

25
ATRIUM
HOMES
Celebrating 25 Years

YOUR HOME

THE NEWSLETTER OF ATRIUM HOMES | NO. 60 - WINTER 2024



MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE!

The Atrium Elves will be out and about again this year, spreading Christmas cheer and goodwill to many of our tenants.

COME AND JOIN OUR CHRISTMAS 'CRAIC'ER (CRACKER!) & CHAT

We've been putting the finishing touches to Atrium's Christmas 'Craic'er on Thursday 12th December, 2pm - 4pm - a chance to pop into the office and chat through anything you need to know to help with your festive finances in a friendly and festive environment.

Whether it's money advice, rent, budgeting, using comparison websites or just to chat through how you can get more involved with Atrium, we'd be pleased to see you. We're hoping to have our allocations and HFF21CLS team there as well, so it's a good chance to catch up on other matters too.

There will be a cosy café corner serving free hot drinks and mince pies, Christmas 'Craic' (ers!), some freebies and a Christmas colouring competition for the children. So come along, enjoy some Christmas cheer and get some sound advice too!

OVER 75S ENJOY AN ELFIE CHRISTMAS DINNER ON US!

The Elves want to do something special for Atrium's older tenants again this year. So if you're over 75, keep an eye out for a special delivery. Once again our older residents will be enjoying food for Christmas - or maybe even some gifts for the kids - thanks to supermarket vouchers which will be distributed in early December.

THE ELF ADVENT CALENDAR GIVE AWAY

The Elves have come up trumps again! Every day from 1st to 25th December, the Elves will randomly select an Atrium tenant from their special Elf Advent Calendar, who will receive **£50 of supermarket vouchers**.

That's a £1,250 give away to 25 lucky tenants! And the great thing is, you don't have to do a thing - as an Atrium tenant, the Elves will make sure you're in the daily draw. Good luck!

ELF ASSISTANCE

Don't forget, the Elves are here to help everyone. So if you need our help this Christmas with any welfare matter (benefits, food, paying the bills, etc), please get in touch. Call us on 01563 528 816 Monday to Friday, **email info@atrium-homes.co.uk**, or pop into the office Monday, Tuesday, Thursday or Friday. We'll be glad to do what we can to make your Christmas merrier.

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR BABIES

The Elves wanted to do something a bit different this year and so we'll be providing a Christmas baby and a New Year baby with a bumper hamper full of goodies to welcome them into the Atrium fold! Babies registered from 25th to 31st December and from 1st to 5th January will be entered into their respective prize draws. Details on how to enter will be posted on our Facebook page from the beginning of December.



Dear Tenant

As we move into the darker months of the year, this newsletter aims to let you know about Atrium's activities over the past six months and give you some important information for the festive closedown.

We're acutely aware of the continuing impact of the cost of living on tenants, and so we were pleased to secure funding which has provided warm packs to new tenants, as well as being able to give out small amounts of financial assistance towards the cost of heating their homes to some of our most vulnerable tenants last year.

We're still managing a challenging cost environment. The cost of our day to day maintenance on your homes has continued to rise, and costs for our Homes Fit For 21st Century Living Standard (HFF21CLS) major investment programme increased by 7% this year. The cost of insuring our tenants' homes also increased by 50% in 2024/25.

We're always reviewing the services we provide to ensure we will meet tenants' needs now and in the future. The Management team, with support from the Board, is always looking for ways to increase efficiency and agility in the way that we work, as well as regularly procuring our essential services to make sure we're getting the best price possible in the marketplace.

Over the years, we've developed ways to support tenants in need. We're working to protect - as far as possible - the Money Advice and other services that work with, and support, people who are struggling to pay their rent or who are suffering wider poverty.

We're undertaking a significant IT project over the coming year which will modernise our software and other systems, allowing us to communicate with you more effectively and do our jobs well, while ensuring the way we work is fit for the future.

Our HFF21CLS programme continued through the pandemic but at a slower pace than we'd originally planned. Our contractor, CCG, completed Phase 3 of the programme early in 2024, and we're on track to improve another 153 tenants' homes by the end of the 2024/25 financial year.

We asked tenants whose homes are in

the last phases of this huge investment programme what their priorities are for us to spend money on - overwhelmingly the response was that we should continue with the upgrades we had planned.

We're committed to completing the HFF21CLS project which will then allow us to start replacing components (e.g. kitchens and bathrooms) needed on properties that we built several years ago. This has to be balanced

our tenants, our 2025 rent increase will need to consider the level of inflation in the economy, as well as affordability for tenants, which means we'll continue to absorb some of the increased costs we're currently experiencing, so we can protect services and support our tenants.

The many inflationary pressures which you and we have been facing, make it especially critical that our consultation with you tries to find the right balance



LAST YEAR, WE PROVIDED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO SOME OF OUR MOST VULNERABLE TENANTS FOR HEATING THEIR HOMES.

against funds we have available in the business and the projected income we can generate from rentals on our tenants' homes.

We'll also continue finding ways to improve the energy efficiency of our older homes, to make them as easy to heat as possible, while always keeping in mind that to meet the Scottish Government's Net Zero targets, the heating systems that you use in your homes will need to be replaced with systems that don't rely on gas over the coming years.

Finally, we're coming up to that time of year where we're thinking about our budgets for the next financial year which starts in April 2025. As a key part of that, we'll soon be starting our statutory consultation with you on what level of rent is set from next April.

As an organisation which is focussed on

between rent affordability and the need to maintain our services and continue investing in your homes.

Every household is different and faces different circumstances. Therefore:

- Our rent setting for 2025 will be based on full and transparent consultation with you, our tenants.
- We'll absorb at least some of the cost increases we know about and expect, to protect our tenants.
- Wherever possible, we'll continue to look to find ways for those who need it most, to access the support they need.

Wishing you a happy festive season.

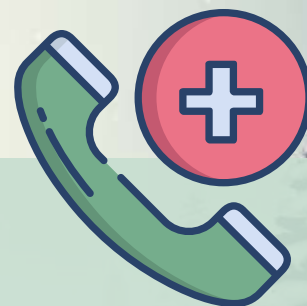
Best wishes

Shannon Watson
Chief Executive

Christmas and New Year Holidays

Atrium will be closed completely over the holiday period. We'll close on Tuesday 24th December 2024 at 2.30pm and re-open on Monday 6th January 2025 at 9.00am.

