

# VOIC**E**

The Tenants'

Summer 2010

## Work begins on new Council houses



Work has started on the first new Council houses to be built in Moray for 20 years and tenants will be moving into their brand-new Council homes before the end of the year.

Phase 1 of the Council's new build programme started on site in February and involves the construction of 48 houses on a site at Reiket Lane in Elgin. The new houses, which are being built by local developer Springfield Properties Ltd, should be ready for occupation by the end of 2010. The houses have been designed to minimise running costs for tenants. Energy-efficiency features include high levels of insulation and air source heat pumps. The housing is being built

with the assistance of a £1.2million grant from the Scottish Government.

With more than 2,500 people on the Council's waiting list and over 900 applications from homeless people last year, the need for new affordable housing in Moray is greater than ever.

It is hoped that the Council's new build programme will not end at Phase 1. A further application has been submitted to the Scottish Government for money to build more houses. If successful, the application will result in the construction of a further 124 Council houses at different locations in Moray.

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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](mailto:buckieaccess@moray.gov.uk)

#### ELGIN

01343 563429

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

E-mail:  
[housing.reception@moray.gov.uk](mailto:housing.reception@moray.gov.uk)

#### FORRES

01309 694000

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

E-mail: [forresaccess@moray.gov.uk](mailto:forresaccess@moray.gov.uk)

#### KEITH

01542 885500

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



the moray council

emergency out of hours: 08457 56 56 56

# Dear Tenant,



**Welcome to the summer edition of Tenants' Voice.**

I am delighted to bring you another edition of Tenants' Voice. When I spoke to you at the end of last year, we were dealing with the traumatic aftermath of the floods. I am glad to say that the Council responded quickly and effectively, finding temporary accommodation for those affected and repairing flood damaged homes as a highest priority.

I am pleased to see that work has started on Phase 1 of the Council's new build programme. Tenants will be moving into these properties at the end of the year. I hope we have another cause for celebration in July when we find out from the Scottish Government if our bid for money to build more homes has been successful.

There will be no Tenants' Conference this year as the event is now being held every two years. But we won't be without a tenants event in 2010. The Forres Tenant Forum is holding an open day in Forres in October. I'm sure this will be as interesting and informative as the conference.

I welcome the Minister's recent announcement of "pressured" area status for the Speyside and Cairngorm National Park areas of Moray. We have an acute shortage of affordable housing in Moray and this measure will go some way to helping protect our affordable stock.

It's hard to imagine that not so very long ago we were in the midst on one of the harshest winters in living memory. Here's hoping for a good summer. Make the most of it while you can!

**Councillor Eric McGillivray**

## Pressured area status for Speyside and the Cairngorms National Park

The Scottish Government granted 'pressured area status' for Council houses in Speyside and the Cairngorms National Park area of Moray on 18 May 2010. Council houses in Elgin, Lossiemouth and rural communities around Forres were granted pressured area status in March 2006. This was followed in February 2009 by pressured area status for Council houses in Forres. This helps us to protect the amount of affordable rented housing in high demand areas, to make sure that there are enough houses for people who need them.

We wrote to all tenants in Aberlour, Archiestown, Craigellachie, Dufftown, Glenallachie, Glenlivet, Knockando, Marypark, Tomintoul, Tomnavoulin in May to tell them about pressured area status.

**If you live in one of these areas AND your tenancy began on or after 30 September 2002, your right to buy is temporarily suspended for 5 years.**

You will not lose out on building up time towards qualifying for right to buy and discount. This will continue during the temporary suspension.

If you signed your tenancy **before 30 September 2002, your rights stay the same** and you still have the right to buy.



If you want more information, contact your local area housing office.

# Investing in your Homes

During the current financial year, we will spend over £8m on the maintenance and modernisation of our properties, with several projects for 2010/11 about to commence on site and the majority of works programmed for completion by the end of March 2011.

