

VOICE

The Tenants'

Winter 2007

Tenant Survey 2007

Every three years, we carry out a tenant survey. This year, questionnaires were sent to 2,000 Council tenants in Moray. A response rate of 38% was achieved. This is a good response rate for a postal survey. As in previous years, the survey asked for views on satisfaction with the Council and housing service provided. It asked for views on problems affecting homes, common areas and neighbourhoods. It also asked about communication with the Council and involvement in tenants' forums and so on.

79% of replies indicated overall satisfaction with the Council – this is slightly down from 2004, but still higher than in 2001. Although you rated staff highly on friendliness and helpfulness, the results identify some areas where we could improve – particularly in the information/explanations we give and the extent to which we keep you updated.

The areas of the housing service that you rated highly were the rent payment system, the repairs service, rent levels and the housing benefit service. The areas identified for improvement are the improvement service and the Council's willingness to take account of tenants' views.

The most mentioned problem about the home was the need for a new kitchen, followed by new bathrooms and external repairs. We also asked about what your priorities were for future investment. This again indicated kitchens and bathrooms. For the first time, a significant number of you identified a shower as an investment priority.

When we asked about views on priorities for all housing stock, the most commonly expressed view was the need for more Council homes.

There is a huge amount of detail in the survey results. The results were presented to the Housing Sub Committee on 7 November 2007. It was agreed that an improvement plan should be drawn up. This will be considered at the next Housing Sub Committee meeting in January 2008. You can read the results by visiting our website at www.moray.gov.uk/minutes/data/HS20071107A00.htm

If you want to tell us your views about what the improvement plan should contain, please contact:

✉ **Jill Stewart**
Chief Housing Officer
Community Services
The Moray Council
Council Office
High Street
Elgin
Moray
IV30 1BX
📞 jill.stewart@moray.gov.uk

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Your local area housing office



BUCKIE

01542 837200

Buckie Area Housing Office,
13 Cluny Square, Buckie, AB56 1AJ.
E-mail: buckieaccess@moray.gov.uk

ELGIN

01343 563429/563433

Elgin Area Housing Office,
Council Office, High Street, Elgin,
IV30 1BX.

E-mail:
housing.reception@moray.gov.uk

FORRES

01309 694000

Forres Area Housing Office,
Auchernack, High Street, Forres,
IV36 1DX.

E-mail: forresaccess@moray.gov.uk

KEITH

01542 885500

Keith Area Housing Office, The
Institute, Mid Street, Keith, AB55 5BJ.
E-mail: keithhousing@moray.gov.uk



HAPPY TO TRANSLATE



Log on to: www.moray.gov.uk

Introduction

Welcome to the winter edition of Tenants' Voice. These are exciting times for the Housing Service in Moray. We have formed a Housing Sub Committee, which includes six tenants. As far as we are aware no other council in Scotland has taken such a bold step. More details are included in an article on page 12.

I would like to thank all the tenants who took the trouble to fill in the tenant survey. The results are currently being analysed by officers and tenants. We will use the information that you gave us to improve our services for you. We are considering your views about the Tenants' Voice. A report was presented to the Housing Sub Committee in November. An improvement plan will be submitted to the Sub Committee in January. This improvement plan will be reported on in the next edition of the Tenants' Voice.

I would also like to thank all of the tenants who attended the Tenants' Conference, with particular thanks to the tenants who gave up many hours of their own time to fund raise and organise the Conference. The Conference was a huge success.

At present we are considering the Scottish Government's Consultation Paper on housing. In it there are proposals for the Right to Buy to be removed from new build Council Housing. There are no proposals for any changes to the right to buy for current tenants. The paper emphasises the importance of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard and I am happy to say that we are on schedule to achieve this.

Finally with the onset of winter I would like to draw your attention to our handy hints for winter article. Most importantly I would like to wish you, your family and friends a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Councillor McGillivray

Rent increase consultation



Setting rents is a balance between providing affordable housing and making sure there are funds for future management and maintenance costs. In February 2008, the Council will decide its housing budget for the forthcoming year.

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is the budget which funds management and maintenance costs relating to Council housing. As part of the process for preparing the budget, we must consult with you. In line with legislation, we must consult you where we propose to increase the amount of rent or service charges you pay.

Moray Council has had low rent levels for many years. Over the last three years, council house rent levels in Moray were the lowest in Scotland. At the same time, we have continued our commitment to improving the quality of housing, with almost 50% of the budget being invested in improvement/repairs.

In past years, the rental increase has been limited to inflation plus 1% (3.5%). The budget process for 2008/09 will be based on the assumption that any rent increase will be as in previous years – i.e. inflation plus 1%. The proposed increase would add approximately £1.44 to the current average weekly rent of £41.24 (based on 48 weekly payments a year). The extra income generated will be invested in improving services.

