



Our award winning
tenants!

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Albyn homes through
the years

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Smoke, heat and
carbon detectors

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Affordable Warmth Highland advice services has now launched!

Changeworks Energy advisors dedicated to Albyn and Cairn tenants with 3 areas of focus.

- 1:1 energy advice and advocacy to tenants in or at risk of fuel poverty
- Support tenants with operating Air Source Heat Pumps
- Provide new tenants with preventative support to avoid fuel poverty.

To be referred you can email
tenancysustainment@albynhousing.org.uk

call us on 0300 323 0990

or refer yourself at
www.changeworks.org.uk

Top Tip from Changeworks

Turn the oven off five minutes before
the end of the cooking time.

If you are finding it hard to meet your rent or other living costs, please contact tenancy sustainment to discuss what support is available to you.

We're here to help.

Autumn Newsletter Welcome!



Welcome to our autumn newsletter and our celebratory issue as we turn 50 years old.

We remember our huge achievements from humble beginnings in 1973, to our position as a well governed, customer focused landlord with almost 4000 homes across the Highlands, in 2023.

We recently held our Annual General Meeting at the Kingsmills Hotel, Inverness on 20 September 2023, where we reported back on our achievements over the year, both in performance - such as the time taken for repairs and to allocate a home, and in the provision of support to customers through the cost-of-living crisis, as well as our annual financial statements.

At this event we also took the opportunity to invite customers, partners and stakeholders to celebrate our achievements for the past year, and the previous 49 years. It was a wonderful event, enjoyed by all who attended.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Highlights in this edition include an update on our new partnership with Changeworks and Cairn Housing Association to provide energy efficiency advice to our customers, an overview of the incredible work undertaken by our customer groups, an update on business plan progress, and a reminder of how important having contents insurance is for our customers.

I hope you enjoy reading this, and I look forward to seeing many more of you turning our communities golden!

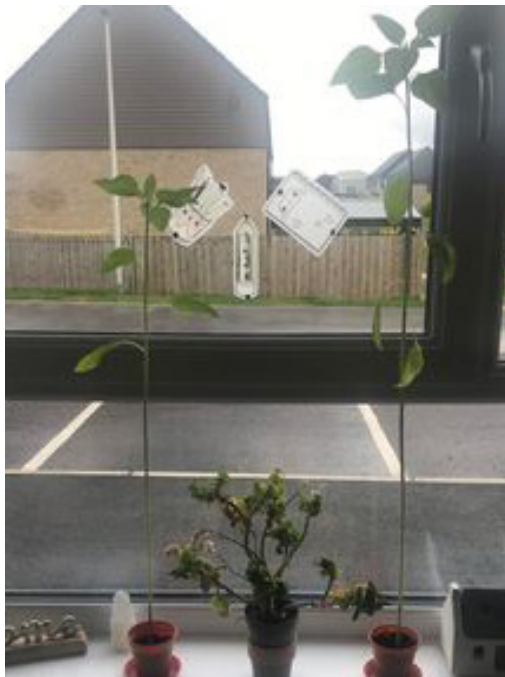
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Turning our communities golden for our 50th

Back in Spring we sent our tenants some sunflower seeds in honour of our 50th Anniversary - to encourage you to turn our communities golden! The response has been amazing and it's been great to see these as we've been out in your communities. Thank you to the tenants who sent us these gorgeous pictures of their blooms, even our tenants without a garden have managed to plant them indoors.

We must apologise for an error that requested pictures be sent to the incorrect email address. The correct email address is ana.macgregor@albynhousing.org.uk - Please keep the pictures coming!



What's coming

Annual Review of Rent Levels

In November, we will be consulting with all of our tenants on options for the annual review of rent levels. We will be guided by our tenants' responses to this important consultation so please look out for your chance to have your say, either through a text message or postal survey.

Customer Satisfaction Survey for 2024

We have begun the process of designing our next full customer satisfaction survey. This lets you have your say on the services and standards that we deliver for you, and your responses will help us identify areas you feel we need to do better, which will help us target our improvement efforts.

Local pop ups

Have you attended one of our pop up events? You can meet with housing officers, tenancy sustainment and more. Look out for news of more events happening in your area on our website and facebook and twitter.

A look at Albyn homes through the years



As we look back on 50 years of service, our celebration is not only about honoring our past but innovating our future and how we go about making the greatest impact for the tenants and communities we support. Albyn's largest asset is its housing stock and property holdings. Our recently published Asset Management Strategy identifies the required outputs and outcomes, whilst seeking improvements and achieving value for money. Albyn will continue to invest in its properties, particularly in matters of safety and energy efficiency - aiming to deliver a greener future and tackle fuel poverty.