If you have any emergency repairs during this period, our normal Out of Hours service will be operating. Call 01563 528 816 and you'll be redirected to our emergency service.



Emergency Repairs Service

We provide an emergency repairs service all year round, including the festive period. 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.

Here are the key contact numbers for repair requirements.

EMERGENCY REPAIRS
01563 528 816

GAS EMERGENCIES
GasSure on 01294 468 113

GAS LEAKS
Scotland Gas Networks on
0800 111 999

GENERAL REPAIRS
Atrium Homes on 01563 528 816

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

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



FESTIVE FIRE SAFETY

Please be aware of the extra risks of fire in your home at Christmastime - fairy lights, candles, etc are all potential fire hazards. It's vital to be extra vigilant.

We provide both smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, and carry out an annual inspection of both. However, we encourage you to undertake periodic checks yourself, by pressing the test buttons. If the alarm fails to sound, report this to us as soon as possible.

Message from the Chair



Hello

This time last year we wrote about how the cost of living and the cost of keeping our homes warm has continued far beyond what any of us have experienced before. That pressure has not eased up for you or us.

We're keenly aware of the difficulties our tenants continue to face at this time and we're continuing to support Atrium's Management team as they work to ensure we provide the best possible service to our tenants, while keeping costs as low as possible.

Following staff changes in our teams, we approved changes to the staffing structure which allowed the creation of two new posts during the year, without increasing the total cost of salaries for the organisation. The focus of these posts is to improve our communication with tenants and to support you to enjoy successful tenancies in our homes.

Angela, our Community Connector, joined Atrium in June 2024 and is out and about in our communities, looking to build up relationships with tenants so we can work together on what you need from us as your landlord. If you see Angela on one of her walkabouts please say hello.

At the end of October, we were advised that Atrium and our fellow housing association, Ayrshire Housing, had been successful in securing three years of funding towards the cost of a Wellbeing Coach who will work with you to make sure you can access all of the support available to you, when you need it. We'll be looking to recruit for this post in the new year.

During the year, Atrium's Board - made up of volunteers who give their time to Atrium Homes - has continued its work to shape the strategy of the organisation. As a group, we're responsible for ensuring the organisation is well governed and meets all the requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator, the Charities Regulator and various other external bodies.

The Board works to support Atrium to continue funding improvements to your homes, while balancing the cost of this and other core services against our desire to keep our rents as low as possible. We look forward to working with the Management team, helping Atrium to continue delivering the best



We're always keen to hear from tenants who would like to work with us to help shape our services and how we deliver them

possible service to our tenants for many months and years to come.

Atrium held its Annual General Meeting on 27 August this year. Carolyn Hope and I will continue as the Vice Chair and Chair respectively for the coming year. Subsequent to the AGM, we were pleased to welcome another new member to the Board, Scott Cunningham. Scott has many years' experience in property maintenance and management, both in a commercial environment and in another large social landlord.

We're always keen to hear from tenants who would like to work with us to help shape our services and how we deliver them. Being on the Board is not the only way that you can do this, and you can be involved in a number of less formal ways. These include groups like our Armchair Panel and our Tenant Scrutiny Group. You can find out more on our website at www.atrium-homes.co.uk/get-involved/.

Wishing you all the best for 2025.

Best wishes

**Alistair Reid,
Chair**

FUNDING SUCCESS - SMALL STEPS AYRSHIRE

Atrium Homes, working in partnership with Ayrshire Housing, was delighted to receive the news that our bid to the Big Lottery's Community Fund, submitted in August 2024, had been successful.

Small Steps Ayrshire is a project developed by the Directors of Housing & Community Services for Atrium Homes and Ayrshire Housing, Joyce McCroskie and Jennifer McCann. The funding will allow for the appointment of a Wellbeing Coach, to be shared by both organisations, and dedicated to supporting vulnerable households across Ayrshire.



Garden COMPETITION

As the summer drew to a close, so did our Annual Garden Competition. We were overwhelmed by the entries we received this year, as well as the amazing transformations tenants had made.

Submissions were received from tenants and staff, who throughout the summer, carried out inspections within all our estates.

At our final in August, seven winners in total, were chosen by a panel of Atrium staff across categories such as:

- Best Vegetable Garden
- Best Floral Garden
- Best Feature Wall
- Best Communal Entrance
- Most Improved Garden
- Best Ornamental/Planted Tubs

From the winners, the best overall garden was selected. The overall winner received a £75 garden voucher and the runners up all received a £25 garden voucher.



BEST OVERALL WINNER
Miss N, Stewarton



BEST COMMUNAL ENTRANCE
Mrs H, Dunlop



BEST FEATURE WALL FENCE
Mr H, Dunlop



Congratulations
TO ALL

Understanding Your Estate. Who Does What?



Within the Satisfaction Survey, we noticed a number of comments from tenants who were confused about who is responsible for what within their estates i.e. what is covered by their Council Tax, or who is responsible for all the different areas of landscaping, roads, etc.

To help clarify, we've put together this table. You can also look at the plans on our website for your estate which also highlight roads and paths adopted by the local authority and those maintained by the factor, Choice Places.

There are a number of agencies and organisations with responsibilities within your estate - not everything is the responsibility of Atrium Homes, the landlord - but we liaise with all statutory agencies when issues are identified during walkabouts, etc.

We hope the table shown opposite helps to show that not all land within your estate is owned by Atrium Homes and even where we do own the land, it is not always our responsibility to address all issues related to it.

However, where we can, we will always try to work with other partners to try and improve and resolve any issues, particularly around rubbish/fly tipping and other environmental hazards.