If you have any views on this, please contact



Jill Stewart

Chief Housing Officer

Community Services

The Moray Council

Council Office

High Street

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Moray

IV30 1BX



jill.stewart@moray.gov.uk

Moray Tenants Conference 2007



The fourth annual Tenants' Conference took place on 13 September 2007 in Elgin Town Hall and has been hailed as the best yet. The event, themed "local connections", had been organised by a group of tenants. The organising group took comments made at previous conferences into account. Tenants attending could choose which workshops to attend. The workshops were carefully chosen to reflect the local theme. The workshops were:

- **The role of estate caretakers and area housing officers**
- **Repairs and maintenance**
- **Fire safety**
- **Saving energy in Moray (SCARF)**
- **Local forums and the tenant participation strategy**

There were an array of displays for delegates to look at.

These included:

- **SCARF**
- **Grampian Police**
- **Waste Aware Grampian**
- **Neighbourhood Forums**
- **Grampian Fire and Rescue**
- **Health Promotions**
- **Message in a bottle**
- **Moray Council Housing Service**

The organisers would like to thank Communities Scotland, the Big Lottery who funded the Conference, and the many local business and individuals who very generously donated prizes for the free raffle draw.

The organisers have already begun planning for next years Conference. **A date for your diary is Wednesday 17 September 2008 at Elgin Town Hall** and we look forward to seeing you there,

Steven Christie,

Chairperson, Moray Tenants' Core Group

CHANGES TO THE WAY THAT YOU CAN MAKE PAYMENTS TO THE COUNCIL



From 1 April 2008, instead of making payments at local area offices, you will be able to pay Council bills at local outlets such as the post office, local newsagents, convenience stores and petrol stations.

The new, extended service has many advantages. It will give you a greater choice of where and more flexibility about when you can make payments. It will mean that:

- There are more places where you can make a payment;
- There will be outlets across Moray, making it more convenient for you to make a payment;
- There will be longer opening hours. Some outlets are open on weekends and on bank holidays and some are open 24 hours a day and 7 days a week; and
- You will be supporting local business and post offices.

We sent you a letter and leaflet which explained the changes and a response form to find out what you thought. If you want more information please phone **01343 563456**.

Handy hints for

WINTER

Make sure you don't lose energy out of your windows. Keep all windows in rooms that are not heated closed in cold weather unless you need to air the room after cooking, washing clothes, and so on. Close your curtains and blinds at night.

Find out where your stopcock is (this is the tap that controls the water coming into your home). Test it to see if it is working so that in an emergency, for example a pipe bursting in your home, you can stop any more water coming in.

Check that your heating is working well and that it is giving a good spread of heat during the day. If you are going on holiday make sure that the heating is left on low, to prevent any pipes bursting in your home and causing water damage. Or, before going off on holiday, you could ask your area housing office to drain down your water system. You could also leave a key with a neighbour or a member of your family so that they can look after the house for you.

If there's a draught coming under your door, use rolled up towels to act as a draught excluder. Simply place them at the bottom of the door. Or, you can buy draught excluders from most DIY stores to seal doors and windows.

When driving in the winter, carry out a few safety checks to keep you safe. Check your battery, antifreeze, wipers/washer fluid, lights including hazard lights, brakes, heater/demister and oil level. Always make sure you have at least half a tank of petrol.

In the run-up to Christmas, keep presents out of view of windows. If thieves can see you have a stack of gifts under the tree they might be more tempted to break in.

Never leave burning candles unattended. They could easily start a fire. Also, don't place Christmas cards or decorations on or near fires, if they fall off, they could catch fire.

If you want any more information, or you need to be shown how your heating works, or if you are not sure where your stopcock is, please contact your local area housing office.

With suppliers increasing the cost of fuel, many of you may find it more difficult and expensive to heat your home, especially during winter months. If you want to know more about ways to cut your fuel bills, then read on.

SCARF, (Save Cash and Reduce Fuel) may be able to help you. SCARF is an agency that provides free impartial and accessible energy efficiency advice and information services to help save energy, save cash and help save the environment.



The SCARF Fuel Cost Campaign aims to address the cost of fuel and increase awareness of opportunities available to help householders, like you, to get the best value fuel costs. The campaign message is '**Cut Your Fuel Bills - Best Value Energy**'

Cut Your Fuel Bills

To help you find the best fuel supplier and secure the lowest possible fuel tariff and best payment method, which will in turn save you money, there are just three simple steps.

Step 1 Your fuel supplier

Switching your fuel supplier can save you money. You will need to check the most up-to-date fuel prices and compare fuel suppliers to make sure you are switching to the supplier with the lowest fuel costs for you.

Step 2 Your tariff

Fuel suppliers have a range of tariffs available. You will need to check that you are on the lowest rate tariff for your heating system and your household requirements. This is most important if you have an electric storage heating system or where you have replaced an electric storage heating system with a new heating system.

Step 3 Your payment method

All fuel suppliers have a range of payment methods available to you. Choose a payment method that gives you the lowest cost for fuel and suits your household budget.

SCARF's Energy Advice Team can help you with steps 1, 2 and 3.

SCARF Energy Advisors will provide you with free, independent and impartial advice.

How to contact SCARF

If you want more advice and information on how to cut your fuel bills and stay warm this winter then contact SCARF.

 **Phone the SCARF Energy Advice Team on 0800 512012.**

This is a free phone call.