Digital Update

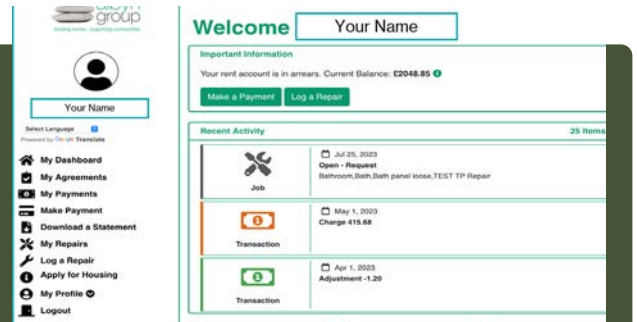
You may remember that over the past few years a lot of work has gone into updating our housing management system, making the switch to a system that would allow us to offer more flexibility for tenants in the ways that they manage their tenancy and engage with Albyn. The first phase was to embed the new system with our staff and ensure that they were comfortable with the system. We have since been working on introducing new functions into the system, such as how we internally manage complaints, ASB and repairs.

Our latest update to the system has been developing the customer portal, so that tenants can log in and access information about their tenancy, and rent balance, and take actions such as logging non-emergent repairs, download and submit forms such as mutual exchange, request tenancy sustainment support and much more. This is now in place, and being tested, you will receive more information from us in the coming months to get you familiar with the system, watch this space!

Fancy Being a Digital Tester?

We would like people of all digital abilities to take part in testing the accessibility and user-friendliness of new online services as they develop.

If you'd be interested in taking part, please contact Chris Ellis at chris.ellis@albynhousing.org.uk



Tenant Charter Report

Every year we have to submit an Annual Return on the Charter to the Scottish Housing Regulator to report on our performance against the Scottish Social Housing Charter. We must involve tenants, and where relevant other service users, in the preparation and scrutiny of this performance information.

The resulting Tenant Charter Report will then be sent to you by the end of October. The Charter is developed and designed by a group of volunteer Albyn tenants and gives tenants the opportunity to look in depth at how we are performing as a landlord. Along with your report, you will receive a survey asking if you would like to be involved in next year's report preparation. We are always grateful to our involved tenants who support these activities and encourage you to sign up.

"The tenant groups not only allow us to meet and make a real difference to tenants in important areas but also allows us to chat, laugh and have discussions in a relaxed, but friendly environment."

Scott M.

Regional Group Meeting

The Regional Networks were set up in 2008 to enable tenants, residents and the Scottish Government to work collaboratively on issues of national policy.



Their objective is to improve the housing and well-being of tenants and residents in Scotland. They work to promote tenants' and residents' interests in housing, planning, community regeneration, the environment and community safety.

One of our involved tenants, Jackie Bugden (pictured at the bottom of the next page) has been elected as a committee member for North of Scotland and she will be involved in engaging with the Scottish Housing Regulator to discuss social housing regulation, challenging the Scottish Government to produce more robust guidance and to participate alongside professional organisation to ensure that tenants interests are at the heart of the policy process.

Double success for Tenant Participation

Albyn Housing Society staff and tenants were recognised for their hard work at an awards ceremony held in Clydebank on Thursday 29th September 2023.

The TPAS (Tenant Participation Advisory Service) awards are designed to recognise the fantastic work and innovation happening across the sector, both by individuals and organisations and Albyn tenants and staff were successful in not one, but two awards!

'Best Practice in Digital Involvement' highlights how our Customer led Performance Review group have been able to communicate their views on services and engage in consultation using digital methods.

Kirsty Morrison, Chief Executive of Albyn Group said: "The Customer Involvement Strategy Group and its subgroups are so important to Albyn and the work we do. From providing feedback on our newsletters and comms through the Tenant Editorial Group to scrutinising our service delivery, policy and practice and delivering recommendations to Board, the groups are absolutely invaluable and their dedication in giving their time and expertise voluntarily, is to be commended."

But the accolades didn't stop there with a further nominee, Anne Mackay, taking home 'Champion of the Year – Individual Staff'. An award which recognises the staff members that goes over and above to meet the needs of tenants, and participates with the community to influence services, performance and embeds a culture of participation.

Kirsty continues: "Our wonderful Communities Assistant, Anne has shown a huge passion for, and dedication to ensuring our customers voice is heard loud and clear. This has resulted in real change to our service delivery, directly based on customer feedback. The fantastic relationship Anne has with our customers was very evident at the event, not only that they were the ones who nominated her for this award, but in their real pleasure that winning this award recognised all of Anne's hard work".

Pictured below L-R, Anne Mackay (Communities Assistant), Scott Macleod (tenant and board member) Jackie Bugden (tenant), Kirsty Morrison (Group CEO) Liam Salkin (tenant and board member), Lucy Fraser (Head of Innovation), Ian Fosbrooke (tenant and board member). Not pictured are Odette Macdonald, Mike Grist and Sinead Mcfarlane, tenants who are a valuable part of the Performance Review Group but were unable to attend the event.



