



Barochan Greenspace:

Record Breaking Planting

Green fingered members of the community were involved in a Guinness Record breaking planting attempt at Barochan Greenspace.

Members of the Ferguslie Park Community Garden Scheme, local children from Glencoats Primary School and Ferguslie Park Housing Association staff along with Carts Green Space managed to plant 800 shrubs in one hour in Barochan Greenspace.

The planting was part of a Tree O'Clock event which was organised by the BBC's Breathing Space Campaign to celebrate National Tree Week. Across the country similar community planting events took place in an attempt to break the Guinness Record.



The event took place on Saturday 5 December 2009. Managing to plant 800 trees in one hour was incredible and greatly contributed to the record breaking attempt.

All the planting that took place across the country is being verified and collated and we should hear shortly if the record breaking attempt was successful.

Ferguslie Park Housing Association has been working with the Ferguslie Park Community Garden Scheme and Carts Greenspace to transform Barochan Greenspace into a community garden and allotment space.

Membership forms to join the Ferguslie Park Community Garden Scheme are available from the Tannahill Centre.

Treat Yourself this Christmas with Your Good Neighbour Union Vouchers

This year 721 Good Neighbour Union (GNU) Members will receive up to £30 of bonus bond vouchers in time for Christmas.

We are keen to encourage all our tenants to become GNU members and show a commitment to the community of Ferguslie Park. So if you haven't qualified this time round why not meet the conditions of the GNU and you could receive Bonus Bond Vouchers in June 2010. The full qualifying conditions of the GNU are available from the Associations Office. We would like to congratulate all our

tenants who are GNU members. We hope you enjoy spending your vouchers.



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This Organisation Needs You!!

Customer Participation – have a say in how we do business

We continue to offer residents the opportunity to have a say in our decision making on policy and service delivery.

If you are interested in a particular area of our service that you would like to be consulted on you can register as an interested individual. We will then contact you whenever we carrying out consultations on the areas you are interested in. This is an opportunity for you to get involved without having to give up much of your time.

Policies we have consulted on previously include:

- Rent Arrears
- Allocation of houses
- Anti social behaviour
- Rent increases
- Estate Management

If you would like to be added to the list of Registered Interested Individuals please contact Jan Brennan, Housing Manager on 0141 887 4053.

Consultation on Digital TV

In 2011 an analogue switch off is scheduled for Southern Scotland. This means that unless you have a relatively new digital television or a digital set top box for your old television you will no longer receive a television signal.

Another critical factor in receiving a television signal will be the suitability of the aerial and cable. Existing aerials and cables in our houses are capable of delivering a digital signal.

The Association proposes to review its Digital TV Policy to offer a full digital service. In practice this means receiving the channels available on Freeview and providing a suitable aerial to receive the signal. It is important to note that some channels on Freeview are of varying signal strength and the list changes frequently so it is not possible to provide a complete guarantee for all stations.

We are currently reviewing our Digital TV Policy and would like to hear your views. If you have any questions about your digital aerial please contact the Maintenance department on 0141 847 5200.

Repairs Line Reminder

The Association now has a direct telephone line to our repairs and maintenance department.

If you are reporting a repair, requesting a clerk of works visit or have any repairs and maintenance enquiries just call our direct repairs line on **0141 847 5200**.

A member of the maintenance department will answer your call and will ensure your enquiry is dealt with quickly and efficiently.

Editorial

This year has been an extremely busy and successful year for the Association with many high points worth mentioning.

In development we celebrated the completion of the building of 8 much needed amenity homes. These amenity homes are for people with specific needs and were built on the grounds next to St Fergus Chapel and Oakridge Crescent. The building of these homes was funded by the Scottish Government Housing Investment Team and the Association. Tenants

moved into their new homes in May 2009 and the Association hosted a community open house day to celebrate the completion of the homes.

Housing staff managed to reduce the amount of rent arrears to 4% this year. They have also reviewed our allocations procedures to ensure better information on housing availability is provided to prospective tenants. Maintenance staff have continued to ensure our high repair standard and have exceeded all their targets. This ensures your homes are maintained to an excellent standard.

The Tenancy Intervention Project was awarded a further 2 years of funding from the Scottish Government. This will ensure that two Intervention Officers who help support our tenants who are experiencing difficulties in maintaining their tenancy will be employed until March 2011.

The Staff and Committee would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a prosperous and Happy New Year.



Housing Transfer Result

The Association is disappointed to tell you that the recent housing transfer ballot resulted in a no vote. With just a 17 vote majority, Renfrewshire Council tenants in Ferguslie Park decided not to transfer to the Association and not to have the Association as their landlord. This means Renfrewshire Council will remain their landlord. The result means that the Renfrewshire Council tenants will not benefit from the Associations plans to deliver an investment



will continue as planned our maintenance programmes and will ensure our high maintenance and housing standards.

Robert Craig FPHA Chief Executive says: "We feel that the proposals we developed in consultation with the Councils local tenants and residents association and others offered a good

package and high standard of housing service to them.

