



Fyne news

Autumn 2014

A Fyne Homes publication for tenants, residents & the wider community

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June 2014	Miss N Lindsay	Rothsay
July 2014	Mrs A Sutherland	Rothsay
August 2014	Mr & Mrs A Campbell	Cairndow



Prohibition of Smoking in Certain Premises

Residential accommodation is exempt from the smoking ban. However during regular property visits concern has been raised that some residents are smoking in the common close, stairs and landings. Whilst these areas are not caught by legislation Fyne Homes would ask smokers, and their visitors, to consider other residents in the property and ensure that the areas are well ventilated to eradicate the smell of smoke.

Smoking in the common close and stairs also carries a fire risk and we would ask all smokers to ensure their cigarette remains are safely and suitably disposed of and not discarded in the common areas.

Fyne Homes would politely ask tenants/residents to refrain from smoking in lifts and the common close areas.



Online Newsletters/ Annual Report

Our newsletters and annual reports are always published on our website; however we also send a hard copy to our tenants and stakeholders.



£50 Cash

In considering our responsibility to the environment together with printing, in-house administration and postage costs we are giving you the opportunity to receive these documents electronically in the future. If you would like to take up this option, please log onto www.fynehomes.org.uk and complete the proforma on the publications page.

All respondents who choose to receive future publications in this manner will be entered into a **prize draw for two £50 Cash Prizes**. Closing date 31st October 2014



Complaints Performance



We value complaints and use the information from them to help us improve our services to you. The table below details complaints information for the period April to June 2014.

Our Complaints Procedure is available from any of our offices and also from the Tenant's Information section of the website. No complaints progressed to the Ombudsman stage during the period.

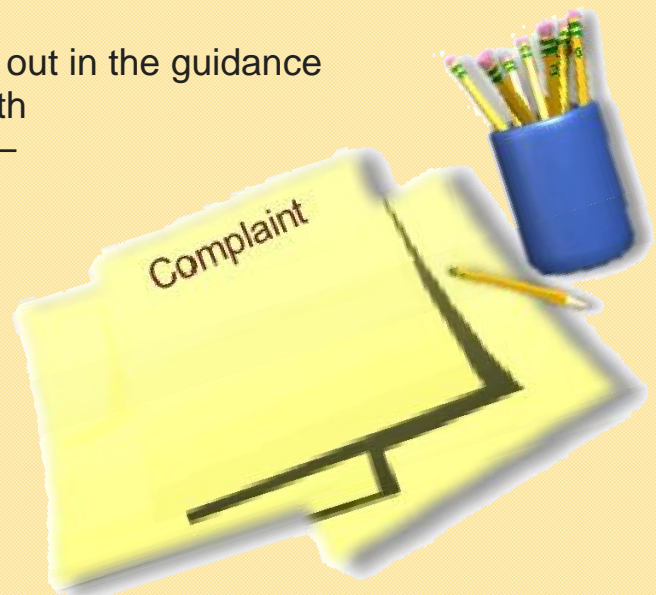
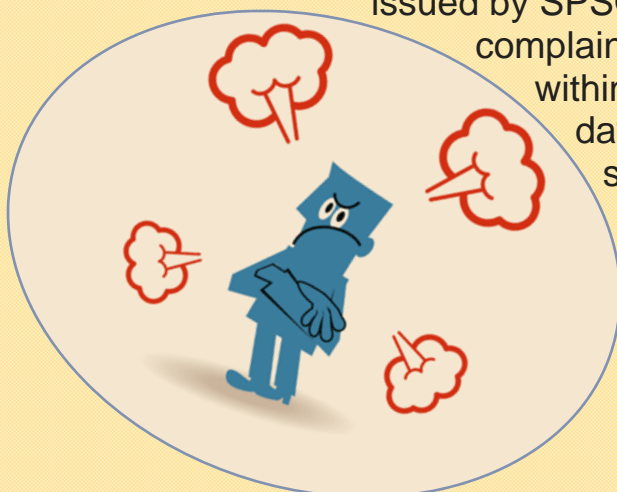
	No of Stage 1 Complaints		No of Stage 2 Complaints		Cumulative for year			
					Stage 1		Stage 2	
Equality related issues	0		0		0		0	
Other issues	19		5		19		5	
Total Number of Complaints	19		5		19		5	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Responded to in full	19	100	5	100	19	100	5	100
Upheld	17	89	1	20	17	89	1	20
Responded to within SPSO timescales	18	95	4	80	18	95	4	80

Definitions

Responded to in full -Where the landlord has either met the service user's expectations or, where this is not appropriate, provided a full explanation of the landlord's position.