Performance Management Panel - New Builds

This tenant led group was set up last year to look at the processes within Albyn. The panel questions why things are done a certain way, and provides feedback and support to Albyn to ensure we have systems and processes that deliver for our customers.

Our Performance Management Panel have just finished looking at our process for new developments, from purchasing land, right through to handing over the keys. Although they found many examples of great care being taken and Albyn's staff and contractors evidencing a customer focus they found areas where improvements were needed to deliver best service.

They spoke with the teams involved, asked insightful questions and together tenants and Albyn staff agreed some outcomes that could improve the service and reduce costs. The report will soon be available on our website, but here are some of the key outcomes of the process.



- ◇ Albyn have implemented a quick guide, which is being reviewed to ensure the recommendations are incorporated. This will be reviewed for each development and every 2 years. It will be available on the website until the Customer Portal is in effect.
- ◇ Further development of the process and procedures around handovers and defects on new properties will be actioned to achieve a better flow of information internally, all relevant staff will be trained to be able to assist tenants with, in some cases, complex heating systems.
- ◇ A new process for pre-handover sessions will be developed and implemented for all new developments.
- ◇ A new build adaptations process has been drafted and implemented, led by customer service colleagues. It now sets clear roles and responsibilities and timescales. A light touch review will be carried out to incorporate any improvements still required.
- ◇ As part of implementing pre-handover sessions, and new tenant information packs, there will be consistent/accurate property information i.e the latest floorplans etc. Information on what defects are, how to report and indicative timescales will also be included.
- ◇ Implementation of clear processes during handover will strengthen the relationship between internal teams.
- ◇ Community engagement will be considered as part of the wider development process with the aim of introducing more engagement at relevant stages of the new build process.
- ◇ An Albyn specific 'new build standard' will be developed, in addition to Firm Foundations (required by THC)
- ◇ Tenants who moved into New Build Properties during 2021/22 will be surveyed at the end of defects period. This will then be continued for all future developments and will enable us to evaluate the impact of this performance management activity.

These recommendations were presented to Board at its meeting in August 2023, with all being accepted and a commitment to report back to the group on implementation. We are very grateful to all of our involved tenants for volunteering their time to this process, and for their impactful suggestions.

The panel are now looking at our processes for Void Properties and we hope to share the results with you soon.

Development Update

Albyn's New Build Programme continues to deliver high-quality affordable homes for existing and new customers. Each of these projects takes several years to plan, design and build, which is a true cause for celebration upon completion. Some developments face unavoidable delays - such as our Beaulieu development which required additional flood prevention works which slowed progress. We are delighted to confirm that this scheme is now completing and tenants are moved into their homes.

In the 2023/24 financial year we anticipate work beginning or concluding on **135** new homes. Of these, **60** homes in Alness, Beaulieu, Kirkhill and Nairn have already been handed over or will be ready to occupy before Christmas. This includes a mixture of Social Rent, MMR and FitHomes.

We are on site in a further **38** homes, in Alness, Dornoch and Lairg. With works beginning in Dingwall, Dornoch, Kildary and Tain early next year.

We hope each of our new tenants enjoy their homes!



Do You Need Home Contents Insurance?



**Find More Information at
www.citizensadvice.org.uk**

When life gets busy and things are going well, it can be easy to forget about home contents insurance.

Like most forms of insurance, it is something we hope we will never need, but the value becomes clear if we ever have to use it.

You should be aware that whilst we insure the building, it is your responsibility to obtain cover for your own household belongings as we are not able to replace these for you if

they are lost in a major incident.

If you already have insurance but want to make sure that you are fully covered, don't be afraid to call your service provider and ask questions.

Contents insurance can cover replacing personal belongings in your home (and typically outbuildings) if they are damaged, destroyed, or even stolen.

Examples of items covered include: washing machines, fridges, phones, tablets, laptops, televisions, and jewellery. You can even insure personal possessions such as clothing. Exclusions do apply so ensure you get advice to understand your policy.

Check out moneysavingexpert.com for advice on getting the best value and read some handy FAQs. There is also content insurance providers that specialise in insurance for social housing tenants such as Thistle Insurance Scheme, visit www.thistlemyhome.co.uk for more information. They offer flexible payment options, and low minimum sums can be insured.

The risks of not having insurance are high – if catastrophe strikes, there may be no way of replacing appliances, tech, or a number of other household goods without paying a premium.

We hope you sign up soon!