Expenditure for this year will cover the main areas of:

- Capital Works - Kitchens; Heating; Replacement Doors; Adaptations
- Planned Maintenance – Roof and Fabric Repairs; Estates Upgrades; Garage Upgrades
- Cyclical Maintenance – Gas and Solid Fuel Servicing; Smoke Detectors; External Painterwork and Repairs

The majority of projects within the Investment Programme are now being delivered through our Partnership Agreement between Housing, Building Services Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) and Property Services.

The main area of spend under our Capital Programme will again be our kitchen replacement programme. In financial year 2010/2011, around 400 kitchens will be replaced, at a cost of over £1.9m. Also within the Capital Programme is our budget of around £0.6m for door and window replacements. This will allow us to complete our common access door replacement programme, and begin a major programme of replacing older style windows in our properties with new timber,

energy efficient and sustainable lifecycle windows. In order to further improve energy efficiency and reduce tenants' fuel bills, we are also spending around £0.5m replacing older style heating systems with more efficient ones. Some properties will receive new gas heating systems where we have access to mains gas supplies, and we are also installing an increasing number of energy efficient, renewable heating systems for tenants who live off the main gas supply network.

We will also be carrying out a range of major works under our Roof and Fabric Repairs budgets, prioritising areas such as external insulation and re-rendering of properties, internal refurbishment, and replacement of rainwater goods in order to meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard. This work will total nearly £1m.

Our Cyclic Maintenance budget of just over £1m is mainly spent on servicing the Council's 4,500 gas, coal and oil-fired heating installations, as well as a regular six-yearly programmes of pre-paintwork repairs and external paintwork. The Council is also in the process of renewing a large number of existing smoke detectors through our normal servicing contracts.

More details of the current programme can be found on the Council's website or by contacting your Area Housing Office or the Capital Programmes Team.

## Moray Council Capital Programme 2010/11

Works	Area Housing Team	Town	Street	No of Properties
Kitchen Replacement	Buckie	Fochabers	Milne Road	13
		Fochabers	Whiteash Place	4
	Elgin	Elgin	Christie Road	4
		Elgin	East Road	3
		Elgin	Ladyhill Wynd	6
		Elgin	Mossend Place	3
		Elgin	Murdoch's Wynd	11
		Elgin	Nicol Street	5
		Elgin	Ontario Court	4
		Elgin	Pansport Place	10
		Elgin	South College House	2
		Elgin	South College Street	11
		Lhanbryde	Blackshaw Court	8
		Lhanbryde	Cranmoss Court	4
		Lhanbryde	Harestone Court	5

Kitchen Replacement	Elgin	Lhanbryde	March Court	4
		Lhanbryde	Park Road	13
		Lossiemouth	Coulardhill Terrace	11
		Lossiemouth	Dunbar Street	8
		Lossiemouth	Fairisle Place	27
		Lossiemouth	Ogston Lane	2
	Forres	Alves	Moray Avenue	3
		Burghead	Forteach Street	18
		Duffus By Elgin	Hopeman Road	3
		Forres	Caroline Street	4
		Forres	Cicely Place	4
		Forres	Clovenside	1
		Forres	Fleurs Place	9
	Keith	Keith	Braeside	27
		Keith	Cuthil Road	9
		Keith	Duff Street	2
		Keith	Fife Street	8
		Keith	Mar Place	21
		Keith	Nelson Terrace	31
		Keith	South Street, Newmill	3
Mulben, Keith		Craighead	3	
Tomnavoulin		Allt-Na-Coire	7	
Heating Replacement	Buckie	Buckie	Barhill Road	1
		Buckie	Inward Road	11
		Buckie	Turner Street	1
		Cullen	Sea Street	2
		Cullen	New View Court	4
		Lintmill, Cullen	Tochieneal Corner	3
		Portknockie	Geddes Avenue	1
	Elgin	Elgin	Beech Walk	2
		Elgin	Rowan Court	3
		Elgin	Duff Place	2
		Elgin	Beechfield Rd	1
		Elgin	Cockburn Place	1
	Forres	Burghead	Davidson Place / Fraser Road / Keith Road	27
		Forres	Strathcona Road / Brig Wynd (flats only)	13
	Keith	Drummuir	Tocher Terrace	4
		Drummuir	Bomakelloch	4
Keith		Banff Road	1	
Knockando		County houses	2	
Window Replacement	Buckie	Buckie	Samson Avenue	15
		Buckie	Shanks Lane	1
		Buckie	William Street	1
		Cullen	Logie Avenue	15
		Cullen	Logie Drive	1
		Cullen	Seafield Place	1
		Cullen	Victoria place	10
		Findochty	Cliff Street	11
		Findochty	Hall Street	2
		Findochty	Reidhaven Crescent	4
		Portknockie	Addison Street	6
		Portknockie	Craigview Road	1
		Elgin	Lossiemouth	Boyd Anderson Drive
	Lossiemouth		Community Way	19
	Lossiemouth		Coulardhill	27
	Lossiemouth		Coulardhill Terrace	11
	Forres	Dallas	Struan Grove	3
	Keith	Keith	Isla Road, Newmill	1