 **Visit the SCARF website at www.scarf.org.uk.**

 **E-mail duty@scarf.org.uk**

EMERGENCY OUT OF HOURS SERVICE

Out of hours emergency phone number

08457 565656

Our offices will close for the festive season at 3pm on Monday 24 December 2007. We will re-open at 8:45am on Thursday 3 January 2008.

If you have an emergency when our offices are closed and it can only be dealt with by a Council Officer, for example, loss of electricity in your home, burst water pipes, homelessness, and so on, please phone **08457 565656** for help.

You should **only** use this number when we are **closed** and if the matter is urgent. To help us, please wait to report **non-urgent** matters when our offices are open again in January.

Going on holiday?

Are you a going on holiday during the winter? You can ask us to drain down your hot and cold water systems, so they cannot freeze up.

Contact your area housing office for more information.

Community ENVIRONMENTAL Initiatives Moray



What is CEIM?

Community Environmental Initiatives Moray (CEIM) was set up by a group of five local, charitable, community recycling organisations in Moray.

CEIM are about more than recycling. Its members are social enterprises who work in partnership with the local community providing training and work experience, as well as supported training and job placements for adults with learning disabilities. CEIM also makes a significant contribution to diverting waste from landfill.

Each member is involved in a different part of recycling but all are enthusiastic about the benefits they bring to the local community:

What are the benefits of CEIM?

CEIM work with the people of Moray and aim to promote the recognition, importance and value of community recycling initiatives. Key benefits include:

- 1. Work experience and training placements for young people, adults who have been long-term unemployed and supported training placements for adults with learning disabilities.**
- 2. A forum for community spirited volunteers to can gain new skills and share ideas and experiences to make a positive contribution within their local area.**

- 3. An opportunity for local people, regardless of age or circumstances, to purchase pre-used, quality items at affordable prices in a friendly and non-judgemental environment.**
- 4. Making a positive contribution to our environment by diverting tonnes of waste away from our landfill sites.**

Volunteering and training opportunities

CEIM, are always looking for people to join them as part of their volunteer teams. Volunteering can be extremely rewarding. It gives you the opportunity to share experiences, ideas and information, whilst learning new skills. You do not need any formal qualifications. All that you need is to want to work for the benefit of the community and a belief in the importance of Reduce Reuse Recycle.

All CEIM members offer training opportunities and have built up an expertise in the provision of training and all are highly respected within the industry. Working in partnership with agencies including the Moray Council, Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, Job Centre Plus and local training providers, CEIM members offer a range of training experiences to suit individual needs. The opportunity to work in a range of working environments can be exciting and the possibility of gaining Scottish Vocational Qualification Modules and City & Guild Certificates can be a real achievement.

Recycling from home

If you have unwanted household items such as, electrical appliances, white goods, books, toys, bikes, tools and so on please

phone either **The Green Home**
on **01542 839600** or **Moray**

Waste Busters on **01309 676056**

– they will be pleased to help you. The Green Home offers a **FREE** collection service for anyone living in Moray.



Who are TEAM?

TEAM is located next to the Go Kart Racing Track in Elgin and sells reclaimed and new timber, decking, used doors, windows, paving slabs, tiles, bricks, rockery and dressed stone as well as new, garden stone ornaments and wall plaques. There is a lot to see at TEAM so make sure you allow plenty of time for browsing. TEAM also has 18 supported training placements. Together with Moray Council TEAM carries out erosion prevention work on Moray's forest footpaths and parks using woodchips that have been made by TEAM. **Contact TEAM on 01343 546100**



Who are ReBOOT?

ReBOOT refurbishes computer systems at very affordable prices – from £39 for a system that has everything you need. ReBOOT also offers a Repair and Safe Data Removal Service. If you have any unwanted computers or lap tops, take them to ReBOOT, there's no charge for householders living in Moray. **Contact ReBOOT on 01309 671681**



Who are Waste Watchers?

Waste Watchers work in partnership with Moray Council so all of Moray's cans (aluminium and steel) end up at their depot in Buckie. They are then separated, crushed and palletised before being sent off to either Novelis (aluminium) or Chorus (steel). The money received for these cans helps to maintain 20 supported training placements so please don't throw your tins away, recycle them to help support this charity.



More information

If you want to find out more about volunteering, training or you want more information on any of the above, please contact:

✉ **Isobell Tesch**

52 Low Street
Buckie
AB56 1UX

☎ 01542 831888

✉ itesch-ceim@btconnect.com

www.ceim.org.uk

REDUCE YOUR RENT AND COUNCIL TAX

Find out if you can get a rebate.

If you are on a low income, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit may be able to help by reducing your rent and council tax bill.

If you get other benefits, they won't be affected by Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit.

Find out if you are eligible by applying for a rebate today.

For further details and an application form please contact the Revenues Section on 01343 563456.

Bilbohall Estate Forum


Since the last issue of the Tenants' Voice the Bilbohall Estate Forum has been busy. During the summer, work commenced and was finished to improve the drying areas behind the Glenlossie Drive flats. This included the removal of old broken fencing, levelling and resurfacing the ground and the installation of additional rotary clothes dryers. The Forum has sent out surveys to tenants to find out the condition of sheds. The Forum will use this information when creating future works programmes.