Safety - smoke, heat and carbon detectors

Frequent testing of smoke, heat, and carbon monoxide detectors is required to ensure they are functioning correctly; alarms should be tested after:

- installation and once a month thereafter
- prolonged absence from your home (e.g. if you have been on holiday)
- repair or servicing of the systems elements or household electrical works

The fire service offer a free home safety visit to all households, for those who meet any of the following criteria: over 50, smoke, have mobility issues, live alone or use medical oxygen we urge you to arrange a visit so that they can advise you on an escape plan should this be needed, and offer advice on how to live at home safely.

How to test your smoke, heat or carbon monoxide alarm:

Check that the green LED power indicator is on continuously; if there are green, yellow or red flashing lights refer to the manual which accompanies your unit or contact us

1. Press the test/hush button for up to 10 seconds to ensure the alarm sounds (the initial press will alarm the fire sound pattern, the second will alarm the carbon monoxide sound pattern)
2. The alarm will stop when the button is released
3. If you have an interconnected alarm, test the first unit by pressing the test/hush button for 10 seconds, all alarms should sound within 10 seconds and after releasing the test/hush button the local alarm will stop immediately and the interconnected alarms will be heard for up to 3-4 seconds

Check the battery back-up at least once every year

1. Turn off the mains power at the distribution board and check that the green indicator light is flashing (1 flash every 48 seconds) to indicate the alarm is on back up battery power
2. Press test/hush button for 10 seconds and ensure the alarm sounds loudly, monitor the alarm over a three-minute period for any fault chirps or yellow LED fault indicators; refer to the manual which accompanies your unit or contact us
3. If you are happy with operation of the alarm on battery back-up turn the mains supply back on

Cleaning your detectors

Clean your alarm by using the narrow nozzle of your Hoover to remove dust, insects etc and regularly wipe the



outside of the unit with a clean damp cloth (do not use cleaning agents, bleach or polishes), then dry thoroughly and do not paint your alarm.

Carbon Monoxide Detectors

Many people are unaware of the devastating effects of carbon monoxide poisoning. Carbon monoxide is an extremely dangerous invisible, odourless and tasteless gas which binds itself to haemoglobin in red blood cells preventing them from transporting oxygen around the body.

Common household appliances such as gas boilers, wood, gas and coal fires can produce carbon monoxide if they are not installed properly, are faulty or poorly maintained.

What to do if your alarm activates

NEVER IGNORE A CARBON MONOXIDE ALARM ACTIVATION

1. Open as many doors and windows as possible to allow fresh air to circulate and reduce the concentration of carbon monoxide.
2. Turn off and stop using all the appliances that you suspect could be causing the carbon monoxide leak
3. Get everybody, including pets, out of the property as quickly as possible and leave doors and windows open
4. If anyone is suffering from the symptoms or effects of carbon monoxide poisoning seek medical advice immediately
5. Contact Albyn Housing immediately and let any adjoining neighbours know about the alarm, carbon monoxide can seep through walls floors and ceilings
6. Don't go back into the property until it has been properly checked and verified safe to enter by a certified professional; don't use the affected appliance until it has been checked and certified as being safe by an approved engineer.

The alarm will stop once the carbon monoxide has cleared; it is vital that the source of the carbon monoxide is established and appropriate remedials done.

Cold weather precautions

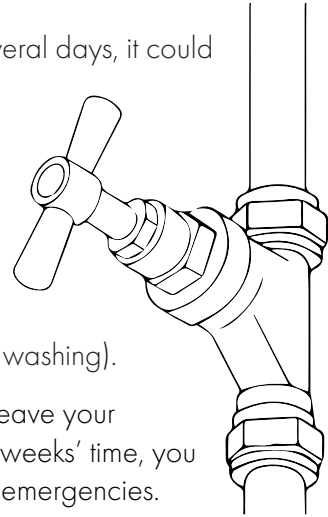
Keep warm

In order to avoid burst pipes try to keep your house warm day and night. If you choose to only have the heating on downstairs, leave room doors open to allow heat to circulate. Burst pipes can be avoided by keeping your radiators at the frost setting, so please consider this if you will be away during cold spells.

Check on attic spaces, especially if water and storage tanks are there. Make sure insulation which should cover pipes and tanks has not been accidentally moved.

You should never ignore a minor water leak. A small leak may be okay overnight, but if left for several days, it could cause major damage within your home. If a leak happens, these are the steps you should take:

1. Turn off the water supply. The stop valve is usually under the sink.
2. Switch off the electricity at the mains.
3. Call your local Customer Services team at Albyn to report the emergency.
4. Switch off central heating systems. If you have a solid fuel fire, close down the damper and let the fire die out. Do not attempt to drain down the boiler unless the fire has gone out.
5. Use a bucket or basin to catch any water leaking from the burst.
6. Open all taps to sinks and bath (if possible, collect water in the bath for flushing the WC and washing).



