will see!
(what happens next...?)

Moira Strommen
St Peter's Court, Aberdeen



Fire prevention - tips for keeping your home safe



Most of us couldn't live without our domestic appliances - they are convenient and they save us time. They usually run smoothly but it is important to remember that washing machines, tumble dryers and dishwashers have powerful parts that heat up, any of

which could start a fire if something goes wrong. Fires can spread quickly and are unpredictable, with the potential to cause injury, damage and even death. Almost half of all domestic fires are caused by electricity. Therefore it is important to be aware of the proper safety measures when using these everyday appliances.



General hints and tips to help you stay safe when using electrical appliances

- Always switch appliances off at the wall before going to bed or going out
- Always plug straight into a wall socket and avoid adaptors for lots of plugs as they can result in electricity overloads
- Be careful when using extension cords. If they are torn or damaged, throw them away. For major appliances, use only heavy duty extension cords that are designed to handle high amperage. Extension cords should never feel hot to the touch
- If one of your appliances shocks you or sparks when you use it or unplug it, replace it immediately or have it repaired. Sparks and shocks indicate a dangerous electrical issue



Here are some additional safety rules to prevent a tumble dryer fire

- Never overload the dryer
- Let each cycle finish completely, including the cooling down time. If you have to stop the dryer before the cycle ends, remove all the clothes straight away and leave the dryer door open to help it cool down
- Remove lint from the machine after every load of clothes that you dry
- Never use the dryer without the lint filter being back in place
- Do not cover any vent or opening on the machine
- Sweep or vacuum areas around the dryer to prevent fluff build up
- Don't leave the dryer running when you leave the house or go to bed at night. You don't want a fire to break out and spread
- Don't use the dryer to dry items that have been in contact with flammable substances such as cooking oil, alcohol or paint thinner

Some of this guidance may seem like common sense, but it is based on the negative experiences of others who made mistakes with their own appliances. Stay safe!

Remember to ensure to regularly check that all smoke detectors within your property are working properly.

If you would like to book a free fire safety home visit from Fire Scotland, it is quick and easy to contact them:

- **call 0800 0731 999**
- **text "FIRE" to 80800 from your mobile phone**
- **book online at firescotland.gov.uk**
- **call your local fire station**

Detailed fire prevention guidance is available at:

firescotland.gov.uk whitegoodsafety.com
electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk

Alan Morrison

Above and Beyond Award 2018

REMEMBERING ALAN



Castlehill Housing Association and CaRTO (Castlehill Registered Tenants Organisation) have introduced the Alan Morrison Above and Beyond Award to commemorate the life of Alan Morrison, who was a prominent figure in tenant participation in the North East.

Alan was one of the founding members of our Tenants Panel, which later became CaRTO, and was the group's Chair. He was involved with the Scrutiny Panel, a key member of NETRALT (North East Tenants, Residents and Landlords Together) and a member of Castlehill's Management Committee. Alan devoted a considerable amount of his time and energy to these groups and made a positive impact on tenant participation, not just at Castlehill but throughout the North East.

This award in his memory reflects the compassionate person that Alan was by celebrating the kindness, generosity and understanding that often goes unrecognised in our busy lives.

ABOUT THE AWARD

This award gives you the opportunity to pay tribute to someone who has gone above and beyond for you or your community. Caring neighbours and thoughtful people can play an important role in making our lives that bit easier, and this is your chance to make sure that these individuals are recognised.

Any Castlehill tenant may submit one nomination per year by filling out this form. You can nominate anyone (nominee) who you think deserves the award, e.g. a family member, a friend, a neighbour, a carer, etc.

The person you nominate must be an individual who you feel has gone Above and Beyond in helping and supporting you or your community.



The winner will receive **£100** and a unique glass trophy.

The person who nominated the winner will receive **£50**.

About you

Name	
Address	
Email	
Phone	
Mobile	

About the person you would like to win

Name	
Address	
Email	
Phone	
Mobile	

How do you know this person?	
How long have you known them?	
Are you nominating this person because of what they do for you as an individual, or what they do for your local community?	

<p>Why do you want to nominate this person?</p>	
<p>Please give example(s) of where this person has gone 'Above and Beyond' for you or your community.</p>	
<p>Why do you think this person should win?</p>	
<p>Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the person you are nominating?</p>	
<p>If you are sending in photos or other documents, please tick</p>	

THE RULES

You can nominate anybody, including relatives, friends and staff.

You cannot nominate yourself.