# Gas Safety in the Home

We are committed to keeping our tenants safe in their homes – so help us by letting us carry out regular servicing and safety checks on gas appliances and other safety features within your home.

The Moray Council has a duty under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 to ensure that all gas installations in its houses are safe to use, and serviced on an annual basis.

The Council's Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) carries out this servicing work, as well as providing a repairs service for gas heating problems.

The DLO arranges access for servicing on a pre-programmed basis spread throughout the year. Details of your appointments are sent out on a specially designed card 14 days before access is required, giving you an opportunity to rearrange the visit if the date or time is unsuitable.

It is important that tenants contact the DLO through the dedicated Gas Servicing/Repairs line on **01343 829111** to make alternative arrangements for access if the first appointment offered is unsuitable, or you are not at home when the engineer calls. The Council has an agreed policy that limits the

number of visits made to properties before legal action is taken to gain entry. In cases where two arranged appointments are missed, legal action is taken to gain access, and this may involve forcing entry to the house to carry out the service and the tenant being recharged.

In the event of any serious fault occurring in the gas heating system in your home, your safety - and that of your neighbours - could be affected.

The Council has also fitted CO2 detectors in all its properties that have either gas or solid fuel heating. These are checked as part of the annual service.

Smoke detectors are fitted in all our properties. We service these every two years.

Although the Council is not required by law to fit smoke detectors in existing properties, or service these on a specific basis, we consider the safety of our tenants a high priority.

When you are contacted to arrange a visit for the smoke detector servicing contract, we would encourage you to allow us to carry out the service when planned, and ensure that these important safety devices are operating correctly to safeguard you, your family and your home.

## Council housing through the ages

In a new regular feature in Tenants' Voice, we will be presenting archive material relating to the development of Council housing in Moray. This first illustration shows architectural plans for Council housebuilding in Forres in the 1920's.

In the aftermath of the First World War, the Government, under the Housing Act of 1919, encouraged Councils to build houses through generous subsidies. The 1919 Act followed a campaign by social reformers to tackle problems of poor housing and public health in Britain, particularly in working class urban areas. The campaign became known as *Homes fit for Heroes* in recognition that the poor physical condition and health of many recruits to the army was directly attributable to slum housing and overcrowding. In responding to this campaign, the Government was mindful that the housing problem could exacerbate the widespread social and industrial unrest that characterised the post-war period.