Complaint upheld -Where the landlord considers the case put to them and decides in favour of the complainant.

Target timescale -The target timescales as set out in the guidance issued by SPSO for dealing with complaints is: 1st stage – within 5 working days ,2nd stage – within 20 working days.



High Fuel Bills

A household is said to be in fuel poverty if it needs to spend more than 10% of its income on fuel to maintain a reasonable standard of warmth.

How can you combat Fuel Poverty?

Implement Energy Saving Practices- e.g. using radiator controls, using heating controls –turning down the thermostat by 1 degree can reduce your fuel bill by 10%, use low energy light bulbs, draught proof your doors and windows, switch off appliances on standby- they can use up to 85% of their power whilst on standby, choose A rated domestic appliances, take showers instead of baths, only wash full loads of washing in your washing machine.

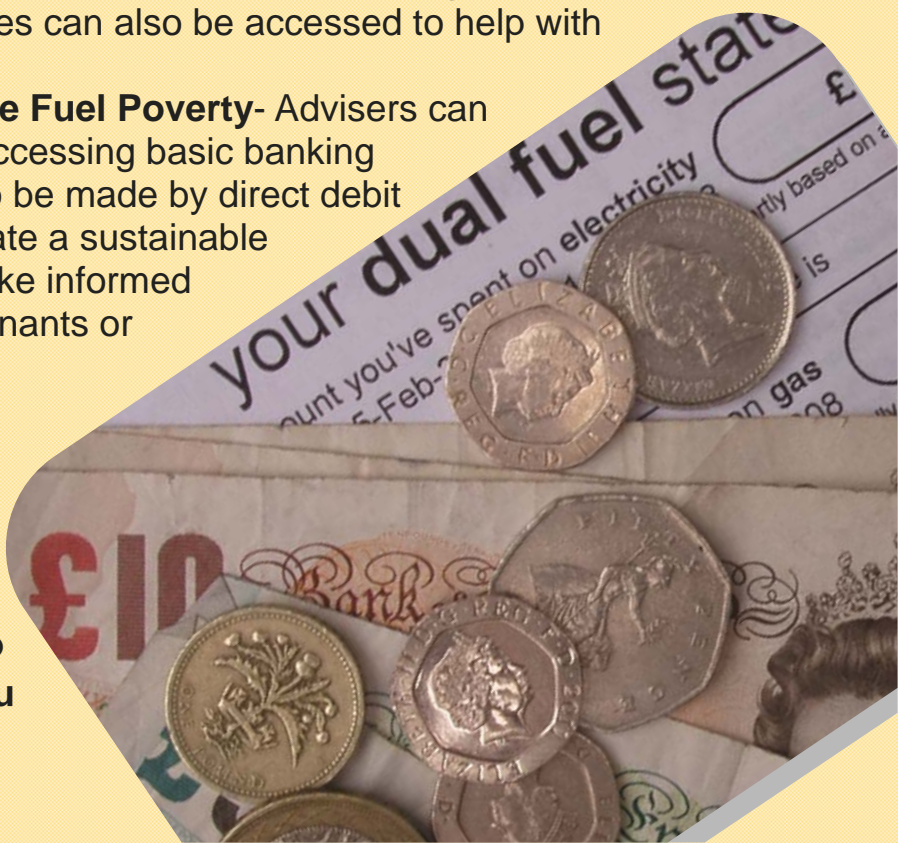
Maximise your income- ensure you are getting all the Welfare Benefits you are entitled to, this could include: Housing Benefit, Job Seekers Allowance, Employment Support Allowance, Personal Independence Payment, Disability Living Allowance, Crisis or Community Care Grants from the Scottish Welfare Fund, Carers Allowance, Income Support, Council Tax Reduction, Discretionary Housing Payments, Cold Weather Payments, Winter Fuel Payments, Pension Credits, Tax Credits, Bereavement, Maternity or Paternity Benefits.