Nominations can come from any Castlehill tenant.

You can nominate one person per nomination form.

Photos and other supporting documents are welcome.

Please send your completed nomination to Freepost CASTLEHILL (please don't write anything else on the envelope or use a stamp), drop off at our office or email catherine.coutts@castlehillha.co.uk

The closing date for nomination is Friday, 31 August 2018.



Alan Morrison (right) having a great time with friends Colin Stewart (Castlehill tenant, CaRTO and management committee member) and Carol Hannaford (Aberdeen City Council staff) at NETRALT's House Party last year.

A warm welcome to our latest tenants

Tenants have recently moved in to 12 flats at our brand new, high specification development at Portstown Park in Inverurie.

These properties consist of 6 x one bed and 6 x two bed homes, which are spacious and energy efficient. There is ample parking and very easy access to the local school and Inverurie's shops and amenities.

We hope that all our new tenants are settling into their homes and enjoying life at Portstown Park.



Housing Officer Lynne Murray handing over keys to our youngest Portstown resident and her delighted Mum.

All About You - Health, housing and everything in between!

Saturday 15th September

10am-2pm

**Hebrion Evangelical Church,
Aberdeen**



This free, drop-in event is aimed at people living in social rented housing, including sheltered, amenity, assisted and general needs.

We will showcase what many organisations can do for people living in Aberdeen and highlight the amazing

wellbeing opportunities the city has to offer. You will have the opportunity to get involved in your community and to network with other people and organisations. There will be refreshments available throughout the day.

Hebrion Church is on Summer Street, across from the YMCA. It is fully accessible, central, close to bus routes and close to car parking at Summer Street and Chapel Street.

This event is organised by NETRALT, TPAS Scotland and Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership. No need to book, just drop by any time between 10am and 2pm.

Join us!

Be part of our forward thinking, positive team and help make a difference!

WE NEED PEOPLE WHO:

- Want to get involved in making important decisions about their homes and services
- Want to work in partnership with Castlehill
- Are willing to share ideas
- Like to meet new people
- Are willing to learn and develop new skills

There are lots of options to get involved at any level to suit you.

INTERESTED?

Please contact Catherine on **01224 628109**
or catherine.coutts@castlehillha.co.uk for more info.



Give yourself a rent break

We are aware that a minority of tenants do not pay their rent in November and December, often citing the expense of Christmas as the reason they have not paid. This means that some tenants are starting the New Year in rent arrears, which can be stressful and in some cases, have a knock-on effect for the rest of the year, until the cycle repeats itself in November.

If you struggle to pay for Christmas, why not try saving for it each month in advance? Or you could overpay your rent, giving yourself a rent break when you need it most. For example, if your monthly rent is £400, if you paid £436 per month January to November, you would have enough credit in your rent account to cover December's payment.

Remember, rent is a priority bill. If you break your tenancy agreement by not paying your rent, ultimately you are at risk of losing your home. Your housing officer is here to help you so please let us know if you are facing financial difficulties that may affect your rent payment.



Automatic Door Openers



Automatic door openers have been installed on the main entrances of several of Castlehill's properties, upon requests of Occupational Therapists for disabled or elderly tenants. These doors open automatically when someone uses their fob to gain access or someone buzzes a visitor into the building.

Recently we have noticed that these are frequently breaking down, leading to expensive repairs.

The reason these are breaking is misuse. People are pushing the doors to open them quicker. The consequences of this are that the door opener breaks down, the building can be left unsecure and the tenant who requires the door opener to gain access independently is no longer able to do so.

Costs to carry out repairs within buildings are fed back to tenants and reflected in rent charges. For example, rent charges to tenants in 2018 include the cost of repairs that were carried out within their building in 2017. Therefore the costs to repair automatic door openers in 2018 will be reflected in rent charges in 2019.

Over the last year, Castlehill have received invoices for the repairs of automatic door openers that operate the main entrances to buildings totalling £2430. We endeavour to keep our rent charges as low as possible. However with the increasing amount of automatic door openers breaking due to misuse this is becoming increasingly difficult.

Castlehill urges all tenants, staff, and visitors to wait for the doors to open and close in their own time. Not only will this prevent the door from breaking down but will also keep your rent charges as low as possible.

Newsletter Editorial Group

We are looking for people to get involved in creating this newsletter. It is published twice a year and is issued to every Castlehill tenant. You could make suggestions about what to highlight in the newsletter, help decide what is included, proof read and give feedback on the layout and design.

