



## Major home improvements set to start.

**It's been a very complicated jigsaw puzzle, but dates have now been scheduled for Atrium's major investment in home improvements and construction of new properties.**

It's all part of our ambitious Business Plan to bring our older properties to a new 'Homes Fit for 21st Century Living Standard', as well as to build up to 99 new homes, between now and 2023.

If you remember, last year we started a consultation exercise with all tenants on this Plan, sharing our proposals and what this meant in terms of investment to individual properties. The Plan was recently endorsed by our Board and we've since completed a tender exercise to identify experienced and capable contractors to complete the works successfully. The first internal improvement contracts will start in the summer.

We understand everyone is keen to know when works will be carried out in their home, so we've included a draft schedule inside this newsletter. This may be subject to change as works progress, but our processes will involve detailed inspections (march-in surveys) of each property well in advance of works starting, so that you can plan ahead.

We'll provide more information as we progress, but if you have any queries meantime, please contact the Investment team on **01563 528 816**.



# Dear Tenant

Welcome to our latest newsletter. It's hard to believe we've reached the summer already! It's been a very busy few months at Atrium House with lots going on:

- We've been refreshing our Board, with new members joining us and others leaving – more on this from Joe Keen, our Chair.
- As part of our Homes Fit for 21st Century Living Standard delivery programme, we started overcladding 23 houses in Stewarton to improve their fuel efficiency. We also undertook a major procurement exercise to appoint contractors to deliver internal improvement works to up to 780 older properties. We've already shared with you the core works that will be undertaken in each property and for the first time we can provide an indication of when works are planned. See pages 6-7.
- We demolished 8 flats in Shortlees to make way for a new development of older persons bungalows, family homes and "starter flats".
- Last year we looked at the staff resources we're likely to need to deliver our ambitious plans and after an internal reshuffle, have appointed a number of new people.
- We conducted a Customer Satisfaction Survey and are pleased with the across the board improvements in satisfaction levels so far. But there's still a way to go.



- We've been working closely with our Tenant Scrutiny Group on all these matters and they've had a strong influence on the shape and communication of our plans.

In the coming months, we'll be continuing to work to deliver service improvements and to roll out the Homes Fit for 21st Century Living Standard.

Best wishes  
Stephen Black  
Chief Executive



## Atrium is governed by a voluntary Board who oversees how the organisation is run.

This includes what services we provide and how we provide them. Our Board is led by Chair Joe Keen and made up of a maximum of 12 Board members. This is called our 'governance arrangements'.

### Our current Board members are:

Marie Coyle	Joe Keen
Hugh McIntosh	Jim O'Neill
Carolynne Kelly (appointed 2019)	Angela Milloy (appointed 2019)
Dave Sherlock (appointed 2018)	Alistair Reid (appointed 2018)
Graham Piggott	Ken Stewart
Brian Woods	

# HELLO!

It's been an interesting time for the Board and for me as Chair, since I took on the role after the last Annual General Meeting. We said goodbye then to three Board members, but have since added four new members in their place.

Each of the new members has gone through their induction to help them understand the organisation and the role of the Board within it. I'm glad to report they're all settling into their roles very well. Some have had experience of similar positions, but for others it's a brand new ball game.

The Board as a whole has also had to get to grips with a new regulatory regime, which came into force on 1 April 2019. The Scottish Housing Regulator, who oversees all housing bodies in Scotland, issued a new set of Regulatory Standards on Governance & Finance Management. They set out the standards that we and others are measured against, and that

we have to adhere to. As part of the new arrangements, we have to produce an "Annual Assurance Statement". This is our view of what we're doing well and where we might need to improve. We've already mapped out where we think we are, and we're quietly confident that we've got most things well covered.

We're always keen to hear from customers and other service users and once again I'd like to extend an invitation to come along to a Board or sub-committee meeting to find out more about what we do.

Best wishes

Joe Keen  
Chair, Atrium Homes

## GET INVOLVED

To find out more about joining the Board (or a sub-committee) or how Atrium works, contact us on **01563 528 816** or email [info@atrium-homes.co.uk](mailto:info@atrium-homes.co.uk)



# Get on Board

We want to strengthen our Board by appointing new members.

## Would you like to join us?

Board members set Atrium's overall organisational strategy and objectives, and also monitor our performance. It's important we've got a good mix of skills and experience on our Board at any one time, to match our business needs. We're really keen to attract new members who have experience of our services as customers, and are committed to service excellence and continuous improvement.

## Interested?

Here are a few more things you might want to know:

### Will I get paid for being a Board member?

No, a Board position is voluntary, but we can offer you reasonable expenses to help you attend Board meetings or cover childcare costs.