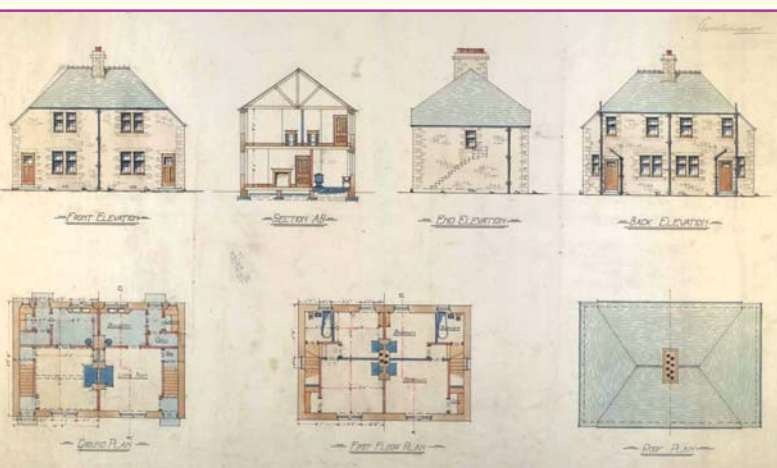


Image courtesy of Wittets Architects and Moray Local Heritage Centre.

*The houses shown in the drawing were built at Castle Street in Forres and illustrate the generous space standards and amenities that were typical of much of the cottage-style Council housing built under the 1919 Act.*



Councillors Eric McGillivray and Lee Bell present the prize to the winner of the summer edition quiz to Mrs Lily Hendry of Forres.



## Catch-phrase Quiz **Win £50**

**What or who first made these catch-phrases famous?**

1. I'll be back ...  
.....
2. Lovely Jubbly! (or Luvvly Jubbly!)  
.....
3. Correctomundo  
.....
4. Famous for fifteen minutes.  
.....
5. And now for something completely different ...  
.....
6. Whassup? (or Wazzup?)  
.....
7. Does my bum look big in this?  
.....
8. Big Brother (is watching you)  
.....
9. And so to bed.  
.....
10. I love it when a plan comes together.  
.....
11. Evening all. (or Evenin' all)  
.....
12. Show me the money!  
.....
13. You bet your sweet bippy.  
.....
14. Be all that you can be.  
.....
15. Every day, in every way, I am getting better and better.  
.....
16. You're going to like this - not a lot ... (but you'll like it)  
.....
17. The world is your lobster.  
.....
18. (It's) Naughty ... but nice.  
.....
19. To infinity, and beyond ...  
.....
20. He can run, but he can't hide. (also adapted to You can run, but you can't hide/They can run, but they can't hide)  
.....

### Tenants' Voice Quiz Entry Form

Name: .....

Address: .....

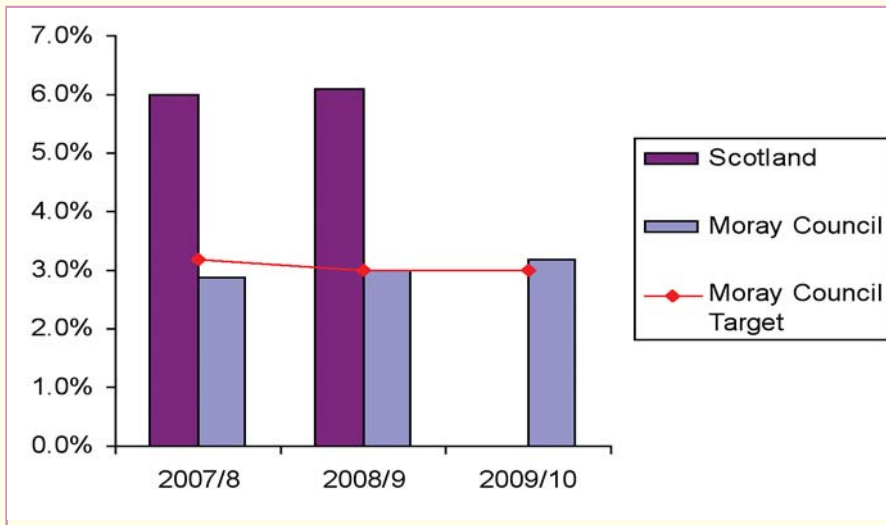
.....

Telephone Number: .....

Email Address .....

**Please return entry forms to: The Tenants' Voice Quiz, Housing Planning & Development, The Moray Council Headquarters, Elgin IV31 1BX or drop it into your local area housing office. Entries received after 1 September 2010 will not be entered into the prize draw. The winner will received a £50 shopping voucher.**

# Housing Performance and Service Standards



## Rent Arrears

We set a target level of rent arrears to be achieved each year. We report our performance against this target.

