

ancho NEWS

Autumn 2020

WELCOME!

Earlier this year we carried out a consultation with tenants to find out how often they'd like to receive the newsletter and in what format.

We received some brilliant ideas and many tenants wanted to see us send out email bulletins, with the number of printed newsletters reducing to save costs and paper. The majority also said they valued the newsletter and the opportunity it gives us to keep tenants updated.

After listening to your feedback on the newsletter we're going to send out email bulletins every two months and a printed newsletter every six months. Doing this will let

us communicate with you more frequently, reduce waste, while still keeping in touch with those who do not have access to the internet.

To make sure you are keeping up to date with our latest news, please make sure you give us your email address if you haven't already by emailing mail@ancho.co.uk. You can also follow us on Facebook for even more up to date news and information.

If you have an idea for a newsletter article, or if you'd like to update your email address, please get in touch.



Latest updates on Facebook and www.ancho.co.uk

COVID-19 UPDATE

ROUTE MAP

In the summer we sent you our route map. The Route Map will be regularly updated as our services adapt to guidance from the Scottish Government and Public Health Scotland. As a reminder, you can go on our website to find the most up to date version of the route map, or give us a call and a member of our team will be happy to update you.

TEST AND PROTECT APP

If you haven't already downloaded this app onto your smartphone or tablet then make sure you take a minute to do so. The app has been designed to help us protect each other, reduce the spread of coronavirus and avoid further lockdowns. The more people who use it, the better it will work.



STAY SAFE ON BONFIRE NIGHT

Due to the cancellation of organised fireworks displays, the Scottish Fire Service are expecting to be busier than usual this year. They have passed their guidance to us, which we hope you'll find useful.

They have asked that you consider the impact of fireworks on people and animals, It is often children rather than adults who are injured by fireworks. The noise and lights that fireworks emit can also be overwhelming for people with sensory impairment and those with neurological differences such as Autism. Animals can also find fireworks particularly distressing.

If you must hold a private display, please follow their advice:

1. Don't set fireworks off after 11pm - it is an offence to do so
2. Never throw spent fireworks on a bonfire
3. Keep pets indoors
4. Don't go near bonfires or fireworks whilst under the influence of alcohol.
5. If you must have a bonfire at home make sure it is well away from buildings, vehicles, trees, hedges, fences, power lines and sheds
6. It is an offence to lay or light a fire in a public place
7. Never leave a burning or smouldering bonfire unsupervised
8. Supervise children with sparklers and never give them to a child under the age of five
9. Only buy fireworks which carry the CE mark and keep them in a closed metal box until you need them
10. Never return to a firework once it has been lit - even if it hasn't gone off it could still explode

SMALL STEPS COUNSELLING

Are you struggling with depression, anxiety or stress? Is it starting to have an impact on your life or wellbeing? If so, our free counselling service might be just what you need.

WHO IS SUITABLE?

If you are suffering from mild mental health problems or are feeling overwhelmed with events in your life, then this service is for you. People who are suffering from major mental illness will likely not benefit from this service, due to the short-term nature of support provided.

HOW CAN I GET HELP?

Anyone can self-refer for this service. We also accept referrals from service providers and support organisations. To get in touch, email mail@ancho.co.uk or call 01294 313 121.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I PHONE?

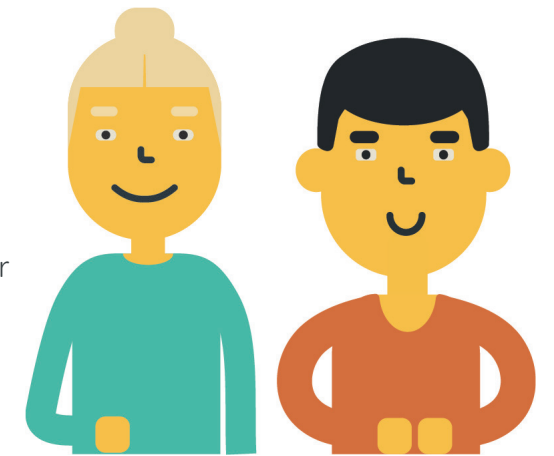
A member of our team will take some basic information including your name, date of birth, address, contact number and what support you might need.

WHAT HAPPENS AT FIRST CONTACT?

The Community Support Worker will contact you and discuss your counselling needs. We will discuss the support we can offer and take some information about your requirements. We will find out whether this service is the right fit for you. If it isn't, we can make recommendations of where you can get help and support.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

If the service is right for you, you will be offered seven sessions, with the opportunity for more if it is required. Each session will last an hour.



NEED MORE STORAGE SPACE?

Did you know that you can rent a lock-up garage from us? If you are short of storage space, need somewhere to keep your garden furniture or kids toys, or maybe need somewhere to keep your car safe, then get in touch to find out where we currently have vacancies.

CUSTOMER INVOLVEMENT

We really want to involve tenants in a more meaningful way in how decisions are made. Traditionally this has always been about bringing tenants together in a room but with all the other pressures on people's time, we struggle to get people to come along. We want to shake up how we do things and try something new, so we drafted a new Customer Involvement Strategy for how we see this working over the next three years.

We recently sent this draft strategy out for consultation and here are the results...

What kind of involvement would you participate in?

Completing surveys or questionnaires (online)	10
Estate walkabouts with staff to find improvements	8
Feedback about our publications	3
Focus groups or meetings in person	3
Scrutiny projects lasting one or two full days (in person)	3
Completing surveys or questionnaires (by post)	2
Long term scrutiny projects (lasting many months)	2
Focus groups or meetings by video conference	2
Scrutiny projects lasting one or two full days (online)	2
I don't want to participate	2
Total	37

Are you more or less likely to participate online or face to face?