### How much time is involved?

The Board meets roughly once a month (in the evenings at our office in Shortlees) which members are expected to attend. In total, members will spend around four or five hours a month on Board business.

### Will I receive any training?

Yes, there's a full induction for new members, plus further training and support, depending on your individual requirements.

### How do I find out more?

For an informal chat about the role, please contact us on **01563 528 816**.





# ACROSS OUR COMMUNITIES

At Atrium we're proud to serve a number of communities throughout East Ayrshire. Here's a quick update on some of the recent activities around the area.

## NETHER ROBERTLAND, STEWARTON

Work started in January to overclad 23 houses in Nether Robertland as part of our Homes Fit for 21st Century Living Standard investment programme. The application of external wall insulation will improve the energy efficiency of these properties. With the blocks of flats at Meikle Court and Malcolm Court already completed, all our properties in this area are now more fuel efficient and look nicer too.

## ESTATE INSPECTIONS

Estate walkabouts started again in April and will continue over the summer. These are open events where we're routinely joined by representatives of Choice Places (open area factor), EEG Utilities (landscape contractor) and very often home owners and local councillors. The aim of the inspection walkabout is to identify and help resolve issues in relation to the hard and soft landscaping, together with our partners in East Ayrshire Council. Check out our Facebook page for details of when the walkabouts are taking place in your area and feel free to come along and join us.

## SHORTLEES

The demolition of two blocks of Atholl Steel properties in Knockmarloch Drive, Shortlees took place in April and May. This marks the start of a further phase of our activities to help regenerate the Shortlees estate.

The demolitions will help pave the way for a further round of new house building starting in July this year to provide a 27 unit development of older person bungalows, family homes and starter flats.

These will be similar in design and appearance to the new houses built last year at Earlston Ave/Blacksyke Avenue, but there will be a greater number of bungalows for older persons. The contractor will be McTaggart Construction.

It's important to remember that the demolished properties were once family homes and this was a wee community of friends and neighbours in its own right. The properties held a lot of memories for the people who lived in them, all of whom were rehoused locally. Some residents may move into the new properties when they're completed next year, hopefully continuing the spirit of the community and helping to start a new one.

# HOMES FIT FOR 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY LIVING STANDARD

## DRAFT SCHEDULE

We're delighted to share with you our proposed schedule for our major investment plans. Between now and financial year 2023/24, our aim is to make major improvements to all our older properties, internally and externally.

## EXTERNAL WORKS

Some external works have already started in Nether Robertland, Stewarton where we've been overcladding 23 houses. We expect to start work on overcladding a similar number in New Farm Loch, later this year. This external wall insulation will improve the appearance of the properties but, more importantly, make them much more energy efficient, and therefore cheaper for tenants to heat.

## INTERNAL WORKS

The schedule for internal works overleaf is set out by year, area and house-type. The first internal works will be in Bellfield and Burnpark, starting in the summer and the tenants directly affected have already been notified. The rest of the programme will be rolled out in phases in successive financial years as shown. These dates are approximate and where two years are shown, it's because works to the final properties in a phase, might roll over into the next financial year.

Before any work starts, each property will be inspected thoroughly. This means that as well as preparing for the core works, we can identify any additional works needed, property by property, at the same time. We've created a framework of four contractors, all of whom are capable of doing the range of works. However, the first year will be delivered by CCG, who have experience of doing similar works across Scotland and with ourselves.





		Core Works					
Works Programmed	Area & Build Type	Bathroom Upgrade	Electrical Rewire	Electrical Safety Upgrade of Fans & Detectors	Energy Efficiency Boiler or Full Heating System	Kitchen Upgrade	Other Core Works
Phase 1	Bellfield Brick Cavity Miller - Houses	✓	2031	✓	2031	✓	Partial Internal Wall Insulation
2019-20	Burnpark Brick Cavity Dunedin - Houses	✓	2031	✓	2031	✓	
Phase 2	Shortlees Brick Cavity Construction - 1 Bedroom Flats	✓	2040	✓	2024	✓	
2019/20 into 2020/21	Shortlees Brick Cavity Commissioner - Houses & Flats	PARTIAL	2045	✓	✓	✓	
Phase 3	New Farm Loch No Fines Concrete - Houses & Flats	✓	✓	✓	2026	✓	
2020/21 into 2021/22	Onthank Brick Cavity Dunedin - Houses	PARTIAL	2045	✓	2029	✓	
	Crosshouse Brick Cavity - Bungalows & Flat	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Galston Brick Cavity Traditional - Houses & Flats	✓	✓	✓	2028	✓	
	Galston Swedish Timber - Houses	PARTIAL	2043	✓	✓	✓	
	Kilmarnock Central Tenement - Flats	✓	2046	✓	✓	✓	External Door Replacement
Phase 4	Shortlees Wilson Concrete - Houses	PARTIAL	2043	✓	✓	✓	
2021/22 into 2022/23	Shortlees Atholl Steel - Flats	PARTIAL	2030	✓	✓	✓	Partial Internal Wall Insulation
	Nether Robertland, Stewarton No Fines Concrete - Houses & Flats	✓	✓	✓	2027	✓	
	Lainshaw, Stewarton Brick Cavity Traditional - Houses & Flats	✓	✓	✓	2027	✓	