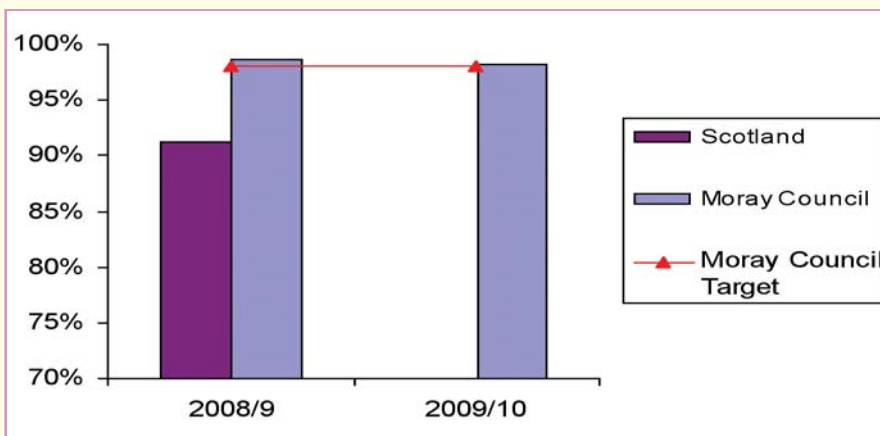
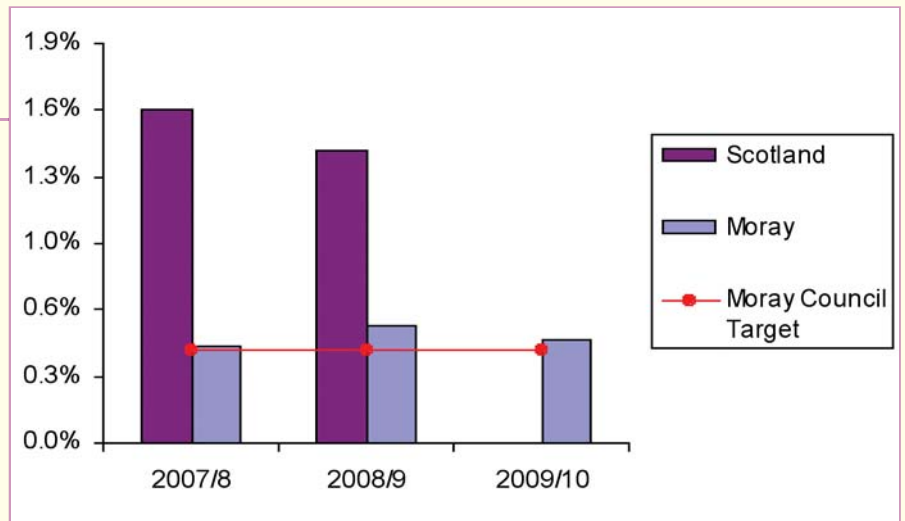
Our rent arrears figure for 2009/10 was 3.18%. Although we didn't quite meet our target, we consistently perform well against the Scottish average.

During the financial year, we evicted five tenants due to rent arrears.

## Empty Property Management

We aim to turn around empty properties as quickly as possible to minimise rent loss and maximise the amount of money available to pay for maintenance and improvements to other properties.

In 2008/9, we were amongst the top performing authorities. In 2009/10, 0.49% of net rental income was lost through empty properties, an improvement on the previous year. However we narrowly missed out on achieving our target of 0.45%.