If you go away in the winter, please be advised that you should take care to drain your pipes or leave your radiators on the frost setting to prevent damage to your property. If you go away for more than 2 weeks' time, you should let the Society know you will be away and where a key can be obtained in case of emergencies.

The society is not responsible for any damage caused to your personal belongings by frost damage or burst pipe or tank. Have you insured your household contents? See page 8 for more information.

Icy and snowy conditions

Where we grit and clear snow

Wherever possible, we have had our roads adopted by the Highland Council so they provide gritting service for you. Of those estates which have un-adopted roads, we try to prioritise those which have a majority of elderly or disabled people for gritting and snow clearing, otherwise we provide grit bins and grit for our tenant's use. The level of service provided will be reflected in the service charge that you pay.

If you are uncertain whether your street is adopted, or if we clear it for you, you will find helpful information in your tenants' handbook or tenancy agreement. If you would like more information call our main number for advice.

How to clear snow and grit paths safely

Don't be put off clearing snow or gritting paths. If you clear snow and grit pathways effectively you will be doing a service to your community.

Remember to check on less able and vulnerable neighbours as they may need assistance to clear their paths and driveways.

- Clear snow and ice early in the day. Less compact snow is easier to move.
- Use salt – not water. Pathways become dangerous if they are allowed to refreeze.
- Use sand or ash to provide grit. Remember to use extra on steps or where it is steep.
- Avoid piling snow over drains to prevent flooding when it melts.
- Pile snow away from driveways and turning points to allow free access for vehicles.

Let us know if grit bins are empty or damaged.



Emergency Repairs

My Rights

Albyn Housing has a legal duty to maintain your home to ensure it is safe for you to live in. On our website you can check out the Tenant's Handbook which details repairs you are responsible for as well as the work we will carry out.

You have the right for small, urgent repairs to be carried out by us within set timescales.

When you report a repair, we'll:

- tell you if it's covered under the Right to Repair scheme
- tell you your rights
- let you know the date the repair will be completed.



My responsibilities

It is important that you inform us straight away when repairs need done and that you allow us access to carry out those repairs. You are responsible for ensuring your home is maintained internally and kept in good order.

It is very important that you inform us immediately and that you allow our contractors access to your property. When a repair is completed promptly there is less disruption to you and less cost to us. Lower costs keep rents low and give us more funds to upgrade and maintain your home.

If you have oil or gas heating, you can contact Heatcare Oil and Gas directly to report the issue you are experiencing on 01343 842042.

Damage where you are responsible

If you have damaged your property through negligence or misuse we may carry out the repair and recharge the costs to you. We will provide you with a copy of the contractors invoice and will charge you the actual costs of the work.

Our day-to-day reactive repairs service is contracted out to local tradesman in the areas we operate in.

Timescales

We aim to have all repairs to our properties completed as quickly as possible, however, the time it takes to complete a repair depends on a range of factors including:

- nature of the repair
- if parts are needed and available
- the weather (for external repairs)
- the availability of access to your property
- the urgency of the repair.
- In order to ensure that repairs are prioritised we classify out repairs as emergency, urgent or routine.

Emergency repairs

We aim to have a contractor with you within 8 hours of your call if it is deemed an emergency. They will carry out a 'make safe' repair and further work may be needed.

A repair is classed as an emergency;

- When your home is insecure, for example broken windows or damaged door/door locks.
- Where there is danger to life and limb, for example your home is unsafe after a storm or fire.
- Where repair is necessary to prevent further damage, for example flooding, burst pipes or serious roof leaks.
- Where there is a complete loss of heat or power supply to your home, excluding area wide power cuts.

Emergency Call-out Arrangements

If you have an emergency at any time of day or night please call: 0300 323 0990.

The emergency out-of-hours service is provided to deal with emergency repairs outwith our normal office hours.

Urgent

A repair is classed as urgent where any substantial delay in attending to the repair may result in further damage to the property, for example water penetration causing damage to ceilings or walls.

We aim to have 'urgent' repairs completed within 2 working days of being reported.

Routine

Any repair which does not class as emergency or urgent is classed as routine.

We aim to have routine repairs completed within 10 working days of the repair being reported.

With the exception of emergencies, all our repairs are carried out during the working day and the contractor will arrange an appointment with you.

Business plan update for year 2

In “normal” years, we would provide a short update on our progress with our Business Plan and review our strategic objectives.

However, the many challenges globally have forced us to rethink our strategic view and condense our priorities for the next few years.