Recently, after a long wait, work to level off the concrete parking areas and create more and better parking facilities on the estate has started.

The Forum had organised a Garden Competition for tenants within the Forum area and had secured donated prizes from Po-teak and Decora.

The Forum meets on the first Wednesday of each month in the Cedarwood Centre on Edgar Road at 7:30pm. Our meetings are well attended by tenants, the local Councillors, the Area Housing Officer and the Community Warden. All tenants from Bilbohall, Birnie, Fogwatt, Miltonduff and Mosstowie are welcome. The AGM will be held in early December. For more information about any of the Forum's activities please contact:

 **Steven Christie,**
Chairperson
01343 540524

 **Moira Sutherland,**
Secretary
01343 547490

Bishopmill Tenants' Forum

There is not a forum for the tenants of Bishopmill, Elgin at the moment – but we would like to start one. Do you have a

view about the service the Council provided? Do you want to improve the environment you stay in? If you do, why not become a forum member and help us make a difference. As a forum member you would have the chance to influence the Housing service, and have a say in how the Housing service's environmental and improvement budget is spent.

We are looking for members to start the group. If you are interested or would just like to know more please contact:

 **Fiona Shand,**
Area Housing Officer
01343 563429 or
 01343 563433
fiona.shand@moray.gov.uk

Forres Tenants' Forum

The Forres Area Tenants' Forum covers Brodie, Dyke, Findhorn, Kinloss, Half Davoch, Rafford, Dallas, Burghead, Hopeman, Duffus, Kellas and Alves, as well as Forres. This widespread area has approximately 940 council houses.

The Forum organised a garden competition open to tenants in its area. The Forum also organised a competition presentation tea on 17 August 2007 in the Mossett Tavern, paid for from their grant funding, which was attended by Forum members, the winning tenant and 3 Councillors.

The Forres Area Tenants' Forum is always looking for new members. We meet regularly in the GP Room of Forres House at 10.30am on every second Friday of each month. If you would like to get involved please come along. If you want to know more about what we do please contact:

 **Sandra Ross,**
Secretary
01309 675311

Lossiemouth Tenants' Forum

The Lossiemouth Tenants' Forum has agreed to commit its Environmental Budget to fencing and outdoor security lighting projects.

The Forum continues its efforts to develop its website using funding from Communities Scotland and expects the website to be operational by the end of 2007. The Forum held its Annual General Meeting on 11 September 2007.

All tenants are members of the Tenants' Forum and can attend the committee meetings, which are held on the second Tuesday of the month in the Seaview Suite of the Lossiemouth Town Hall. If you want to get more involved you can join the Committee and help us carry out the necessary work to improve the tenants' lot.

 **Charles French,**
Chairperson
07887 921553

New Elgin Tenants' Forum

The New Elgin Tenants' Forum is a small but busy group as one of our members is also an office bearer in the Tenants' Core Group.

We have regular estate walk-about looking at ways to improve the area and would be pleased to hear from anyone with ideas on this.

The New Elgin Tenants' Forum meets in the Cottar Hoose and is always looking for new members with new ideas. If you would like to join the forum or if you want to put forward any ideas please contact either:

 **Muriel Ettles,**
Chairperson
01343 545394 **or**

 **Gayle Henderson,**
Secretary
01343 552891

Rothies Tenants' Forum

Rothies Tenants' Forum is always looking for new members. The Forum meets every 4/5 weeks in the Grant Hall at 7pm. All Rothies tenants are welcome to attend.

For more information please contact:

 **Audrey Murray,**
Chairperson
01340 831703

Spey Coast Tenants' Forum

The Spey Coast Forum is always looking to attract new members, who will be made very welcome if they want to join. The Spey Coast Forum meets in Buckie High School at 7.30pm on the last Thursday of each month.


For more information please contact:

 **Gilbert Grant,**
Chairperson
01542 839528

Other areas

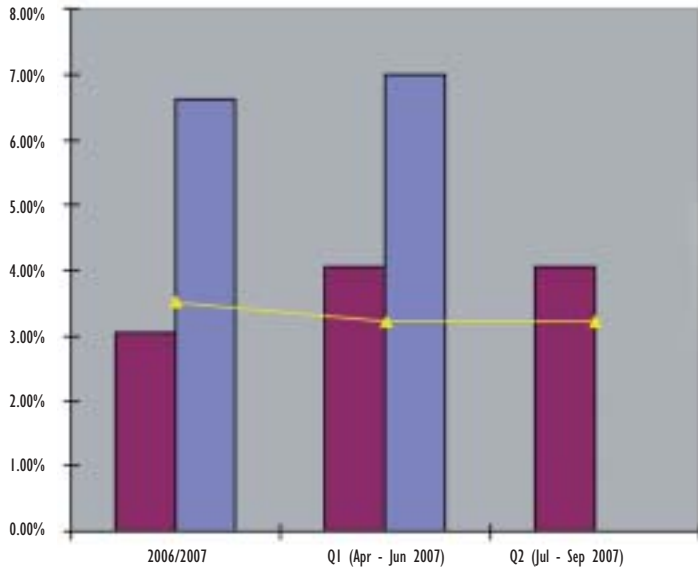
If you would like to know more about how you can influence housing services, but there is not a forum in your area, please contact:

 **Fiona Geddes,**
Policy Officer
01343 563588

 fiona.geddes@moray.gov.uk

Housing Performance

ARREARS

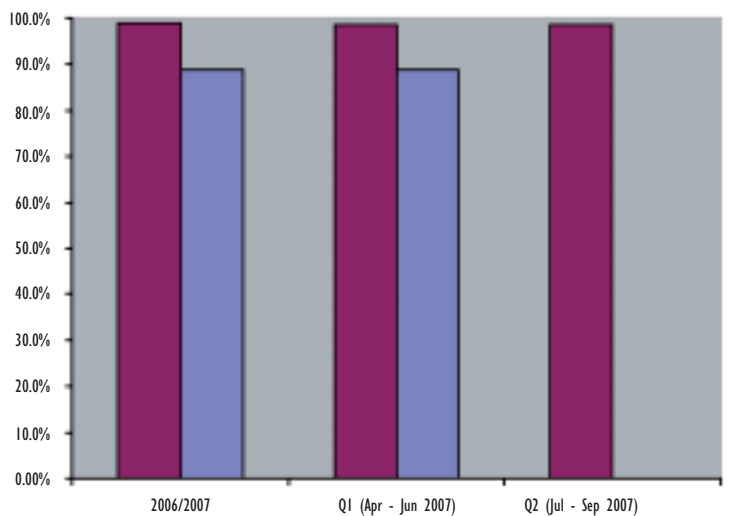


At the end of September 2007, rent arrears for house and garage rents was 4.05% of net rent receivable, against a target of 3.2%. Although not meeting our target, we continue to perform well in comparison with other councils. As with Quarter 1 performance, the level of arrears has been affected by the timing of direct debits. If these were discounted, performance would equate to 3.7%. Housing staff continue to implement the new Rent Arrears Policy and Procedure to meet the target.

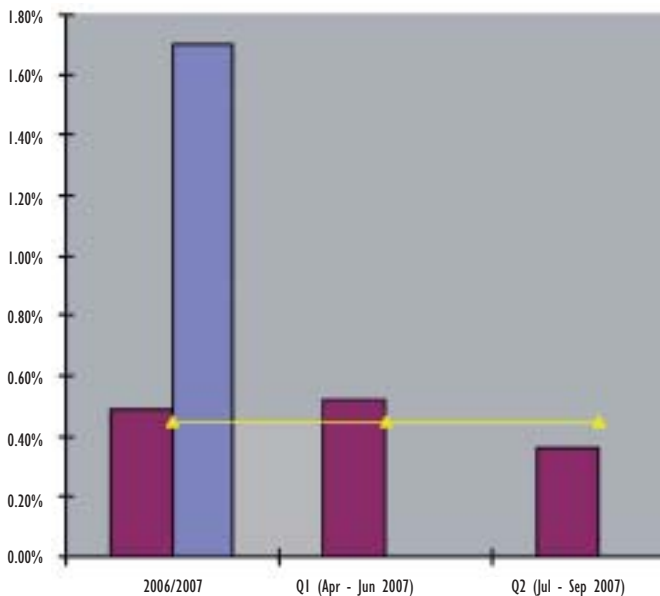
REPAIRS

We continue to improve our performance on repairs, showing a marked improvement on the number of repairs completed within target time-scales:

- Emergency – within 2 hours
- Urgent – within 1 working day
- Priority – within 5 working days
- Ordinary – within 20 working days



Moray Council
Scotland



VOIDS

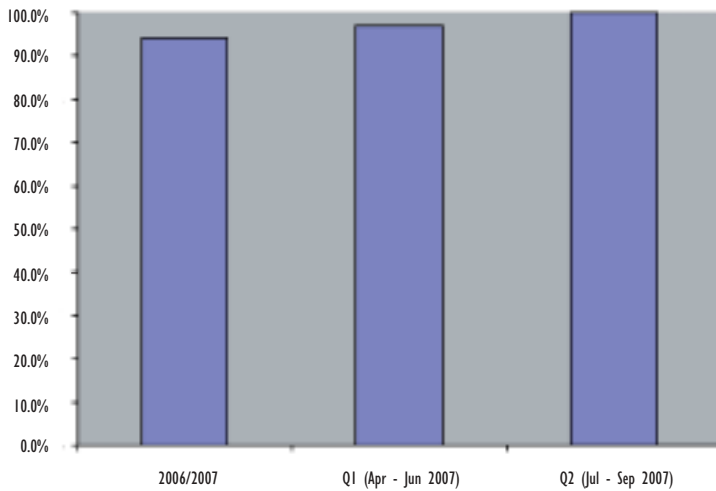
At the end of the second quarter of the financial year 2007/2008, the percentage of rent lost due to empty properties was 0.36%. The target for 2007/2008 is 0.45%. We continue to perform extremely well in comparison with other councils in Scotland.