PARTY	RESPONSIBILITIES
Atrium Homes	Atrium Homes, the landlord, is responsible for the maintenance and repair of its properties (your homes) and the plots they sit on. Where Atrium Homes has outright ownership of full blocks of flats, it is also responsible for any communal maintenance required.
Individual owners in shared blocks	<p>Their title deeds tell them about their rights and responsibilities for the property and their shared responsibility for the upkeep of the common block. They also detail the proportional share of common costs and their obligations to manage and maintain the building jointly with the other owners. They also tell them about their responsibilities as an owner in an estate.</p> <p>As the owner of 1,210 properties, Atrium Homes must also pay its share for these properties to Choice Places, the factor, for repair and maintenance of any common closes where it owns any properties within e.g. if Atrium owns a flat in a block and the remainder are owner occupied.</p>
Individual owners in an estate	<p>Their title deeds tell them about their rights and responsibilities for their own property and for their shared responsibility for the estate. They also detail their proportional share of common costs and their obligations to manage and maintain the estate jointly with the other owners.</p> <p>As the owner of 1,210 properties, Atrium Homes must also pay its share for these properties to Choice Places, the factor, for open space maintenance e.g. Atrium must pay the relevant shares in the estate for repairs to car parking, grass cutting, etc, the same as private, individual owners also paying a share each.</p>
Choice Places	A Factor is essentially a Property Manager and is appointed by a group of owners to help them repair and maintain their shared building and/or their estate. This relates only to deliver the responsibilities as outlined within the owners' Deed of Conditions – i.e. the Factor only delivers what the title deeds instruct. This generally relates to maintenance and repair of common closes, etc in common blocks or open space maintenance i.e. hard and soft landscaping in estates, as well as roads and footpaths NOT adopted by the local authority (the Council determines this, not Choice Places).
East Ayrshire Council	The local authority has a statutory responsibility for the provision of services in relation to education, social care, waste management and recycling, planning, adopted roads and footpaths (determined by the Council), environmental health, pest control, removal of abandoned cars, etc. It is these local public services that are funded by Council Tax income.
Other landlords	Any private land owned by other landlords will be maintained by them.
Scottish Water	Scottish Water is responsible for the water main in your street and all the pipework up to and including the stopcock at the boundary of your property. Atrium Homes will then normally have responsibility for any pipework from the stopcock into the property, and all your indoor and external plumbing. Scottish Water has the public drainage duty and is responsible for the drainage of rainwater run-off (surface water) from roofs, and any paved ground surface within a property boundary. Additionally, they help protect homes from flooding caused by sewers either overflowing or becoming blocked.
Police Scotland	To uphold the law and keep the public safe.

Paying Your Rent at **CHRISTMAS**



Although the Atrium office will be shut over Christmas, that doesn't mean you can't pay your rent. There are plenty of other ways to make a payment:



CALL US

You can phone the office on **01563 528 816** up to 24th December 2024 and pay by debit or credit card.



PORTAL

If you're registered with Atrium's tenant portal, you'll be able to make a payment in this way also.



DIRECT DEBIT

You can pay monthly by setting up a Direct Debit. To do this, call us on **01563 528 816** - please have your bank details ready before you call. We'll set up your Direct Debit and you'll receive a letter from our Direct Debit provider - allpay.net - within 7 days.



ONLINE OR PAYPOINT OUTLET

Pay via the website
www.allpayments.net/allpayments/

Or pay at any Post Office or other outlets which display the PayPoint sign using your rent payment card.



BACS/FAST PAYMENT

Transfer your rent straight to our bank account:

Sort code 82-65-30, Account Number 30300484.

Please make sure you quote your Customer Account Number so your payment is assigned to the correct account. If you need your Account Number, please contact us at the office.



ALLPAY APP

Go to the app store and download the allpay app. To use this, you'll need your rent card and your debit/credit card. Simply follow directions to set up. Once set up, this is a quick and simple way to make rent payments. It stores the last six months' transactions, so you can always check if you've made your rent payment.

Struggling to pay your rent this Christmas?



At this time of year, everyone feels the excitement of the festive season creeping up on us, together with the priorities that lie ahead. There's no denying Christmas is a costly time for all of us. However, we must remind you that you should continue to pay your rent as you would normally do.

If you're having any difficulty doing this, please contact us on 01563 528 816 as soon as possible so we can offer help and advice before any major problems develop for you. Your Estates Officer will be glad to help you manage your budget.

Remember, as long as you work with us to deal with your debt, we'll do what we can to help you keep your home. So make sure you tell us as soon as it starts getting tough.

Please don't ignore any letters we send you about your rent - this could put your tenancy at risk.

Missing out on Pension Credit?

A recent estimate from Age Scotland suggests that 40% of those eligible for Pension Credits in Scotland aren't claiming it, which amounts to £200,000,000 in unclaimed benefits. Entitlement to Pension Credits could then result in the claimant receiving their Winter Fuel Payment.

There are also other benefits such as Universal Credit, Adult Disability Payment, Carers Support Payment, Scottish Child Payment and Attendance Allowance which will shortly be replaced with Pension Age Disability Payment Scotland.

Our Money Advice Service can complete a benefit check for you and also help you apply for any additional

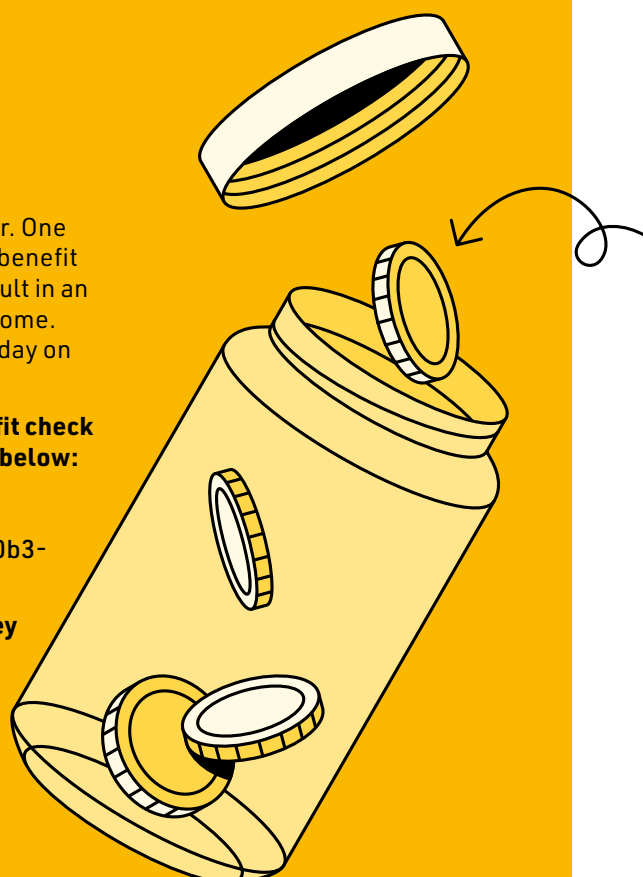
benefits you may be eligible for. One simple call to us to carry out a benefit check on your behalf could result in an increase in your household income. Call our Money Advice team today on 01563 528 816.