Change your Energy Supplier or Tariff – generally there is some money to be saved by changing supplier, however, the bigger savings are to be made by ensuring you are on the correct tariff for your heating system e.g. people with storage heating should be on Economy Seven tariff to take advantage of cheaper electricity during the night. Ali Energy or Bute Advice can help tenants to decide whether it is beneficial to switch supplier or tariff, if you wish a referral please contact Margo on 0845 6077117.

Access Grants- there are various grants and schemes available to help with fuel costs or to provide help purchasing new white goods e.g. Warm home Discount Scheme, Winter Fuel Allowance, Cold Weather Payment, British Gas Energy Trust & The Scottish Welfare Fund- various charities can also be accessed to help with fuel bills.

Increase Budgeting Skills to Reduce Fuel Poverty- Advisers can assist tenants to see the benefits of accessing basic banking facilities, this may enable payments to be made by direct debit which generally creates a saving, create a sustainable budget, minimise expenditure and make informed choices. This can be useful for new tenants or those who have had a change in circumstances e.g. redundancy, bereavement, and ill health.

If you wish any more information on the above please contact Margo on 0845 6077117, she will be able to provide further information or do a referral to ALIENERGY to help you access the help you need.



AGM Report



Fyne Homes held its AGM on 10th September 2014 at the Discovery Centre, Rothesay. The members attending received a full report on the Association's activities from Fyne Homes Chairman T McKay and Chief Executive C Renfrew.

Key highlights included:

- Completion of the final phase of our Lochgilphead High School development. The three phases provided 101 units, the largest the Association has ever undertaken and the largest scheme undertaken by a housing association outwith Glasgow and Edinburgh. The development was officially opened by Margaret Burgess MSP in May of this year.
- £1,969,249 spent maintaining and upgrading stock
- 94.37% of the housing stock meets the Scottish Housing Quality Standard
- Arrears of 1.7% against a target 2% - an excellent performance by the housing team in face of welfare benefit reforms. The figure includes former arrears and if just current arrears the figure would have been 0.7%.
- Voids of 2.1% against a target of 1%. The void levels have been increasing over recent years due to there being a lot of tenemental stock in Bute and Cowal which is difficult to re-let and the Association will focus on this area to try and reduce this figure.
- 87.8% were satisfied with the overall service provided by Fyne Homes (*Scottish average 87.8%*)
- A healthy surplus of £1.024M, this enabled £737,000 of property improvements to be carried out during the year

2013/14 was a year of great progress for the Association with 3 successful public hearings during the year for Craginish Glebe in Ardfarn, St Cuthbert's in Dunoon and a wind turbine project at Glenbarr in Kintyre which will see construction of 3 wind turbines. A lot of work will be required to get this project to the operational stage however it has the potential to generate in the region of £740k per annum profit for the next 20 years. All profits would be put back into the community in some shape or form split between Fyne Homes for affordable housing, Fyne Future for employment projects and the remainder to local Glenbarr community for projects they wish to develop. There were no nominations for Committee and we currently have 12 members and 3 vacancies.

Mr Robert Reid decided to retire from Fyne Homes Management Committee after more than 50 years dedicated voluntary service to the Housing Association. Unfortunately Mr Reid was unable to attend the meeting that day and a formal presentation recognising his service will be made in due course.



WATER SAFETY



Water borne bacteria can be found in most domestic water systems and there is a very slim chance that these may result in water borne diseases such as Legionella occurring if the domestic water system is not kept clean. There are ways that the slight risk of such diseases occurring can be further reduced in your home by following preventative measures such as:

- ☞ When you have been away for a few days, it is advisable to flush out the hot and cold water pipes with really hot or really cold water. Whilst you are running the taps prevent any misting and keep the room well ventilated.
- ☞ If your home has been empty for a longer period of time i.e. over two weeks then then the hot and cold water taps need to be run as above and the outlet of the taps themselves may need to be cleaned to remove any biofilm that may have built up.
- ☞ Showers heads should also be flushed out and disinfected on a regular basis (quarterly) and if a shower has not been used for a long period it should be run with hot water for about 5 minutes and the room should be well ventilated. Preferably you should not be in the room whilst this is being done.
- ☞ If you have a garden hose it is important that you completely drain it down after using it so that water does not stagnate in the pipe when it is not being used.