Upgrade is, as listed on the schedule of works



Works Programmed	Area & Build Type	Bathroom Upgrade	Electrical Rewire	Electrical Safety Upgrade of Fans & Detectors	Energy Efficiency Boiler or Full Heating System	Kitchen Upgrade	Other Core Works
Phase 5	Shortlees Brick Cavity Blackburn - Houses	✓	2045	✓	2028	✓	
2022/23 into 2023/24	Shortlees Hilcon - Houses & Flats	PARTIAL	2045	✓	✓	✓	
	Shortlees Brick Cavity Traditional - Houses & Flats	PARTIAL	2034	✓	2028	✓	
	Shortlees SSHA - Houses	✓	2036	✓	✓	✓	
	Shortlees Brick Cavity Construction - Houses & Flats	PARTIAL	2040	✓	✓	✓	
	Shortlees Brick Cavity Construction - Houses & Flats	PARTIAL	2040	✓	✓	✓	
	Shortlees Brick Cavity Miller - Houses & Flats	PARTIAL	2040	✓	2025	✓	
	Shortlees BISF - House	PARTIAL	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Properties which are not located directly next to Atrium's main housing area

Phase 2 or 3	<b>Crosshouse</b> Brick Cavity Construction - 1x Flat	✓	2039	✓	✓	✓	
2020/21 -2021/22	<b>Cumnock</b> Timber Kit - 1 x Bungalow	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	<b>Kilmarnock Central</b> Brick Cavity Construction - 1 x House	✓	2030	✓	✓	✓	
	<b>Kilmaurs</b> Timber Kit - 1 x House	✓	2030	✓	✓	✓	
	<b>New Farm Loch</b> Brick Cavity Construction - 2 x Houses	✓	2038	✓	✓	✓	
	<b>Onthank</b> Brick Cavity Construction - 3 x Houses	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	<b>Tarbolton</b> Brick Cavity Construction - 1 x House	✓	2030	✓	2030	✓	

Upgrade is, as listed on the schedule of works



# Penny for your thoughts? Let's make it a fiver!

During the last 12 months, we've started using digital communications to encourage tenants to review some of our key policies. We've been promoting the policy reviews via our Facebook page, offering links to our website where we post drafts of the policies, plus a link to an online survey.

Now we're offering you a small incentive to give us your thoughts - entry into a £25 prize draw, with five prizes of a fiver each. Not bad for a few minutes work!

If you'd like to take part in future surveys and be in with a chance of winning £5, simply like our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/atriumhomeskilmarnock/>



## Help us keep you and your family safe

As your landlord we have a legal requirement to have the gas appliances in your home serviced every year. Our contractor City Tech will visit your home on a 10 month cycle to make sure we comply with the legislation. We appreciate your co-operation in arranging access and will always give you reasonable notice.

If you don't allow access to your home, we may need to force access to do the service. Please help us to keep you safe and respond to our access cards and letters in good time.

Thanks!



# Get on board the ARC

It's that time of year again when we have to complete our statistical report, the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) and send it to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR). This is a requirement for all Scottish Landlords and is based on standards and outcomes which were set in 2012 in the Scottish Social Housing Charter.

In the autumn we'll once again publish our ARC Report which will give an overview of our performance and show you how we've performed compared to other landlords across Scotland.

In last year's ARC Report we provided information on the outcomes related to the areas you expressed an interest in from our Customer Satisfaction Survey. You can still see this online at [www.atrium-homes.co.uk](http://www.atrium-homes.co.uk)

For our 2018/19 ARC Report, we'd like to know if there are any other areas you'd like to hear about, so please get involved.

### GET INVOLVED

To tell us what areas of our performance you're interested in, please call Joyce McCroskie on 01563 528 816 or email [info@atrium-homes.co.uk](mailto:info@atrium-homes.co.uk)

## Tenant Scrutiny Group



We've been continuing to work closely with our Tenant Scrutiny Group, to make sure we develop our services in line with what our customers want.