I'd prefer to get involved online	5
I'd prefer face to face meetings	1
I have no preference	7

"I have detailed knowledge of women who have been in abusive relationships. I am also disabled so can also provide a light on so some of your tenants problems. Most times someone who has been at the heart of a problem can talk to and see a answer to a problem easier than someone who has not."

"I would like more meaningful consultation."

Thanks to everyone who took the time to respond. We will take this feedback into account when we are planning ways to involve you in decision making and consultations.

At the time of writing we're updating the strategy to reflect your feedback and ideas. We'll have more detailed feedback on this consultation in a future email bulletin and the final strategy will be posted on our website once its been approved by our Board.

SOCIAL MEDIA ROUNDUP

In case you don't follow us on Facebook, here's just some of the posts that you've missed over the last few months.

Aged 50 and over and unsure of your pension options? Visit pensionwise.gov.uk for advice

Are you aged 16 - 24 and just started a new job? You can get a one-off payment of £250 - £400 for the cost of new clothes, travel and childcare. Visit blogs.gov.scot/fairer-scotland or call 0800 182 2222.

Do you want to save £140 on your energy bills? Applications to the Warm Home Discount are now open. Go to our website to watch the short video we put together telling you how to go about it. Alternatively, contact your energy provider to find out if you're eligible.

If you've worked in the grocery industry and now face financial difficulty, go to groceryaid.org.uk to find out how they can help.

Are you a European National and planning to remain in the UK after Brexit? Your entitlement to support and benefits may be impacted from 1st January 2021 if you do not hold settled status. It's free and all citizens and family members are encouraged to apply. Visit gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families or get in touch with our Tenancy Sustainment Team for help and advice.

Give us a follow on Facebook so you don't miss out on future posts!

BECOME A SHAREHOLDER

Did you know that for just £1 you can become a shareholding member of Ancho?

Shareholding membership is open to anyone over the age of 16 that is a tenant, service user, or anyone who makes an active contribution to Ancho activities. As a member you can get involved and shape the future of the association by:

- Voting at Annual General Meetings and any Special General Meetings
- Applying to be a Board or Sub-Committee Member based on your skills and experience.

If you are interested, please get in touch with Carolyn Owens by emailing carolyn.owens@ancho.co.uk or by calling 0800 990 3405.

- Electing the right people to serve on Ancho's Board, who will effectively govern the Association



OUR PARTNERSHIP PROMISES

When we asked you to vote for our partnership with Cairn Housing Association we made some promises about what the partnership would mean for you. These were:

- Local services from the Ancho team in Irvine
- £4.5m in additional investment in your community, with hundreds of new kitchens and other home improvements
- An affordable rent guarantee for five years
- The potential to develop new affordable homes in North Ayrshire

The partnership between Ancho and Cairn is now firmly established in both organisations, with a lot of work going on behind the scenes to ensure better value for money and equip our team to provide better services in our communities.

We are facing challenges with the impact of coronavirus but the partnership with Cairn has given Ancho the strength and resilience to face the problems that lie ahead. We know there is much more to do, and in the year ahead we'll be looking at how we can work together to provide better services to our tenants and other customers.

We have completed the second year of the five year planned maintenance programme, with £1,159,962 spent on upgrades in 2019/20. See across the page for details on how this was spent.








CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

We celebrated our 20th anniversary at this year's annual general meeting.

This year, Mary Black was elected as Chair of the Ancho Board, with Bill Finlay voted in as Vice Chair.

Mary Black said, "The AGM gave an important opportunity to mark the retirement of Jackie Brown after 19 years' dedicated service as a member of the Ancho Board. Jackie served as Vice Chair and Chair and her commitment and energy to the work of Ancho, including steering the Association into the partnership with Cairn, is very much appreciated and we wish Jackie well for the future."

Reflecting on the last year, Mary Black, continued: "We have faced up to a challenging year as we responded to the national lockdown that put restrictions on our ability to provide housing services. Housing associations are not immune to the impact of Covid-19 and the benefits and support of our partnership with Cairn Housing Association are clearly showing. Being part of Cairn Housing Group has made both organisations more resilient to the challenges of this year and those that are still to come. In the year ahead, we will be looking at how we can further integrate operations and strengthen the bonds between our organisations, to plan for the best possible services to our communities."

	Five year commitment	Completed in 2019/20	Spent in 2019/20	Completed overall	Spent overall
 New kitchens	560	64	£207,722	119	£294,539
 Rewiring	300	121	£284,132	265	£623,265
 New roofs	200	13	£63,924	70	£331,356
 External wall insulation	160	67	£601,803	105	£1.35m
 New windows	100	3	£2,381	84	£269,874
 New door entry	90	0	£0	0	£0
 New external doors	70	0	£0	63	£95,640

HOW DO WE MEASURE UP?

You will have noticed our Annual Performance Report has been included with your newsletter. This report gives some highlight figures from the last financial year and reflects on some of the hardships we've all encountered so far this year.

Due to the pandemic, average performance of other housing providers that we would usually include in our detailed online Annual Performance Report hasn't been released yet by the Scottish Housing Regulator. Keep an eye on our website over the next couple of months though; as soon as we have these figures we'll publish our full range of in depth performance information.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY DATES

Everyone at ANCHO would like to wish you a very happy and healthy time over the festive season and best wishes for 2021.

We will be closed from Friday 25th December and reopening on Wednesday 6th January. You can still report emergency repairs during this time by calling 03030 300 999.



Our mission is to create neighbourhoods where people want to live

Our head office:
ANCHO Ltd.
Sovereign House,
Academy Road,
Irvine KA12 8RL

Our website:
www.ancho.co.uk

Our phone number:
01294 313 121

Our email:
mail@ancho.co.uk

Part of the

cairn
HOUSING GROUP

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

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.