The positive news for Association tenants is the ballot results do not affect the good standard of service you receive from the Association. We

deal for council tenants in Ferguslie Park. But the tenants, albeit by a very narrow majority, decided they did not wish to accept our proposals. We feel that this was a lost opportunity to have one housing organisation representing the needs and aspirations of all residents in Ferguslie Park. However, we will continue to work with the local community and our partner organisations in taking forward regeneration in Ferguslie Park."

In total 251 of the 528 Council tenants voted in the transfer ballot. This was a turnout of 47.5%. 117 (46.6%) voted in favour of transferring to the Association with 134 (53.4%) voting no to transferring to the Association.

A Christmas gift for the environment

The Scottish Government's Go Greener campaign is encouraging people to make an extra effort in the lead up to Christmas and reduce their energy use by making small changes to the way they live.

And it's not only the environment that will benefit. Reducing the amount of energy you use throughout the year will also help you pocket some extra money in time for the holiday season.

Every year in the UK around £8 billion of energy is wasted, enough to give every man, woman and child £125. On average, this means a family could save around £300 per year by making small, positive changes to their daily routine.

Saving money and reducing Scotland's contribution to global warming doesn't take time or much effort.

UK households spend around eight per cent of their electricity bill on standby power for appliances such as TVs, microwaves, digital radios, broadband and games consoles, so when you're switching off, make sure it's at the plug socket.

You can also save money by using energy efficient lightbulbs and switching them off when you leave the room. This can help you save around £40 every year.

By turning down your thermostat by just one degree, you can cut heating bills by up to ten per cent. You'll save even more if you close your curtains at night to stop heat escaping through the windows.

When making your afternoon brew, try not to overfill the kettle. If everyone boiled only the water needed to make their cup, enough electricity could be saved in a year to run the UK's street lighting for seven months.

The Go Greener Top Ten Tips are:

- Recycle household waste using locally-provided facilities
- Turn the tap off when brushing your teeth
- Switch to using energy-saving light bulbs
- Leave the car at home and walk, cycle, use public transport or car share at least once a week instead.
- Use rechargeable instead of disposable batteries

"LISTEN TO THE EARTH AND SAVE MONEY AROUND YOUR HOME."



- Re-use carrier bags when you shop
- Buy more seasonal and unpackaged food
- Hang your washing up to dry rather than using a tumble dryer
- Organise or volunteer in an environmental project in your local community
- Avoid flying when you can, and pay back the environmental impact of any flights you have to take

For more information and tips, plus a chance to win some fantastic giveaways and money saving offers visit www.infoscotland.com/gogreener.

Get ready for winter...

As Winter approaches, the possibility of freezing weather and pipes becomes more of a worry, however there is a lot you can do to minimise the risk of freezing and bursts:

- 1 Keep this newsletter handy with the emergency numbers that are listed.
- 2 Check now where the stopcock is in your house to turn off the water supply if you need to – it's usually under the sink, or in the hall cupboard near the front door.
- 3 If you are going away during the holidays, leave your heating on at a low setting and leave the loft hatch open to stop the pipes and loft tank from freezing. If you will be away for 3 days or more we can drain down your water and heating systems to avoid a burst. However please let us know at least 2 days before you go away.
- 4 If you get a frozen pipe, wait till it thaws – do not apply a direct flame.

NEVER switch on the heating boiler or hot water immenser to thaw out a frozen pipe, this is very dangerous. If the boiler or immenser freeze, turn them off.

When frozen pipes thaw out, they often leak, so to avoid flooding:

- 1 Turn off the water supply at the stopcock in the house/flat and turn off the boiler and immenser, then
- 2 Turn on the hot and cold water taps to drain the system and water storage tank, then
- 3 Call the plumber, by contacting the office or the emergency number if the office is closed.
- 4 Don't turn the boiler or the immenser back on until the plumber has been and told you it's safe.
- 5 If you get water in from an empty house upstairs or next door, turn off the water at the toby in the street, call out our plumber if you can't do this yourself.
- 6 If you get water in and think that any sockets or electrical equipment is affected, switch off the power, or the circuit for that appliance, and telephone for an electrician.



Emergency Contact Numbers over the festive period when the Housing Association Office is closed.

Carillion
08459 303031 (All Trades)

Lambert Contracts
0779 304 1602
(Not heating)

West of Scotland Water
0845 600 8855
(Severe Flooding)

British Gas
0800 111 999 (Gas leak)

Scottish Power
0845 2727 999
(Power cuts affecting several houses or streets)

Renfrewshire Council
0141 889 2314
(Blocked Street Drains)

Opening Hours

over the Festive Period

The Association's Office will be **closed** on **Friday 25th December 2009, through to Tuesday 5th January 2010.**

The office will **RE-OPEN** on **Wednesday 6th January 2010** for business as usual.

Why don't you become a Member of the Association?

Membership applications are encouraged from anyone who is interested in supporting and further developing the aims and objectives of the Association.

For further details contact: **0141 887 4053** or call into the office.