Moray Council
Scotland
Moray Council Target

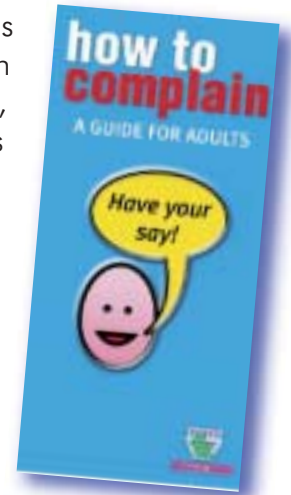
nice 2007/2008

COMPLAINTS

% complaints replied to within timescale of 20 working days



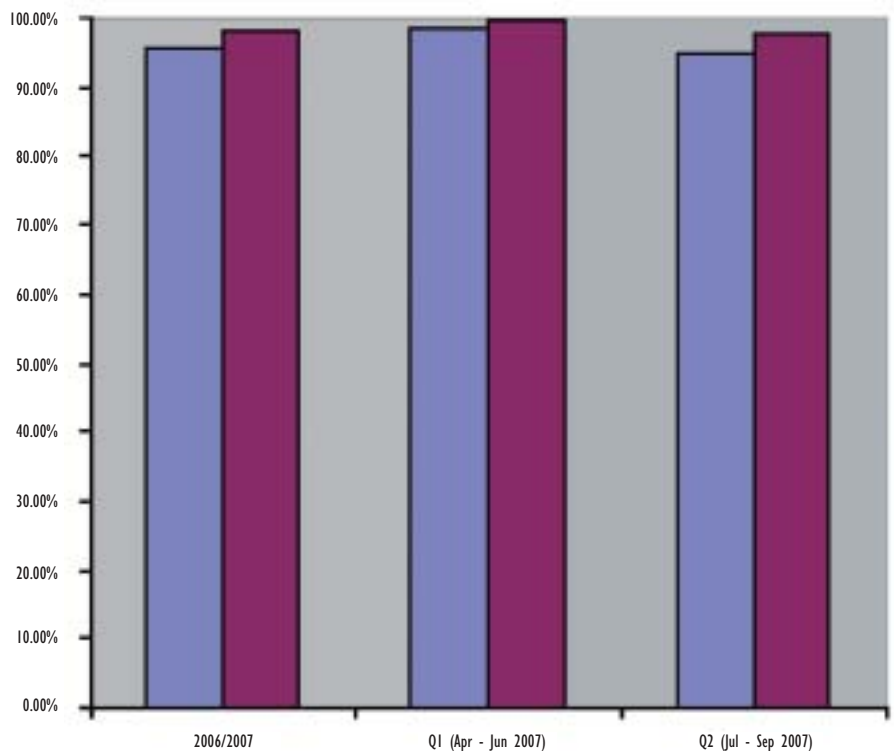
We have a formal complaints procedure and we aim to make sure that we reply to complaints within 20 working days. As shown opposite, we have continued to improve our response rates throughout the year. In Quarter 2 of 2007/2008, 100% of complaints received their response on time. The Housing Service aims to continue to achieve this performance and meet timescales in 100% of all cases in 2007/2008.



REPAIRS

If we have carried out a repair on your property you may have received a follow-up questionnaire. The results of returned questionnaires are shown right. On average during Quarter 2, 95% of the tenants who responded were satisfied with the service they received. However only 13% of the questionnaires were returned. If you receive one, please do return it as we value your opinion.

■ % Repair carried out to tenant's satisfaction
■ % Repair carried out in a competent, friendly and helpful manner



The Housing Sub Committee

The Moray Council has taken the bold step of introducing a Housing Sub Committee with 6 tenant representatives on it. The tenant representatives are one from each area forum. The Councillor representatives are made up of 5 from the Administration, 3 SNP and 1 Labour. A list of Committee members is contained in the box below. Tenant representatives are nominated from their area forums and will report back to them.

Housing Sub Committee members

Councillors	Tenant representatives
Eric McGillivray (Chairman)	Ms Heather Anderson
Gary Coull	Mr Steven Christie
Stewart Cree	Ms Muriel Ettles
Barry Jarvis	Mr Charles French
Graham Leadbitter	Ms Elaine Martin
Anita McDonald	Mrs Audrey Murray
Joe Mackay	
Ron Shepherd	
Iain Young	

The purpose of the Committee is primarily to deal with the Council's landlord role. So most of the discussion will focus on how we manage, maintain and improve your homes. The Housing Sub Committee has powers to agree certain matters but in other instances, it can make representation to the Policy Committee. A list of the functions is below.

Summary of the Housing Sub Committee Functions

1. To agree the terms of draft housing policies for wider consideration with tenants.
2. To agree housing policy in relation to the Council's landlord role.

3. To monitor performance of housing landlord services, including tenant satisfaction.
4. To monitor performance on housing investment programmes and the attainment of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard in the Council's housing stock.
5. To develop the Council's Tenant Participation Strategy, and monitor performance in relation to milestones and targets.
6. To agree responses to consultation papers relating to the Council's landlord role.
7. To comment to the Policy Committee on draft housing strategies.
8. To Comment to the Policy Committee on Housing Revenue Account budgetary performance and proposals
9. To comment to the Policy Committee on consultation papers relating to the Council's wider housing role.