You can also complete a benefit check yourself by following the link below:

www.entitledto.co.uk/benefits-calculator/Intro/Home?cid=eee95b0e-85ce-40b3-88cb-a1413dc6e332

For more information on money and benefits, see:

www.agescotland.org.uk/information-advice/information-guides/money-and-benefits



Community with our C



Meet Angela, our Community Connector

We told you in our last edition about the appointment of our new Community Connector – Angela Gracie. Well, with almost six months under her belt, we thought we'd let Angela introduce herself and tell you about some of the exciting work she's done so far.

Walkabouts

You'll often see me out and about in my high vis vest. I like having a wander about the estates and chatting to people to find out what they like (and what they don't like) and, where possible, rope them into agreeing to some sort of tenant participation! I've managed to join Choice Places walks too – there's always method to my madness, because this lets me understand how our factoring service works AND I still get the chance to blether. There are some cracking community group walks in our communities and I'm always on the look out to join more, if you know of any in your area, please let me know.



Drop ins

In celebration of National Housing Day, we held a cake and coffee afternoon. Although this was an informal event, of course I managed to squeeze some questions into the chat. The national theme was "Homes For Life" and I asked if people thought their house met their future needs. We had mixed responses from "Happy and content with my home"

through to "No, possible amendments needed as health changes". I also managed to rope in some of the winners of Atrium's Annual Garden Competition to come along and collect their prizes!

I really enjoy this part of my job (especially the cake!) because it encourages tenant participation, and I can really get into the nitty gritty. All the information I gather is fed back to the team here at Atrium. Watch this space because I'm planning more drop-in groups...I'll bring the coffee if you bring the chat!

Freebies

I'm lucky to know lots of people in lots of different places and, when I started working with Atrium Homes, I reached out to contacts in other organisations and have managed to sign us up to some different schemes.

Firstly, I managed to get my hands on dog waste bags and, when you see me out and about, I usually have a wee supply of them to hand out. It's been a great way to start conversations and who doesn't love a wee pet of a dog to get them through their day!

Next, we work in partnership with East Ayrshire Council and now stock Hey Girl products, to improve access to period products and eliminate period poverty. To date we've given out 27 products to households in Kilmarnock, Galston and Stewarton.

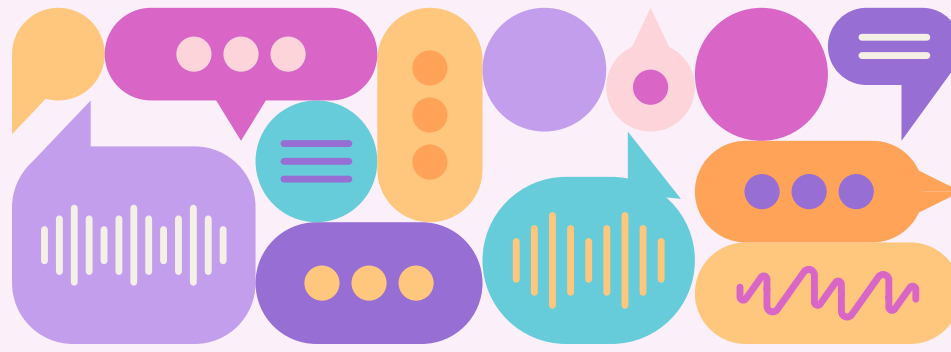
Most recently, we've started working with the Good Things Foundation and are part of the national Data Bank.

Hi everyone!

The past six months have flown in, and I've been busy getting to know as much as I can about Atrium Homes and housing legislation, as well as settling in with the team. I'm new to housing, but my Community Connector title fits me well – I've worked across East Ayrshire in roles where I've been linking with people, communities and organisations that support empowerment, connectivity and sustainability. It's a privilege to be able to get out and about to find out what's important to Atrium's tenants. You can usually see what I have been up to on my "Atrium Community Connector" Facebook page, but since I have a space here, I thought I might as well pick out some of my highlights!

Angela

Communicating with Customers



We're now able to distribute SIM cards to our tenants and the wider community, allowing users to access data for their smart phones. It's early days with this but it's an exciting project and ties in with Atrium's commitment to the Digital Charter.

Reach and Connect Community Fund

Because I'm out and about so much, Atrium's fab Reach and Connect Community Fund is in my care:

Cash in the Community

We offer four rounds of funding per year, up to £1,000, to support community groups or activities. Organisations simply need to fill in an application, available on request. It's important that we reach communities where we have a landlord interest and I'm delighted to say that so far this year, our Cash in the Community Fund has awarded grants to projects in Stewarton and Kilmarnock wide. I visited both projects and it's really humbling to meet such dedicated staff and volunteers.

At Stewarton Annick Girls FC, Lisa, one of the coaches with the club, told me that through our funding, the under 6's team has been provided with their strips, kit bags and more. Meeting bright and early for training on Sunday mornings, the girls told me that their favourite things about training is looking great in their strips, seeing their friends, practising their dribbling, passing, toe taps and, most importantly...shooting! I managed a pic



with the team and their legendary Club Ambassador Rose Reilly.

At The Avenue Childcare Services I was given a warm welcome and told their funding will be used to replace and replenish educational toys. Manager of the service, Mhairi, explained that, as a small, community-based project, they're committed to the welfare of their children and families and that the new equipment will allow them to continue to deliver a high standard of care. I spent time with some of the wee folk who were far too busy casting spells in their Hallowe'en cauldrons to speak to me BUT, I did learn how to master proper hubble bubbles!

Round 3 of this fund is now open (applications must be submitted by 31st December 2024) and so far we've received a lot of interest, something that I hope continues into round 4 (closes 31st March 2025).

Sponsorship & Donations

There's been a lot of interest for Sponsorship and Donations this year and we've donated to The Corner Cupboard, Crosshouse Hospital Children's Fund, and Friends of Willowbank. Shortlees Primary School also received a donation towards their Hallowe'en Spooktacular event, with some of the team volunteering to help on



the night and who loved encouraging all the ghosts and ghouls along the way.