We are in unprecedented times. This is being felt particularly within the housing sector, and we face a challenging few years ahead. Many issues have beset the sector, and we have had to be an agile organisation to pivot direction and respond to these many crises, including but not limited to:

- The war in Ukraine and subsequent impact on fuel prices, and resulting fuel poverty.
- Continuing impacts on the supply chain due to Brexit
- Post Covid service recovery
- Cost of Living crisis
- Continual increase in interest rates affecting our variable debt.
- The Cost of Living (Tenant Protection) Act 2022, and the associated rent cap which now affects our Mid-Market Rent portfolio.
- Political uncertainty with resignation of the First Minister, and what that could mean for changing priorities for Government and a potential cabinet reshuffle.

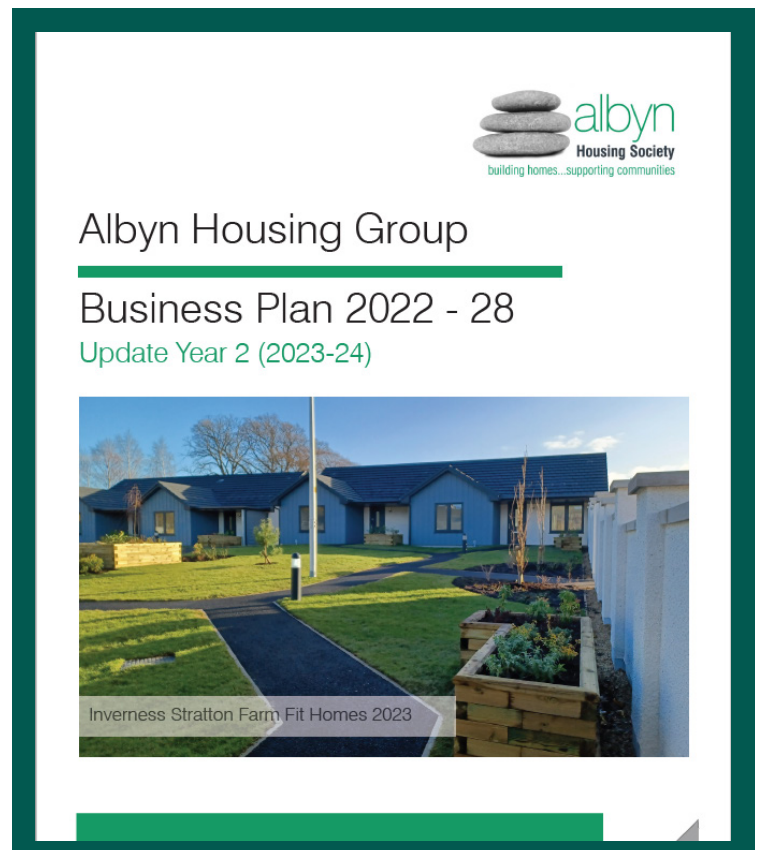
However, as an organisation with a committed Board and staff team, we are truly resilient and are prepared for the challenges ahead.

Our values include being adaptable, and the many factors that have faced us over the past few years have not changed our passion and commitment to our customers, and to the Highlands. In the past year we have:

- Embraced change wholeheartedly and improved our service delivery and culture.
- Implemented a new housing management system – Civica CX.
- Developed our People Strategy – focussed on our goal of Putting People First.
- Carried out a stock condition survey and developed an asset management strategy.
- Redesigned our Leadership team to support our managers in excelling everyday.
- Redesigned our customer and property services so they are easier for our customers to access and form a single cohesive function

- Rebuilt our reputation by working closely with partners and stakeholders to encourage a deeper understanding of the housing association business model, and pulling together joint funding for our customers, especially in relation to fuel and food poverty.
- Developed new ways of engagement with our customers and established Performance Monitoring Groups
- Supported customers through the Cost-of-Living crisis by disbursing over £300,000 of internal grant funding (through our Energy and Trust funds), and from both external Fuel Insecurity Support Funds and Winter Hardship Funds.
- Reviewed the strategic direction of our subsidiary HRIL.
- Established an expert advisory board to support the continuing development of our Fit Homes sensor technology, and lead the way in supporting vulnerable customers in the Highlands.

You can read our updated Business Plan for 2023/24 on our website at www.albynhousing.org.uk/library



Solar Thermal and Photo Voltaic Panels

There are 2 different types of Solar panels which The Society has installed on some of our properties. They are Solar Thermal and Photo Voltaic (PV). They both harness the power of the sun to help reduce your energy bills, just in different ways. They will both work all year round, and their efficiencies are affected by the weather, the season and the time of day. So, what are these different panels and how do they work?

Solar Thermal System

The solar thermal panels contain tubes which are filled with a heat-transfer fluid. This fluid absorbs heat directly from the sun. The now hot fluid is piped directly into a sealed space (called a thermal collector) contained within your hot water cylinder, which warms up the water in your hot water cylinder from cold to warm. The now cold heat-transfer fluid is then pumped back up to the solar panel and the cycle begins again. Electricity is therefore only required to top up the temperature of the water in the cylinder from warm to hot, rather than to heat the whole cylinder from cold. Therefore making it cheaper to heat your hot water.