The first Committee meeting took place on 7 November 2007 and received a presentation on the Tenant Survey from the consultants. Other matters it considered included kitchen programming and decoration and the Housing Revenue Account Budget.

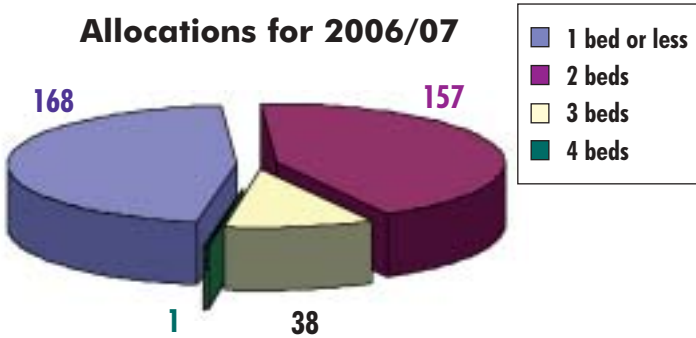
Housing Sub Committee meetings are open to the public. Like all other Council committee reports, the Sub Committee reports and meeting minutes will be available on the Council's website at www.moray.gov.uk/minutes/listdocs.html

The arrangements mean that tenants are situated at the heart of the decision making process about your homes and how they are managed. We would encourage anybody who wants to influence how we provide housing and related services to join their local area forum. For contact details for each forum, please see the article on forum news.

Allocations Policy Review

The Council introduced a revised Allocations Policy in April 2005. Since then, the Council has considered two reports on the operation of the policy.

The most recent report considered the operation of the policy for the period April 2006 until March 2007. This indicated that of 364 allocations of council housing carried out, 83.2% were to waiting list applicants (those not currently in a council tenancy) and 16.8% were to transfer list applicants (those in an existing council tenancy).



The number of council houses becoming available for let in 2006/07 was slightly less than in the previous year. There was also an increase from the previous year in the number of houses allocated to waiting list applicants with more than 500 points.

The detailed analysis is available on the Council's website (www.moray.gov.uk/minutes/data/PH20070829A00.htm) – what it does reinforce is that there is a shortage of affordable rented accommodation in Moray, as there were 2,374 applicants on the waiting list in April 2007 and 456 applicants on the transfer list.

The Council agreed to make an immediate change to the Allocations Policy. When an applicant was prepared to accept a smaller house than required, any overcrowding points were reduced to reflect this. As there is an acute shortage of larger council houses, due to the impact of Right to Buy, applicants who are willing to accept a smaller house will no longer lose overcrowding points.

The Council also agreed that a number of aspects of the current policy should be reviewed. This work is still at an early stage but may result in proposals to amend the current policy. If this is the case, the Council will consult with applicants and tenants on any changes proposed.

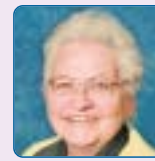
the MORAY council Elected Members



Cllr Michael J McConachie
SNP



Cllr Fiona J Murdoch
Independent



Cllr Pearl B Paul
SNP

WARD 1 SPEYSIDE GLENLIVET



Cllr Gary S Coull
SNP



Cllr Stewart Cree
Independent

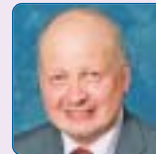


Cllr Ronald H Shepherd
Independent

WARD 2 KEITH AND CULLEN



Cllr Joe Mackay
Independent



Cllr Gordon McDonald
SNP



Cllr Anne C McKay
Independent

WARD 3 BUCKIE



Cllr Anita D McDonald
SNP



Cllr George McIntyre
Independent



Cllr Douglas G Ross
Scottish Conservatives

WARD 4 FOCHABERS LHANBRYDE



Cllr John C Hogg
Independent



Cllr Eric M McGillivray
Independent



Cllr David C Stewart
SNP



Cllr Allan G Wright
Scottish Conservatives

WARD 5 HELDON AND LAICH



Cllr Barry Jarvis
Scottish Labour Party



Cllr John G Russell
Independent



Cllr Mike Shand
SNP

WARD 6 ELGIN CITY NORTH



Cllr Alastair Bisset
Independent



Cllr John A Divers
Scottish Labour Party



Cllr Graham Leadbitter
SNP

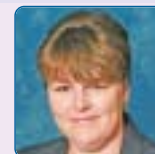
WARD 7 ELGIN CITY SOUTH



Cllr Lee A Bell
Independent



Cllr Jeff Hamilton
Independent



Cllr Irene Ogilvie
SNP



Cllr Iain Young
Scottish Conservatives

WARD 8 FORRES

BEST KEPT GARDEN COMPETITION RESULTS

2007

In the summer 2007 edition of the Tenants' Voice, we asked you to show off your achievements in the garden. Congratulations and thank you to all of you who entered. As always, the standard was very high. Even though this year was not the best weather for gardening, you did not let the weather dampen your enthusiasm for your blooms, baskets and borders.

This year our judges were from Threaplands Ltd in Lhanbryde. Judging took place on Thursday 26 and Friday 27 July 2007. Here are our winners.