Lastly

If you're interested in tenant participation, please get in touch. I'm always up for a chat about all things Atrium, and encouraging our tenants and residents to be part of the bigger picture. You can help me determine how that picture should look. You'll see elsewhere in this newsletter some of the current ways you can engage with Atrium, but I'm keen to set up some other ways too whether it's meetings, virtual chats, informal get-togethers or as I say, a coffee and a blether...and maybe even a biscuit if you're lucky.

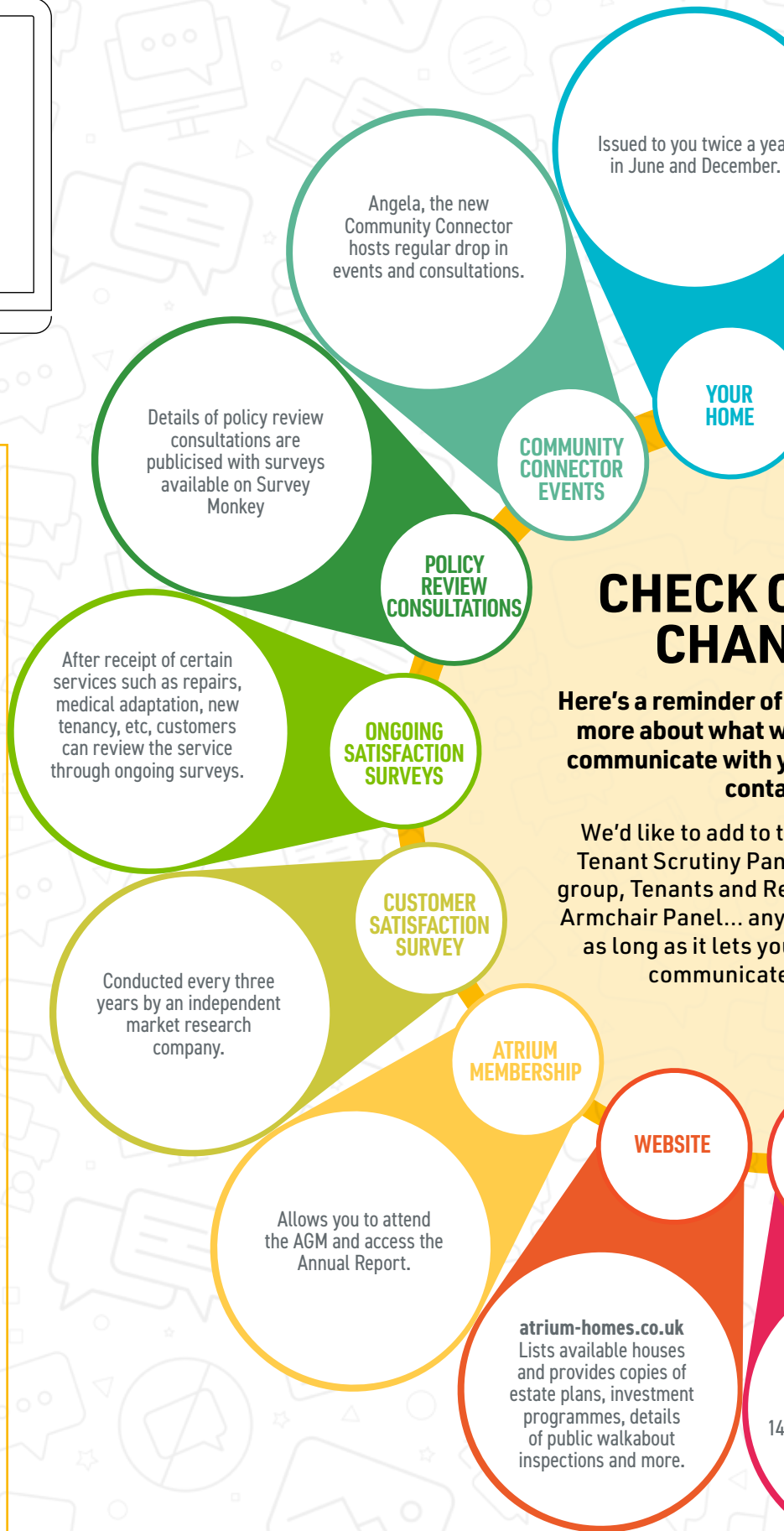
To get in touch with Angela, email info@atrium-homes.co.uk and put the subject heading as 'Chat with Angela' or visit her Facebook page.