Supported by the Tenant Participation Advisory Service, this small group has met regularly over the last 12 months. They started by looking at the standard of Atrium's houses, particularly the standard houses are in when they're let. The Group has gone on to comment on other important areas such as our Business Plan and linked rent increase proposals. In fact, the Group was instrumental in shaping the Business Plan consultation process, making it a much more effective tool.

The Group is soon moving on to consider other priority areas for them. If you're interested in getting involved, please contact us on 01563 528 816 or email [info@atrium-homes.co.uk](mailto:info@atrium-homes.co.uk)



### GET INVOLVED

If you'd like to get involved in this type of activity please contact us on 01563 528 816 or email [info@atrium-homes.co.uk](mailto:info@atrium-homes.co.uk)

# CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

Thank you to everyone who took part in our latest Customer Satisfaction Survey at the end of 2018. The results were presented to our Board earlier this year and key highlights are shown below:

- We're pleased to see substantial increases in the majority of the common indicators used to measure housing association performance in this area.
- Equally, we're disappointed not to see an increase in customer satisfaction with re-let standards of homes, particularly since we introduced some changes to our standards.
- We'll be turning our attention to the void standard again to try to identify what we're still not getting quite right for a small minority of new tenants, whose experience of their new home is a disappointment.

We're also aware that in a few areas we're falling below the overall Scottish average in terms of customer satisfaction. This means that while there are organisations who are performing less well than us in some areas, there are others who are performing much better.

We'll identify those who are doing better and try to learn from what they're doing. But it's our customers who can best tell us how we can improve their customer experience and our plan is to discuss this initially with the Tenant Scrutiny Group and others to get their perspective.

Measure	2016	2018	Scottish RSL Sector Average 2017
Satisfaction with Atrium Homes' overall service	82%	89%	90%
Satisfaction with repairs service	84%	89%	92%
Satisfaction with quality of home	80%	86%	88%
Satisfaction with re-let standard of home	83%	83%	92%
Rating of rent as very good or fairly good value for money	69%	74%	82%
Satisfaction with management of neighbourhood by Atrium Homes	83%	83%	88%
Satisfaction with being kept informed about services and decisions	87%	89%	92%
Satisfaction with opportunities to participate in decision making	81%	90%	84%



# GARDEN COMPETITION 2019



## Calling all Atrium tenants - We're proud to announce our annual Garden Competition is officially OPEN!

We know many of you take pride in your gardens and the places you live. Our Garden Competition is an excellent opportunity to celebrate your homes, and the hard work and commitment you put into making sure your properties stand out in your neighbourhoods.

You don't have to be a professional gardener to enter. We're simply looking for tenants with passion, enthusiasm, originality and a good eye for detail.

The Garden Competition is open to all tenants, in every estate. You don't even have to enter OR have a "proper" garden to win.

Our staff will be out and about looking for outdoor spaces of all shapes and sizes where they feel tenants have made a real effort - from hanging baskets and tubs, to flower beds, vegetable patches and main gardens. So whatever or wherever you grow, it could win you a prize!

All gardens shortlisted in the competition will be entered into a draw, with a range of prizes. We'll announce the winners by 30th August 2019, so start now and give yourself a winning chance!

*Good luck!*

## Digital Garden Champion

This year we're also looking for our first ever Digital Garden Champion. The competition aims to recognise and reward those customers who go the extra mile, creating gardens that improve the look of their local area and who want to show us their efforts by submitting photographs.

For this competition you simply need to photograph something in your garden you're particularly proud of - it might be a rockery you've worked on, or a vegetable patch you've planted or maybe you've grown the tallest sunflower!

All you have to do is take three photographs and send them to us either by uploading them through Messenger via our Facebook page or by emailing [info@atrium-homes.co.uk](mailto:info@atrium-homes.co.uk). Be sure to include your address details.

The closing date is 30th August 2019, and we'll be awarding a winner and runner up.

*Good luck!*



## £100 awards to help make your garden grow

Maybe you feel you're a million miles away from winning a prize in the Garden Competition. If you're keen to improve your garden, but could do with a bit of a hand, you could apply for a Garden Improvement Award.

For a couple of years now, we've been offering four awards of £100 each to individuals or groups of residents who would like to improve their garden(s) but don't have the means - either financial or practical - to do so.

Someone who benefitted from this grant scheme is Stacey from New Farm Loch who applied last year for funding.

We asked Stacey a few questions about the difference the award has made.