Will solar thermal panels only work on sunny days?

The panels work during daylight hours, they work based on work based on converting energy from the sun into heat. They work best on sunny days however due to the efficiency of the heat-transfer fluid you will still receive benefit on cloudy days.

Will solar thermal panels help save me money?

Sunlight is free, therefore, using the heat generated by the sunlight to pre-heat your hotwater cylinder will reduce the amount of electricity that you have to pay for.

To take advantage of the system you need to ensure that the pump is on and use your hotwater as normal.

Can I earn back money from solar thermal panels?

No, this type of panel does not generate electricity, it only generates heat which is directly used in your home to assist in heating your hot water. You will benefit from the reduction in energy used to heat your hot water.

Photo Voltaic System

The PV systems panels are covered with photovoltaic cells. These cells turn the sun's energy into electricity which (with the help of an inverter) you can use to help power your electrical devices in your home. You can plug in appliances and switch on and your system will automatically use the free electricity you have generated, if you haven't generated

enough, it will switch back and use electricity from the grid when needed. Any power which you have not used is fed back into the grid.

Will the PV panels only work on sunny days?

The panels work during daylight hours, they work based on light rather than heat. These cells don't need direct sunlight to work, they can still generate some electricity on cloudy days. However, the sunnier the day, the more power is generated.

Will the PV panel help save me money?

Sunlight is free, therefore, using the power generated by the sunlight will reduce the amount of electricity that you have to pay for. The panels are generating power when the red light in the generation meter "pulses".

What do I need to do to make sure that I use the power generated by the panels?

- If you are at home all day, use electrical appliances during this time.
- Stagger appliance use, so that each appliance is benefitting from the free power generated.
- Consider cooking your main meal at lunchtime so that your appliances are working during daylight hours.
- Keep an eye on the weather and the weather forecast. If the forecast for today is dull and cloudy and tomorrow is for sun, then leave your washing until the next morning and ironing until the afternoon.
- On very dull and cloudy days, it is likely that most of the PV power will be used by what is called the "base" load, i.e.: running your fridge, freezer etc.
- Plug all rechargeable items during daylight hours when you are at home e.g.: mobile phones, electric toothbrushes, drills, laptops.
- Please note that you cannot store any electricity generated by the PV panels for using later. Any electricity that is not used is then exported back to the national grid for others to use.

Can I earn back money from electricity I don't use?

Unfortunately, the scheme for applying for Feed-in-tariff payments has now ended, meaning that any PV panels commissioned after March 2019 are no longer eligible to apply for the feed-in-tariff scheme. You will still benefit from using the energy created from the PV panels for your day-to-day electric usage if you follow the guidelines above.

<https://www.evoenergy.co.uk/technology/how-solar-panels-work/>

Compliments and Complaints

We welcome complaints, comments and compliments in order to ensure that you have the opportunity to shape the service we provide. Contact us in the usual way - by emailing office@albynhousing.org.uk or calling 0300 323 0990. We also feel it's important that we report to you how we are performing. Our latest complaints figures can be found on our website at www.albynhousing.org.uk/library. You can also request the latest figures by calling us on the number above.

What is a complaint?

Any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of, or the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.

What happens when I have complained?

We will always tell you who is dealing with your complaint. Our complaints procedure has two stages.

Stage 1: Frontline response

We aim to respond to complaints quickly. This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong, or immediate action to resolve the problem. If you choose to, you can take your complaint to stage 2. We have a maximum of 5 days to provide a full response to your stage 1 complaint.

Stage 2: Investigation

Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint: where the customer remains dissatisfied after stage 1 and those that clearly require investigation, and so are handled directly at this stage. We have a maximum of 20 days to provide you with a full response to your stage 2 complaint.

Below we've included some of the compliments our teams have received recently.

"I want to thank you for all the support you have provided to [tenant] thus far. I know this has had a huge positive impact on him and I know he appreciates it."
Praise for our Tenancy Sustainment Team.

"Keep up the good work everyone"
Praise for All of Albyn.

"I just wanted to thank you for the fence. It is absolutely beautiful!
The fence is so much better than I was expecting it to be. My son absolutely loves our garden now. Thank you so much. I really appreciate your help with making this happen."
Praise for our Tenancy Sustainment Team.

"She has been so diligent with her work ethic and kept me informed from day one of the progress ie I'm not good in stressful situations. You are a star"
Praise for Margaret in our Highland Residential Team

"Thank you very much for [tenant] and her family for the allocation of a four-bedroom house in Kirkhill. This larger home will make such a difference to their family's living. I do appreciate your help."
Praise for our Tenancy Operations Team

Do you wish to make a complaint or provide a compliment?