Please contact Technical Services on 08456077117 if you require any clarification on how to undertake any of the water safety measures mentioned above.

Are you still paying the Bedroom Tax?

As of August 2014 Argyll and Bute Council has changed their policy on Discretionary Housing Payments which means that all tenants affected by Bedroom Tax should be able to get help.

In order to apply for help you need to contact Housing Benefit on 01546 505512 and advise them that you are affected by the bedroom tax and wish to claim a Discretionary Housing Payment, they may ask for your Housing Benefit Claim number which you will find on the top right hand side of any benefit notification letters you have.

Alternatively we can help you to complete a form to send to Housing Benefit, just call Margo on 0845 6077117.



Below is an article from the Buteman website that also appeared in the paper in August—Thank you to the Buteman for letting us re-use it and for publicising some of Fyne Homes good works.



A new exhibit has gone on permanent display at Bute Museum in Rothesay - a 'knocking stone' which could date back to prehistoric times and is thought to have been originally used on one of the island's farms.

The stone - a kind of large mortar used, along with a stone pounder or wooden mallet, to de-husk grain for human consumption - was put into storage by local housing association Fyne Homes more than a decade ago

after being found during ground clearance work at the site of the former Foley House Hotel in Rothesay, but has only recently been rediscovered in the association's works yard in the town.

It was delivered to the museum this week by Fyne Homes workers Charles Tritschler and Douglas McDade and has gone on display just inside the front door of the premises in Stuart Street.

by Craig Borland

news@buteman.com



BE WARM AND BE SAFE

As the colder weather approaches Fyne Homes would like to remind tenants that the use of paraffin, Calor gas or LPG heaters is not permitted within your home unless Fyne Homes has provided them for a short term in an emergency situation.



Paraffin, Calor gas or LPG heaters as well as being a Health and Safety risk also contribute to the build-up of condensation within the home and promote dampness and the growth of mould on tenants belonging and the fabric of the building.

The storage of paraffin, Calor gas or LPG containers or other explosive or inflammable substances are also not permitted in the house or common parts, areas or facilities of your house for Health and Safety reasons.

Remember be warm but be safe!



Be the BeST
as part of

Fyne Homes Better Services
Team

The Scottish Housing Regulator has introduced a self-assessment approach to how social landlords measure their progress towards achieving the Scottish Social Housing Charter's outcomes.

Fyne Homes would like to invite tenants to work with us on assessing our performance and annually report on our performance against the Charter's outcomes.

Tenants are invited to become part of the Better Services Team (BeST) where you will examine the association's performance figures and give feedback and recommendations to our Staff & Committee.

If you are interested in becoming part of the BeST team please contact Tracy Shields, Housing Manager on 0845 607 7117 or email tshields@fynehomes.co.uk



KEEP
CALM
AND

welcome to the
BEST TEAM



Fyne Homes/NHS Nursery Nurse appointment

Fyne Homes and the NHS have recently appointed a Nursery Nurse in a collaborative approach supporting the Scottish Government's GIRFEC (Getting it Right for Every Child) and Early Years Collaborative programmes.

The post will cover Cowal and Bute areas and we are delighted to announce that Tracy Rooney has joined us to fulfil this role. Tracy will focus on supporting Fyne Homes and tenants who have children age 0-5 years old with a range of things aimed at helping young families.

To find out more about GIRFEC or the Early Years Collaborative go to:



<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People>

If you would like to arrange for Tracy to visit you or to find out more about how she can help you can contact her or your Housing Officer on 0845 607 7117



Fountains Return In July this year a decorative fountain was returned to its original home in Port Bannatyne after an absence of 52 years. The fountain originally stood outside the Strain Hall and was removed following the demolition of the hall in 1962. It was latterly sited at the gardens on the corner of Montague Street / High Street and removed from there when landscaping works were undertaken in 2013. Funding from the William Woodhouse Strain Trust was used towards the refurbishment costs and the fountain now sits proudly in front of the houses in Port Bannatyne which were built by William Woodhouse Strain Housing Association in the early 1960's on the land bequeathed to the Council by a Glasgow Solicitor, the late William Woodhouse Strain.



NEW ON-LINE APPLICATION PROCESS and NEW ALLOCATION POLICY

As of 1st October 2014 you are now able to apply for social housing on-line. You can access the application through www.homeargyll.com and follow the links to social housing.