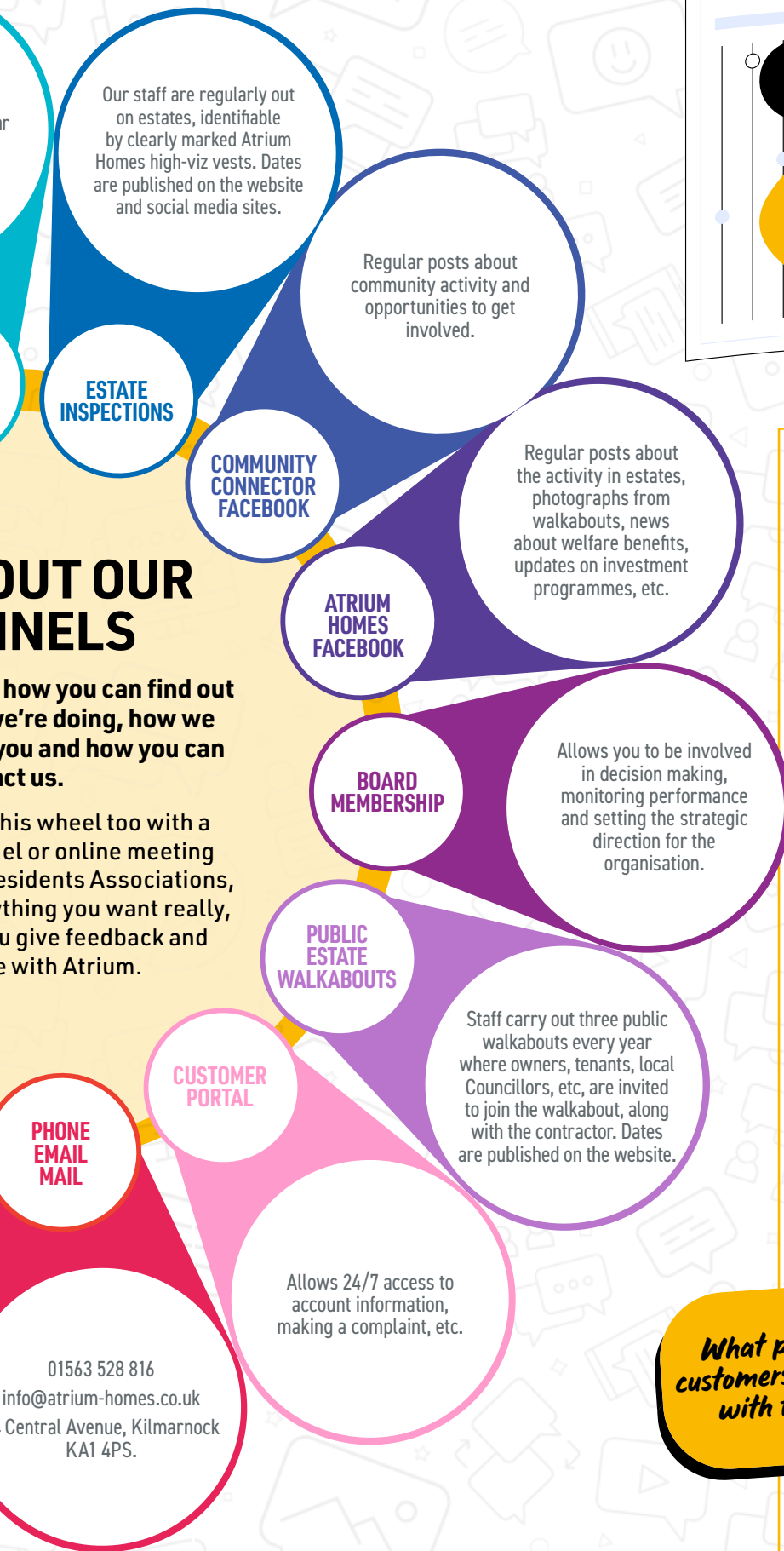


Newsletter we've gone digital!

You'll notice we've changed the way you receive your newsletter – sent to you now in a digital format. (Please make sure we have a current email or mobile phone number for you, so you can keep receiving the newsletter this way). Making use of emails and texts in our communications has a double benefit - it allows speedy communication in real time and it's cheaper.

This Winter edition is also available to download from the website www.atrium-homes.co.uk. If you want the next edition delivered directly to your Inbox, make sure you've signed up for the Portal and given a current email address.





OUT OUR CHANNELS

how you can find out we're doing, how we you and how you can ct us.

his wheel too with a el or online meeting residents Associations, thing you want really, u give feedback and e with Atrium.

01563 528 816
info@atrium-homes.co.uk
Central Avenue, Kilmarnock
KA1 4PS.

Customer Dashboard

A full Customer Satisfaction Survey is carried out once every three years to help us review and improve our services to you. Apart from this, we rely on ongoing customer feedback, complaints and comments from people during walkabouts, etc, to tell us what we're getting right and how we could do better.

We'd like to develop some basic performance information that we could publish regularly that might help us see how we're doing. What would you like to know? Send your ideas to info@atrium-homes.co.uk

What percentage of customers were satisfied with their repair?

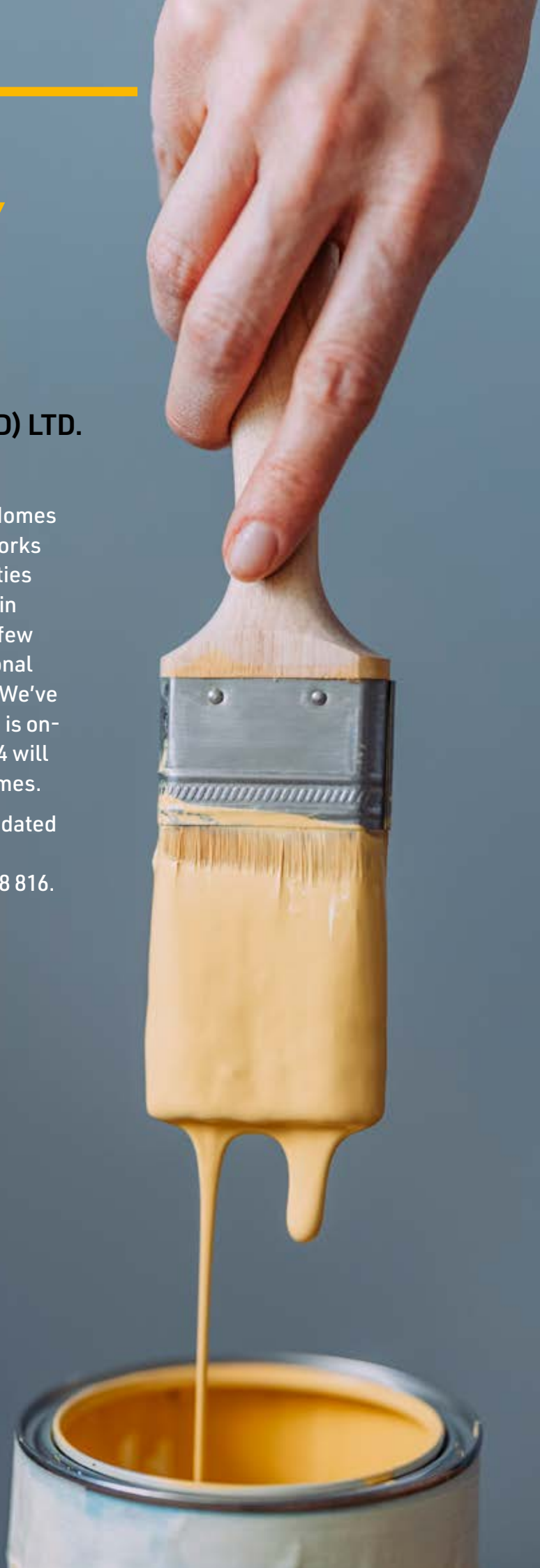
What percentage of public estate walkabouts were completed on time?

