

NEWS



Summer 2019



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MAINTENANCE PERFORMANCE UP TO MARCH 2019

1.3 hours

average number of hours taken
to complete emergency repairs



3.4 days

average number of days
taken to complete
non-emergency repairs

1,751

repairs completed



96.7%

repairs completed right
first time

99.6%

repair appointments kept

100%

Gas safety checks
carried out on time



HOW TO SWITCH ENERGY SUPPLIER

Are you being overcharged?

The majority of people in the UK are overspending on energy by 30% - averaging at £300 - simply due to being on the wrong tariff. If you're with one of the big six - British Gas, EDF, Eon, Npower, Scottish Power or SSE - and haven't switched supplier within the last 12 months then it's even more likely you're being overcharged as you may be on their most expensive standard tariff.

How do you check?

The easiest way to check if you're being overcharged is to use a price comparison site, which should only take you around five minutes. The cheapest supplier for you will depend on factors such as where you live and how much energy you use. Popular comparison sites include: Money Supermarket, Compare the Market, uSwitch and Energy Helpline.

What you will need

The comparison process is easiest if you have a previous bill to hand. You'll be asked for information such as your postcode, the name of your current supplier, the name of your current tariff and the type of heating you have. Keep in mind that paying by Direct Debit can often save you more money and the switch-over process can take up to 21 days.



CHIPS AND CHAT

We had a great meeting with tenants to explore how we could work together to ensure our promises for the partnership with Cairn are met and the investment that has been promised for our communities is well spent.

We were joined by Lynda Johnstone from the Tenants Information Service and our bellies filled with delicious chips from Mamas in Irvine. Those tenants who made it along to the meeting were happy to see some good progress with the delivery of new kitchens and other home improvements. They've got a real interest in how the money for community development and environmental improvements is spent and the Cairn and ANCHO staff promised to report on some ideas and ways forward at the next meeting.

We'll include a full update on the progress of the partnership with Cairn in our annual report, which will be published in autumn.

If you'd like to get involved with our tenants' panel please get in touch.



AN UPDATE ON BENEFITS

Universal Credit

If you are on Universal Credit already you will know that a lot more responsibility is placed on you, the claimant, to keep your claim up to date or you face being sanctioned.

One of the things that is often missed is the annual rent increase which you must update in your online journal or you won't receive the correct housing payment. If you haven't done it for this year (which started on 1 April 2019), then do it NOW. Log in, select 'report a change of circumstances' then select where you live and what it costs. Follow the screens through and submit. If you don't know your current rent amount then get in touch with your Housing Officer.

Are you working and receiving Universal Credit?

If you are working, you will know your Universal Credit award goes up and down with your earnings. This can change frequently if you are paid weekly, fortnightly or four-weekly. If you have asked for your rent to be paid directly to us then there may be occasions where there is not enough left in your claim, after deductions, to pay your rent in full.

The rent is the last thing paid for from your claim. Scroll to the bottom of your payment summary and look for the entry that says 'The total we take off for payment to your landlord is' and this will tell you how much went to your rent account. If there is a shortfall, or no entry at all, then it's your responsibility to make up the difference. There are various ways you can pay. See the 'How to pay your rent' leaflet on our website or contact your Housing Officer for help.

Best Start Grant

Social Security Scotland have launched a new benefit for parents and carers. If you are on certain benefits or tax credits you can claim for extra financial support during the key early years of a child's life. The grant comes in three parts:

- Pregnancy and baby payment - £600 on birth of first child (£300 for subsequent children)
- Early learning payment - £250 when child is between 2 and 3 ½ years old to help with learning costs
- School age payment - £250 around the time child starts primary school.

To find out more and to apply visit www.mygov.scot



STAYING SAFE IN THE SUN

2019 has already brought us some record-breaking heat. The Met Office confirmed that February was the hottest on record, and Easter Sunday saw temperatures rise in parts of the UK to 25C. Vitamin D levels, mood and sleep can all be improved with a daily dose of sunshine, however it's important to ensure you protect yourself. With this in mind here are some reminders to make sure you stay safe while you're out enjoying the sun this summer.