You will be required to complete a Housing Options questionnaire prior to your application which will provide you with an action plan for re housing which will best support your needs and requirements.

This also ties in with the launch of our new HOME Argyll allocations policy which starts on 1st October and all applicants who have re-registered on the new system will be pointed according to the new policy and made aware of their new points totals in the near future.

If you are interested in applying but do not have a computer please do not hesitate to contact the office or one of the HOME Argyll partners for further assistance.



YOUR RIGHT TO BUY

A proposal to end Right to Buy (RTB) for all tenants of social housing in Scotland was included in a Housing Bill that was passed by the Scottish Parliament on 25th June 2014.



Right to Buy will end for all tenants in Scotland in two years on a date in 2016. The exact date is not known yet, however at present the Scottish Government advises that Right to Buy will not end any sooner than August 2016.

If, for example, the two years starts on 31 August 2014, you would have until 31 August 2016 to apply to buy your home. The time you will have to buy your home before Right to Buy ends is called the notice period.



You can find more information on right to buy on the Scottish Government website <http://www.scotland.gov.uk> or alternatively you can contact Fyne Homes on 0845 607 7117 or email us on postmaster@fynehomes.co.uk

Energy Saving Free Prize Draw!

We would be grateful if you could complete and return the survey to us in the FREEPOST envelope provided **OR** you can complete the survey online at :

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/FHEHS>

copy the address into your browser and it will take you to the survey. We all know that the cost of heating and lighting our homes is only going to increase, Fyne Homes would like to be able to offer tenants advice and assistance in reducing their energy use and hopefully, their bills. The enclosed survey will help guide Fyne Homes on how to deliver this service to meet their tenants needs.

Energy Saving prizes include – Energy Monitors, Stand-by Busters, Thermometers & Low Energy Light bulbs.



Number 1 - Energy Saving Tip - Turn your thermostat down. Reducing your room temperature by 1°C could cut your heating bills by up to 10 percent.

Fyne Homes Employability project, assisting unemployed people in to work.

The experience I gained through my placement with Campbeltown Youth Café has led me on the career path of working with young people'. Jimi – who now works for Argyll and Bute Council, Education and Children's Services.

Tackling unemployment is a priority for our communities and Fyne Homes Employability Project has been established to assist unemployed people to gain skills and move into longer term employment. Funding from Scottish Government People and Communities has supported 38 jobs working with community based organisations including; Kintyre



Amenity Trust, Callums Cabin, Kintyre Recycling, ShopperAide and HELP. Feedback from employed trainees and employing organisations has been positive with 65% of participants moving on to longer term employment or further education.

Fyne Homes, promoting health and wellbeing in partnership with Community Gardens.

Fyne Homes has worked with community food producers over the past 6 years to promote affordable healthy produce as well as recognising the benefits for wider health and wellbeing from volunteering for people from all ages and abilities.

Community Gardens in Campbeltown and Bute are currently recruiting volunteers, offering an opportunity to learn new skills and enjoy working as part of a team. Its not just gardening tasks either, there are opportunities to assist with a range of activities, including;

'I was unemployed for quite a while before I started working here. I really love it and hope to get a full time job'. Jamie, Kintyre Recycling.



'I am really happy that the supported placement that I had with Shopper-Aide has now progressed to a 5 year contract'. Joanne, Shopper-Aide.

Events, Marketing and Children's activities.

For more information Rebecca Russell, Tel:

01586 55 0044 Mob: 077952 94317

e mail:

rrussell@inspiralba.org.uk

The support KEG receives from Fyne Homes is invaluable. The Community Horticulture project supports Campbeltown Community Orchard and Garden to provide employment and volunteering opportunities, which are a vital part of the work we do at CCOG which benefits the garden and the community as a whole'. Tracy Chambers, Campbeltown Community Orchard & Garden.





Fyne Futures has had a very busy summer, and are now looking forward to the coming few months, which if as busy as the last few will be wonderful.

Here's a wee resume on what's been happening:



Our new furniture shop "ReStyle" opened in Montague Street. This has been a fantastic addition to our re-use programme. We are now "Revolve" accredited and will keep working hard to maintain the high standards

that are required to be Revolve accredited. We have been very busy with deliveries and collections and we hope this is a trend that continues. If you have any furniture that you no longer have a use for, please contact us on 01700 503181.