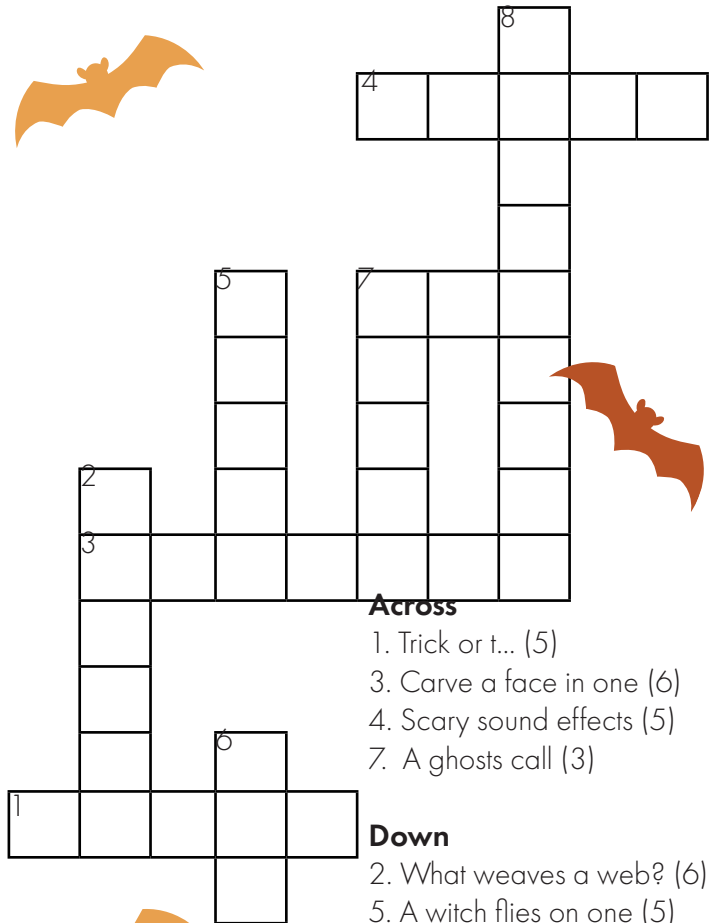
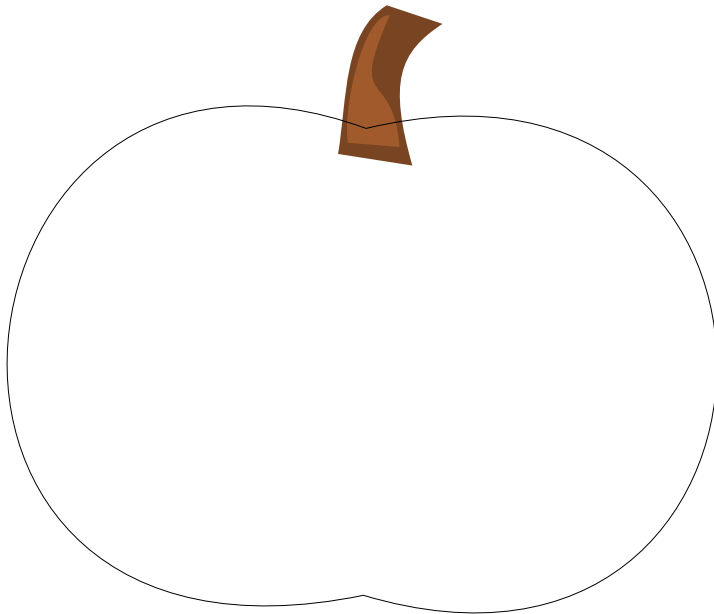
Get in touch in a way that is convenient for you:

- Call us on 0300 323 0990
- Email us at office@albynhousing.org.uk
- Write to us at Albyn Housing Society, 98-104 High Street, Invergordon, IV18 0DL



Kids Page

Spooky Crossword Puzzle



Across

1. Trick or t... (5)
3. Carve a face in one (6)
4. Scary sound effects (5)
7. A ghosts call (3)

Down

2. What weaves a web? (6)
5. A witch flies on one (5)
6. Lives in a cave (3)
7. B... as night (5)
8. The spooky celebration (9)

Colour and draw a silly face on the pumpkin

Time for an autumn scavenger hunt!

Can you find all of the items listed below?

Acorn 	Red leaf 	Gloves 	A hot drink
Pinecone 	Mushroom 	Blanket 	Pumpkin
Jumper 	Umbrella 	Pile of leaves 	Wellie boots

Call us on 0300 323 0990. Select **1** for repairs, **2** to pay your rent, and **3** for everything else.



Invergordon Office

98 - 104 High Street
Invergordon, Ross-shire IV18 0DL

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Join the
conversation