**Q:** How were you looking after your garden beforehand?

**A:** I didn't have my own equipment, so used to pay to get the grass cut. The only thing was I was never really sure when they were coming, never mind that it was quite dear.

**Q:** What did you use the grant for?

**A:** I bought my own lawnmower, a strimmer and an extension lead. I actually really enjoy cutting the grass when I want to - it definitely gets more attention now I have the equipment myself. The kids can get out to play more because the garden is in better condition too.

**Q:** Would you encourage other people to apply for a garden grant?

**A:** I actually can't believe that more people don't take advantage of this. It's made such a difference to me and it's given me peace of mind that when the summer comes around and Atrium's Estates Officers are out doing garden inspections, I'll be proud to let them see my garden!

To apply for a grant, all you need to do is tell us a little bit more about your ideas and what help you need - it might be to buy containers or basic equipment, or for a hand to clear a bit of land or do some planting. We'll consider anything that will improve the appearance of an area.

So go on, uplift a form for a Garden Improvement Award from our office, email [info@atrium-homes.co.uk](mailto:info@atrium-homes.co.uk) or contact us via Facebook.



## Feeling swamped

It's part of your tenancy obligation to keep your garden and exterior of your property in a clean and tidy state. Over the summer months, our staff are out on site most of the working week and take note of properties where this obligation isn't being met.

Atrium Estates Officer Julianne Scarlett said: "We appreciate tackling a large garden can be daunting for someone

who perhaps doesn't have the right equipment or know where to start. That's why we'll do our best to help you to address the problem and turn your garden into a place you can truly enjoy."

If you've got a problem relating to garden maintenance, please contact us for advice as soon as you can - call **01563 528 816** or email [info@atrium-homes.co.uk](mailto:info@atrium-homes.co.uk)



## Looking after your grass

Keeping your garden neat and tidy forms part of your tenancy agreement. One of the simplest ways to do this, is to cut your grass regularly.

Plus, mowing the lawn is good for you too - research shows it's great exercise, as it burns the calories, and tones up the arm and legs muscles. So getting the mower out this summer is a win-win: garden looks great, you keep fit!





## Have you updated your new rent charge?

If you receive Universal Credit, you need to make sure you notify the DWP of your new rent figure urgently – if you don't, you might not receive all the Housing Costs you're entitled to in your Universal Credit.

You should refer to the recent letter we sent you to confirm your new rent from 1st April 2019. If you have any questions, please contact a member of our Operations team urgently on **01563 528 816**.

You can notify the rent change via your online Universal Credit Journal.



## Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 – or FOI(S)A – will be extended to organisations like Atrium Homes from 11 November 2019. From that date, we'll be subject to legal duties under the Act:

- The duty to respond to requests for information about Atrium and our activities.
- The duty to publish information about our services, our decisions and the facts and analysis which informs these decisions.
- The duty to advise and assist people exercising their right to request information under the Act.

We already publish a great deal of information about our activities either directly (through publications like this or our website) or indirectly through the publication of information via the Scottish Housing Regulator, Companies House and the Office of Scottish Housing Charities Commissioner.

However, we're now looking at what else people might be interested in knowing and how we can make that available.

If you have any views on this topic, please get in touch by calling **01563 528 816** or emailing [info@atrium-homes.co.uk](mailto:info@atrium-homes.co.uk)

## Join us on Social Media!

A really easy way to keep up to date with all Atrium's activities and news is through social media.

Like our Facebook page:  
[www.facebook.com/atriumhomeskilmarnock/](https://www.facebook.com/atriumhomeskilmarnock/)



## EMERGENCY REPAIRS SERVICE

Keep these numbers next to your phone for easy reference.

### EMERGENCY REPAIRS

Atrium Property Services  
01563 528 816

### GAS OR HEATING EMERGENCIES

City Technical Services (UK) Ltd.  
0844 579 6493

### GAS LEAKS

Scotland Gas Networks  
0800 111 999

### GENERAL REPAIRS

Atrium Homes  
01563 528 816

**Please only use the out of hours emergency service when it is a REAL emergency such as:**

- burst or leaking pipe
- loss of power to the house
- no heating or hot water
- storm damage which requires action to ensure the property is wind and watertight.

If the problem can wait until office hours with only minor inconvenience, it would not be classed as an emergency. If tradesmen are called out to incidents that are not emergencies or are found to have been caused by you, we will recharge the cost of the call out. The minimum cost of this is £75.



**ATRIUM  
HOMES**

The Landlord of Choice

If you have any comments or questions or want to know what Atrium is doing at the moment, then please get in touch. Our contact details are:

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14 Central Avenue, Shortlees  
Kilmarnock / KA1 4PS

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