PROPERTY SERVICES

HFF21CLS CONTRACT – CCG (SCOTLAND) LTD.

The upgrades to homes included in Phase 4 of the Homes Fit For 21st Century Living Standard (HFF21CLS) works is well underway. Works have completed at properties in Stewarton, with CCG now working in homes within Shortlees. We've seen good progress over the last few months that has allowed us to accelerate an additional 40 properties into this financial year's programme. We've completed all the necessary surveys and the phase is on-track to complete by the end of March 2025. Phase 4 will see over £2m of upgrades completed within our homes.

Further information on the project, including the updated programme, can be obtained on our website or by contacting the Property Services team on 01563 528 816.





STOCK CONDITION SURVEYS

For us to assess and understand what type of work we need to plan for, we carry out Stock Condition Surveys. These surveys help us assess the condition of the main components and allow us to plan for future improvement works. The surveys are carried out on a rolling basis and if you've been a tenant with us for a while, you may have had several of these surveys during your tenancy. We appreciate your co-operation in allowing us access to complete them.

We've completed over 500 Stock Condition Surveys within the last

couple of years. The information gathered from these surveys will allow us to consider how to prioritise and plan the upgrades that will be needed and to balance this within our financial means.

There's no need to contact us to request a Stock Condition Survey as we'll contact you when the surveys are next arranged for your area. However, if you're worried about a repair or component condition at your home, please contact the Property Services team on 01563 528 816 and they'll be happy to help.

OUR FUTURE PLANS

Phase 5 of the project is one of the largest and will be split over the next two financial years, beginning April 2025. We intend to start initial surveys in December 2024 and surveys will be ongoing throughout 2025. We'll contact tenants to arrange appointments in advance of the surveys.

We remain committed to making the improvements and upgrades we consulted on when the HFF21CLS programme was created, but we also must remember that although we have returned to normal, the programme faced significant delays because of the pandemic that we're unable to catch up on.

It's anticipated that a new upgrade programme will begin once the HFF21CLS project is complete, as our newer build properties will soon have internal components reaching the end of their useful life.

EXTERNAL WALL INSULATION

We're investing a further £400,000 in having External Wall Insulation fitted to 27 homes in New Farm Loch. The work started in September and is due to be complete by March 2025. Not only do the homes look much nicer after completion of the work, they also really benefit from the increased levels of insulation, making them easier to heat.



GAS SAFETY

With the weather turning colder, leading to an increased use of the gas central heating, it's important that the safety of your boiler is maintained. An annual service must be completed every 12 months to ensure the gas appliances remain safe for use. It's vital you read the letters we send you about this and act before it's too late. We cannot extend the date of the service and we may gain access to your property if you don't provide it.



GUTTER CLEANING

Our contractor, the Bell Group, recently started a programme of gutter cleaning. The works will be carried out at newer build properties in Catrine, Cumnock, Dunlop, Fenwick, Nether Robertland, New Farm Loch, Onthank and Shortlees.

Tenants will be contacted over the coming months where gutter cleaning work is being planned for this current year.



ELECTRICAL PERIODIC TESTING

Our contractor, Magnus Electrical, continues to complete electrical testing where this is required. This is an important aspect of making sure your home remains electrically safe. We must carry out an electrical safety test of your home every five years. Contact will be made directly with tenants who are included in the programme.

Winter WARNINGS

It's important that you keep yourself safe in your home throughout the year, but especially during the harsher winter months. We'll carry out necessary statutory checks such as gas servicing, but there are also things that you can do yourself to protect your family and home.



FROST PRECAUTIONS

During the coldest months, there's risk of damage to your home caused by frost or flooding from frozen pipes.

To avoid burst pipes

- Keep your home reasonably warm day and night
- Open internal doors
- Check pipes regularly

Check your contents insurance to make sure your belongings are insured for damage.

If the water pipes freeze

- Turn the water off at the main stopcock. You should find this under the kitchen sink or where the service pipe enters your home.
- It's best to let the pipes thaw naturally, but you can try to thaw the ice in the pipe with a hot water bottle or hairdryer (taking care to keep it well away from any water). NEVER use a heat gun or blow torch.
- If the hot water system is frozen, turn off any water heaters.
- If you have some water, fill available containers to ensure you have an adequate supply of water should the pipes freeze further.

If a pipe bursts

- Turn the water off at the main stopcock and open all your taps to drain water from the system. Remember to close the taps again when you're finished. (Make sure you know where the stopcock is – it's usually on the ground floor, under the kitchen sink or in a downstairs toilet.) Closing the stopcock will stop the supply of mains water into your house, helping to reduce damage.
- Turn off water heaters.
- Find the leak and bind it tightly with a towel, placing a bowl below to catch any drips.
- If water is lying on top of a ceiling and making it bulge, pierce the

ceiling using a screwdriver to let the water escape.

- If electric cables are wet, switch off the supply at the mains. DO NOT touch the cables themselves.

Boiler and Heating Problems

Some boilers have a condensing pipe that drains to the outside, and the liquid in this pipe can freeze in extremely low temperatures causing the boiler to shut down.

The pressure gauge on your boiler should sit between 1.5 and 2.0 when the boiler is running however if the pressure keeps dropping, then there may be a leak in one of the heating pipes.

Report any of these faults to our office.

STORM DAMAGE

It's not only cold weather that your home is exposed to over the winter months. There's a risk of storm damage too.

If tiles are blown off your roof but there's no water coming in

- Contact our office on 01563 528 816. We'll log the details of your repair, which will be classed as a Routine Repair and a roofer will call within 7 working days when safe to do so.

If water starts to leak through the roof

There's roofing felt under the tiles and this should prevent water coming into your house. However, if your roof does start to leak:

- Use a bucket or container to catch any water coming into rooms and lay a plastic sheet over any possessions that are close to the leak.
- Tell us immediately to update the information, especially if there's any doubt about water in your electrics.

SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

Wintry weather is arriving, which means there's a greater risk of slips,

trips, and falls. At this time of year, surfaces can be more dangerous than at other times, with seasonal factors to consider in avoiding accident and injury.

Poor lighting, rainfall, snow, ice, and wet and decaying leaves can all increase the potential for slip, trip and fall accidents. Paths can also become a bit uneven at this time of the year because of the weather. Please tell us if paved surfaces inside your property boundary require attention, so that we can help keep you safe.