The recycling centre has had a few challenges!! One of our vehicles has had a lot of problems for several years now and has totally given up, so this has led to reconfiguring the way we do kerbside collections. You might be aware that your pick up is at a different time or happening in a different way, but please bear with us, your recycling will be collected. Thank you



Bute Produce, has had an amazing summer in regard to crops, the strawberries, kiwi and soft fruits were delicious, as were our very own Bute potatoes, of which we have three varieties: Pride of Bute; Beauty of Bute and Marquess of Bute. Ronnie our senior Horticulturist has also been studying during

the summer and completed his teacher/assessor training on Practical Horticulture and we plan to be running courses at the garden soon, as well as seed guardian courses and workshops. Totally Grown on Bute Bags, and Green Boxes are available on a weekly basis and we still continue to have our weekly stall at the Health Centre on a Monday morning, either that or from Bute Produce where they can be purchased directly from the garden Monday to Friday 9-4pm.



Finally, Car Bute has had a busy summer, with our regular members and visitors like. It is wonderful when visitors take one of the cars, because it allows so many to see the beauty that Bute has to offer. The car at Wemyss Bay has also been quite busy too, assisting members who need use of a car on

the mainland. And, as we go to press, Car Bute can announce that they have just taken ownership of the latest car in their fleet an automatic Toyota Yaris Hybrid; this is our half way step towards electric motoring and will help the environment so much, reducing emissions. For more details contact us on 01700 503181.

ACCESS FOR REPAIRS/MISSED APPOINTMENTS



“No access” visits are a waste of staff and contractors time and can be costly to the Association.

Access arrangements should always be made when reporting a repair, however, if due to unforeseen circumstances these require to be changed by us we will always endeavour to contact tenants and advise them of any changes.

Likewise, should you require to change access arrangements we would be grateful if you would advise us as early as possible in order to make alternative arrangements.



ANNUAL GAS SERVICING & SAFETY CHECK

As your landlord, Fyne Homes has a legal responsibility to carry out an annual safety check on all gas appliances owned by us.

Near the time the annual safety check is due to your property our gas servicing contractor will contact you with an appointment. They will provide you with a telephone number to contact them should the given appointment be unsuitable.

Fyne Homes cannot stress enough the importance of having these checks carried out to ensure the safety of our tenants.

PLEASE ENSURE ACCESS IS MADE AVAILABLE TO YOUR LOCAL CONTRACTOR.



Emergency Repairs



We hope that you will not have any problems with your home while our offices are closed. However should any problems arise please remember that assistance in a genuine emergency can always be obtained by calling.....

0800 592 276

Your call will be answered by the Hanover Telecare call centre, where one of their trained repair operators will take the details of your repair and arrange the necessary assistance.

Please note that this service is for "emergency" repairs only. Emergency repairs being repairs necessary to prevent serious damage to the building, danger to health, risk of safety or risk of serious loss or damage to the occupiers of the property.

Telephoning Fyne Homes



To allow us to effectively manage your call and to keep your call costs down



If you are calling from a Landline 0845 607 7117

(calls should normally be charged at your local call rate. Mobile providers will charge more and will not usually include it as part of any contracted minutes)



If you are calling from a Mobile 01700 501600

(which will be a standard call on your normal mobile phone tariff or included in your contracted minutes)



Contact Information

Tel: 0845 607 7117 • E-mail: postmaster@fynehomes.co.uk • Web: www.fynehomes.org.uk

Rothsay—Head Office

Fyne Homes Ltd
81 Victoria Street
Rothsay
Isle of Bute
PA20 0AP
Fax: 01700 505267

Dunoon

Unit 16J Sandbank
Industrial Estate
Sandbank
Dunoon
PA23 8PB
Fax: 01369 702006

Campbeltown

42 Ralston Road
Campbeltown
Argyll
PA28 6LE
Fax: 01586 552680

Lochgilphead

The Attic
Manse Brae
Lochgilphead
Argyll
PA31 8RA
Fax: 01546 606519

This Newsletter and other documentation can be made available in other formats i.e. large print. We also subscribe to language line and induction loops are available within Fyne Homes offices.



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Incorporating: William Woodhouse Strain Housing Association and Bute Housing Association

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