BUCKIE

First place	Mr & Mrs G Stephen	2 Stuart Place, Portknockie
Second place	Mr James Runcie	26 Admiralty Street, Portknockie
Third place	Mr Andrew Boylan	144 Milton Drive, Buckie

ELGIN

First place	Mr Bob Martin	53 Kingsmills, Elgin
Second place	Mr & Mrs P Whyte	6 Calcots Court, South Lesmurdie, Elgin
Third place	Mrs Sheila Hay	24 Glen Moray, Drive, Elgin

FORRES

First place	Mrs Elizabeth McKay	27 Shieldaig Road, Forres
Second place	Mr Brian Ritchie	12 Fleurs Road, Forres
Third place	Mr Alexander McDonald	15 Leys Road, Forres

LOSSIEMOUTH

First place	Mr Peter Stewart	1 Macduff Street, Lossiemouth
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KEITH

First place	Mrs Josephin Mitchell	104 Fife Street, Keith
Second place	Mr Alexander Oag	4 Den Crescent, Keith

Special **CONGRATULATIONS** to our overall winners

Representing the West of Moray
(Elgin and Forres) is
Mr Bob Martin,
53 Kingsmills, Elgin.

Representing the East of Moray
(Buckie and Keith) are
Mr & Mrs G Stephen,
2 Stuart Place, Portknockie.



There are many beautiful gardens in Moray.
So if you did not enter the competition this year why not enter next year?
Look out for more information in next year's Tenants' Voice.

New Tenant Survey Prize Draw

On 1 February 2007 we started sending out questionnaires to our new tenants. New tenants should receive a questionnaire a few weeks after they have moved in. If your tenancy started after 1 February 2007 you may remember receiving a questionnaire like this.

We want to hear what new tenants think about their new home, their new neighbourhood and what they think about how we allocate houses. Also, returned questionnaires are entered into an annual free prize draw to win £50 in vouchers.

**We have a winner!
Miss Elaine Roy
from Keith has won
this years draw.**



Pictured below presenting Elaine with her vouchers are Councillor McGillivray, watched by Tracey McKie, Area Housing Officer (Keith).

WINNER

The results of this survey will be used to monitor and improve our services to you and future tenants, and to make sure that we are providing the best service possible. Questionnaires we have received so far show that new tenants are generally quite happy with their new home, but some have concerns about the internal decoration and some are not confident about how to use their central heating system. If you need advice about how to use your central heating system please contact your Area Housing Team. The phone numbers are on Page 1.

IS SOMEONE YOU KNOW COMMITTING BENEFIT FRAUD?



The Government estimates that Welfare Benefit Fraud costs each and every family in the United Kingdom £80 per year. The Moray Council is committed to protecting public funds and tackling benefit fraud and has a dedicated anti-fraud team who investigate allegations of suspected Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit fraud.

Typical examples of benefit fraud include:

- People who work but do not declare this when they claim benefit
- People who claim from an address but do not live there
- People who claim they are single but actually live with a partner
- People who do not tell us their full income, savings or capital

DO NOT LET FRAUDSTERS TAKE MONEY DIRECTLY OUT OF YOUR POCKET.

If you suspect someone is claiming Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Benefit to which they are not entitled

PLEASE TELL US ABOUT IT.

You can call us on 01343 563611 or
write to the Benefit Fraud Team, Moray Council, Revenues Section, High Street, Elgin, IV30 1BX.
Any information you give will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Environmental Services Waste Management Service

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR ARRANGEMENTS 2007/08

Please note the following arrangements

REFUSE COLLECTION

Date	To be Collected on	Collection Time	Bin Colour
Tuesday 18 December 2007	Tuesday 18 December 2007	Your collection will be earlier than normal - please put your bin out by 7:30am	Green Bin
Tuesday 25 December 2007	Saturday 29 December 2007		Green Bin
Tuesday 1 January 2008	Tuesday 8 January 2008		Green Bin
Wednesday 19 December 2007	Wednesday 19 December 2007		Green Bin
Wednesday 26 December 2007	Saturday 5 January 2008		Green Bin
Wednesday 2 January 2008	Saturday 5 January 2008		Green Bin

There will be **no** brown bin collection from 17 December 2007 to 18 January 2008

Special Collections: The Special Collection line will close on Friday 21 December 2007 at 4pm and will re-open on Thursday 3 January 2008 at 9am.

OTHER SERVICES

Disposal at Landfill Sites,
Civic Amenity Sites and
Recycling Centres

All facilities will be closed on Tuesday 25 and Wednesday 26 December 2007,
Tuesday 1 and Wednesday 2 January 2008

Public Conveniences

All facilities will be closed on Tuesday 25 and Wednesday 26 December 2007,
Tuesday 1 and Wednesday 2 January 2008

Your old **CHRISTMAS TREE**

Your present to the environment this year - **RECYCLE YOUR TREE**

Please take it to:

**TEAM (Wood Recycling Training Project),
Unit 9 Chanonry Spur Industrial Estate Elgin**

TEAM

OR

One of The Moray Council Recycling Centres at:-

- Moycroft, Elgin;
- Waterford Road, Forres;
- Dallachy, Spey Bay;
- Balloch Road, Keith;
- Gollachy, Golf View Road, Buckie.

For further information please
contact telephone no:
01343 557045