We'd like to remind customers to be mindful of how you go during the poorer weather. Information on grit bin and gritting routes can be found on East Ayrshire Council's website www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk or by visiting the Ayrshire Roads Alliance website at www.ayrshireroadsalliance.org

DAMP AND MOULD

Issues with damp and mould can become worse in the winter due to colder temperatures and increased indoor humidity.

We investigate all reported cases of damp and mould, and we aim to resolve the issue as quickly as possible. We monitor damp and mould cases before and after treatment works, to make sure the issue has been fully resolved.

Depending on the cause of the damp and mould, there are various remedies to deal with the problems and we can offer help with the matter until it's resolved.

We can also install air quality monitoring equipment in homes to record internal temperatures and humidity levels. The equipment is unobtrusive and looks just like a smoke detector. The information obtained can help everyone get a better understanding of the air quality and informs the changes that are needed.

If you're worried about damp and mould in your home, please contact us so that we can help.

ANNUAL RETURN ON THE CHARTER

2023 - 2024

Atrium submitted its 10th Annual Return on the Charter in May 2024 to the Scottish Housing Regulator. The ARC Report is broken down into 5 sections: Homes & Rents; Tenant Satisfaction; Quality & Maintenance of Homes; Neighbourhoods and Value for Money.



HOMES & RENTS

AT 31 MARCH 2024

No. of homes owned by Atrium:

1,210

Total rent due for year:

£6,321,178

Increase on weekly rent:

5%

on average from previous year

At Atrium Homes we allocate all our available properties through the Common Housing Register for East Ayrshire, known as SEARCH. Properties are allocated from 5 lists, with targets for each agreed at the start of the year - Waiting, Transfer, Homeless, Strategic Needs and Outwith the District.

Size of Home	Number of Homes Owned	Atrium rent p.wk.	Scottish Average
1 Apartment	-	-	£82.24
2 Apartment	124	£83.27	£87.87
3 Apartment	564	£96.23	£90.29
4 Apartment	481	£109.92	£98.30
5 Apartment	41	£120.55	£108.29



TENANT SATISFACTION

Of the tenants who responded to this landlord's most recent satisfaction survey:

	Atrium	Scottish Average
Tenants satisfied with landlord's overall service	81.9%	86.5%
Tenants who felt their landlord was good at keeping them informed about its services and outcomes	84.2%	90.5%
Tenants satisfied with opportunities to participate in landlord's decision making	78.1%	87.7%



QUALITY & MAINTENANCE OF HOMES

We aim to provide well maintained homes for all our tenants.

	Atrium	Scottish Average
Landlord homes meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard	84.2%	84.4%
Average time taken to complete emergency repairs	1.8 Hours	4.0 Hours
Average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs	5.4 Days	9.0 Days
Reactive repairs completed 'right first time'	94.1%	88.4%
Tenants satisfied with the service they received for repairs or maintenance carried out on their home	85.5%	87.3%



NEIGHBOURHOODS

For every 100 of your landlord's homes, 6.8 cases of anti-social behaviour were reported in the last year.

	Atrium	Scottish Average
Percentage of anti-social behaviour cases resolved within targets agreed locally	100%	94.3%



VALUE FOR MONEY

We recognise the importance of delivering value for money in all our services.

	Atrium	Scottish Average
Percentage of total rent due in the year collected by landlord	99.8%	99.4%
Percentage of rent due but not collected due to empty homes	0.4%	1.4%
Average number of days taken to re-let homes	25.3 Days	56.7 Days

Annual Assurance Statement 2024



As an organisation committed to continuous improvement, Atrium Homes has embraced the self assurance process, and the Board has continually monitored organisational performance and compliance. The Board confirms that we have reviewed and assessed a comprehensive bank of evidence to support this statement.

It is the judgement of the Board of Atrium Homes that we have appropriate assurance we continue to materially comply with:

- All relevant regulatory requirements set out in Section Three of the Regulatory Framework
- The Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management
- The relevant standards and outcomes of the Scottish Social Housing Charter
- Our statutory obligations in respect of tenant and resident safety, housing and homelessness, and equalities and human rights.

This judgement extends to our wholly owned subsidiary Atrium Initiatives Limited.

In reviewing the evidence and assessing compliance, we have taken account of good practice advice. We are confident

that, taking account of the current economic and social environments, we continue to meet our responsibilities to our tenants, service users, regulators and funders.

We are assured that Atrium Homes has the necessary arrangements in place to identify any risks to compliance in the course of the conduct of our business and governance arrangements.

We are satisfied that we have materially met all of our duties in relation to tenant and resident safety. In particular, we have gained the necessary evidence-based assurance of our compliance in respect of duties relating to fire and water safety, and our obligations relating to asbestos, and damp and mould. We have completed our assessment of the potential presence of RAAC in our tenants' homes and confirm that none has been identified. We missed the twelve-month anniversary for gas servicing on one of our properties in July 2024 due to an administrative error. This was quickly detected and rectified in the same month.

We currently have one property which does not have a valid EICR and where the tenant has refused access to our contractor. We are working with the tenant to complete outstanding

inspections as soon as we are able and have taken legal advice on the next steps we should take to ensure that our tenant's home is safe. This property is currently categorised as 'in abeyance' for the purposes of the SHQS and reporting in the ARC.

In reviewing our compliance with the Regulatory Framework, we are assured that we have established appropriate systems for the collection of equalities data. We are assured that we are working towards using appropriate data to take account of equality and human rights issues in our decisions, policy-making and day-to-day service delivery.

The judgement expressed in this statement is to the best of the Board's knowledge and belief, based on factors including internal review of background information and reports presented to the Boards of Atrium Homes and Atrium Initiatives on an ongoing basis, supplemented by independent reviews conducted by internal and external auditors.

This statement was considered and agreed by the Board of Directors of Atrium Homes at its meeting on 24 September 2024.

Signed on behalf of the Board

Alistair Reid, Chair of Atrium Homes



**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:

Atrium House
14 Central Avenue, Shortlees
Kilmarnock / KA1 4PS

T. 01563 528 816
E. info@atrium-homes.co.uk
W. www.atrium-homes.co.uk