Everyone is welcome to take part, and we would recommend this to anyone who is looking to build up their CV or gain voluntary experience.

Communication will usually take place online, to allow those who are busy during the day to take part in their own time. If you do not have access to the internet and want to take part, we will make other arrangements to suit you.





As a parent or carer, you may have had your fair share of G.P, dental, hospital and CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) visits with your child. Children's Health Scotland helps children and young people to get the best standard of health care, especially when they are ill. They are Scotland's only charity dedicated to informing, promoting and campaigning on behalf of the health needs of all children and young people.

Statistics show that before the age of seven, 50% of all children in the UK will have a hospital admission. Most will be treated, recover and go home. For some, the illness may be more complicated and become a long term condition. This may result in a lot of hospital visits or stays as they grow up. Whatever the reason for using health services, it can be a stressful and worrying time.

Children's Health Scotland helps children, young people and their families by:

- Listening, providing support and advice when you need it
- Finding the right service for you

- Providing information about your healthcare rights and responsibilities
- Helping your children and young people cope with illness or a long term condition

They also help children and young people learn about their healthcare rights to help with decisions about their treatment and care. All children and young people are protected by the EACH (European Association for Children in Hospital) Charter. This sets out ten articles that describe how children and young people can expect to be treated in hospital, and what their rights are.

Find out more about health rights, the EACH charter, support and resources:

Go to www.childrenshealthscotland.org

Call **0131 553 6553**

Email enquiries@childrenshealthscotland.org

Do you have or do you care for someone with Dementia?



The Life Changes Trust are offering small amounts of money to people affected by Dementia – both people with dementia and carers who are providing 4 hours (unpaid) care for someone with dementia who live in Aberdeen City. Aberdeen Care and Repair are delivering the new individual award scheme for Aberdeen City and it will run from 1st April 2018 – 30th September 2018.

People can apply for any amount up to £500 per person for something that they think will make their life better or to enable them to do something that matters to them which, without the award, they would not be able to do.

The Life Changes Trust was established by the Big Lottery Fund in April 2013 to support transformational change in the well-being and quality of life of people affected by dementia, including unpaid carers, and care experienced young people. For more information, see their website www.lifechangestrust.org.uk

If you would like more information about the scheme please contact Aberdeen Care and Repair on 01224 251133.



General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

We recently sent our tenants information about the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and how we handle your information. The GDPR gives you rights in relation to how information about you is gathered, used, recorded and shared by organisations. It also places certain requirements on organisations that collect and process information about you.

Our data protection policy explains a bit more about the GDPR, how it affects you and what we are doing to ensure that we meet the legal requirements and demonstrate good practice.

Our Fair Processing Notice explains how we will handle your personal information. This notice explains what information we collect, when we collect it and how we use this. During the course of our activities we will process personal data (which may be held on paper, electronically, or otherwise) about you and we recognise the need to treat it in an appropriate and lawful manner. The purpose of this notice is to make you aware of how we will handle your information.

Our data protection policy and our fair processing notice are available on our website castlehillha.co.uk/publications or by contacting our customer service team on 01224 625822.



Contact us...



Castlehill Housing Association

4 Carden Place,
Aberdeen AB10 1UT
Tel: 01224 625822
Fax: 01224 625830

Website: www.castlehillha.co.uk
Email: info@castlehillha.co.uk

Office hours are:
Mon – Fri 9.00am – 5.00pm



Wishing you a great
summer from all the
team at Castlehill

Win £50 in our summer quiz!

To be in with a chance of winning £50 of vouchers for a shop of your choice, just answer the questions in our quiz and send them to the address below. One lucky winner will be randomly selected out of all the winning entries. The answers can all be found within this newsletter.

Q.1 What is the name of the new award?

Q.2 How much money did we spend on auto door repairs last year?

Q.3 Which town is our new scheme, Portstown Park, in?

Q.4 What does GDPR stand for?

Q.5 The Life Changes Trust has funding available for people affected by which condition?

Name:

Address:

Tel/Email

Email: your answers to:
catherine.coutts@castlehillha.co.uk
Freepost CASTLEHILL (please don't write anything else on the envelope or it may not reach us)
Closing date: 31 August 2018

Catherine Coutts
4 Carden Place, Aberdeen. AB10 1UT
or email catherine.coutts@castlehillha.co.uk

Congratulations to a happy tenant from Holland Street, who won shopping vouchers worth £50 in the last quiz. Well done!