- Wear an SPF – This may be an obvious one but sunscreen application (even when it's cloudy) is one of the best ways to protect yourself! The NHS recommends you wear an SPF factor of at least 15 and with a minimum of a 4 star UVA protection rating. It's also important that the cream isn't out of date, that you apply it at least 30 minutes before you go outside, and you reapply frequently throughout the day.
- Protective clothing – if you don't fancy slathering on the sunscreen, wearing clothing and a hat that doesn't allow the sunlight through can be a great option.
- Seek the shade – the sun is at its strongest between 11am and 3pm, so this could be an ideal time to enjoy a long lunch or seek the shade of an umbrella.
- Wear sunglasses – sunglasses help to protect your eyes from UV rays, so make sure to wear them and that they are 100% UV protective. Remember, even with sunglasses never look directly at the sun.
- Stay hydrated – when we're out in the sun our bodies lose much more water than usual so it's important to drink plenty of fluids throughout the day to help avoid dehydration.

SERVICE PLUS

Our Service Plus scheme is a reward scheme for tenants.

How do you qualify?

To be eligible for Service Plus, you must, at the end of each quarter, have owed no debt (rent, rechargeable repairs etc.) to ANCHO and have had no verbal warnings or warning letters during the previous six months.

What can you win

Eligible tenants are entered into a prize draw every three months and can be nominated for one of our annual 'Good Neighbour' awards.

The Service Plus winners for the last quarter:

**Mr and Mrs McCalman -
Kilwinning Woodwynd**

£150

**Mrs Greenan,
Irvine Central**

£75

**Mrs Hart,
Irvine North**

£50

Ms Paterson, Irvine North

£25

Miss Dougan, Castlepark

Miss Hislop, Irvine North

ANCHO normally hold their annual fun day in August each year. This year North Ayrshire Council's Housing Services have extended an invitation to all our tenants to attend their free event. Information about the event is shown below.

North Ayrshire Council Housing Services

FAMILY FUN & INFORMATION DAY

FREE EVENT

**SATURDAY
31 AUGUST 2019 11AM - 3PM**

**IRVINE ROYAL ACADEMY,
IRVINE**

YOU CAN FIND OUT ABOUT...

- Community safety
- Welfare rights
- Waste awareness
- Housing matters
- Repairs matters and much more.

PLUS... HAVE YOUR SAY

Your chance to tell us your views and ask the experts your questions.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

Including arts and crafts, owl display and lots of other fun and games.

FACE PAINTING

FREE KIDS GAMES

FOOD SERVED 12-2PM

EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Emergency Services will be in attendance with equipment and demos.

If you could spare a donation for our local foodbank it would be gratefully received. Please bring along on the day.

If you have any difficulties with transport or would like more information, please contact the Tenant Participation Team on 01294 324869/324871. Alternatively, email tenantparticipation@north-ayrshire.gov.uk

For further details check out our Facebook page www.facebook.com/nachousingservices or follow us on Twitter @nachousingservices

North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Air a Tuath

INVESTMENT IN YOUR HOMES

One of the partnership promises was an accelerated stock investment programme. This is now well underway, with over £1.5 million already invested to improve your homes.

In customer satisfaction surveys 89.5% of tenants have reported that they are fairly satisfied or very satisfied with the service ANCHO provided with planned improvement projects.

Some of the comments from tenants:

"The guys did a great job; friendly and tidied up afterwards. Great team."

"Excellent workmanship and very kind and considerate."

"Roofers left my garden in a mess."

"Absolutely delighted with the improvements carried out in the kitchen. The contractors did a fantastic job!"

	Five year commitment	Completed at March 2019	Spend to March 2019
New kitchens	560	56	£190,328
Rewiring	300	138	£339,133
New roofs	200	57	£267,432
External wall insulation	160	88	£749,341
New windows	100	81	£267,493
New door entry	90	0	£0
New external doors	70	63	£95,640

ANCHO EASTER EGG CAMPAIGN

Hats off to all the staff at ANCHO who donated to the Adecco Ayr Easter appeal. A total of 487 Easter eggs and goodies were delivered to the Children's Ward at Crosshouse Hospital, Ayrshire Hospice and the Trussell Trust Food Bank by those at Adecco. Great work team!



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cairn
HOUSING GROUP

This newsletter
is available on
CD, in Braille, in
large print and
in community
languages.

ancho
Creating thriving communities

**Our mission is to create neighbourhoods
where people want to live**

ANCHO is a registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefits Societies Act 2014, registered number 2559R(S). Registered with the Scottish Housing Regulator, registered number 306. Recognised as a Scottish Charity, registered number SCO36082. Registered Property Factor, registered number PF000346.