## Repairs

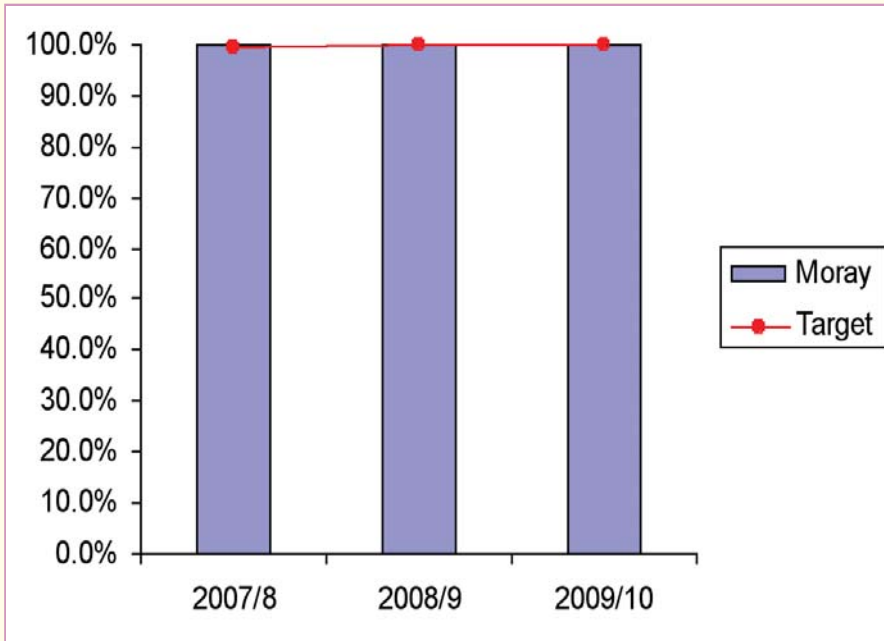
We set and publish targets each year for carrying out repairs within timescales.

In 2008/9 we were the top performing authority in Scotland for completing all response repairs within their target times. In 2009/10, we maintained our strong performance, completing 98.2% of repairs within their target times.

## Gas Safety

**We have valid safety certificates for 100% of properties with gas installations.**

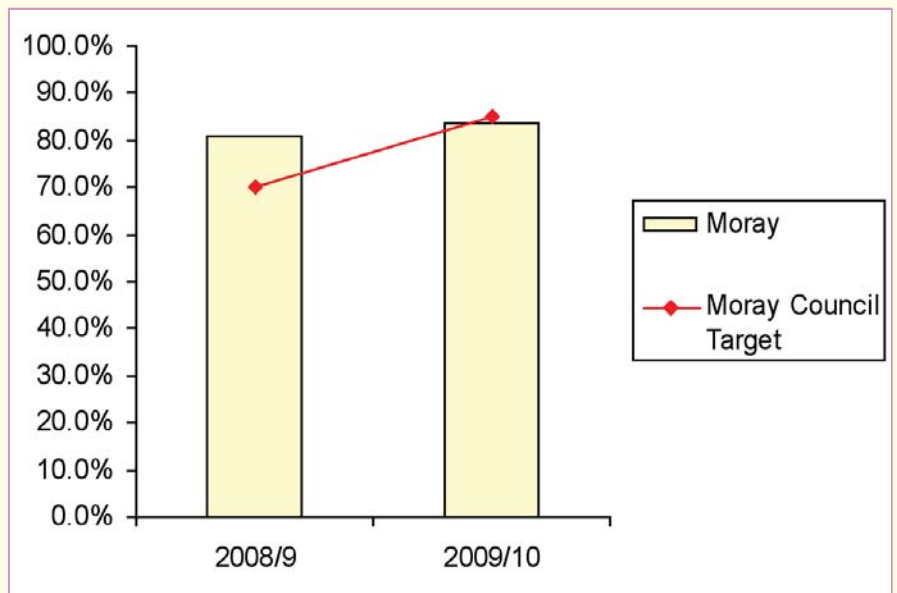
We are continuing to perform well in ensuring properties with gas are serviced annually. In 2009/10, 99.9% of our properties with gas held a valid safety certificate.



## Anti Social Behaviour

**We monitor the extent to which intervention in neighbour disputes and complaints results in improvement.**

In 2009/10, our intervention resulted in an improvement in 83.7% of neighbour dispute cases. We have now introduced a feedback survey to identify areas where you think we can make further improvements to our service.

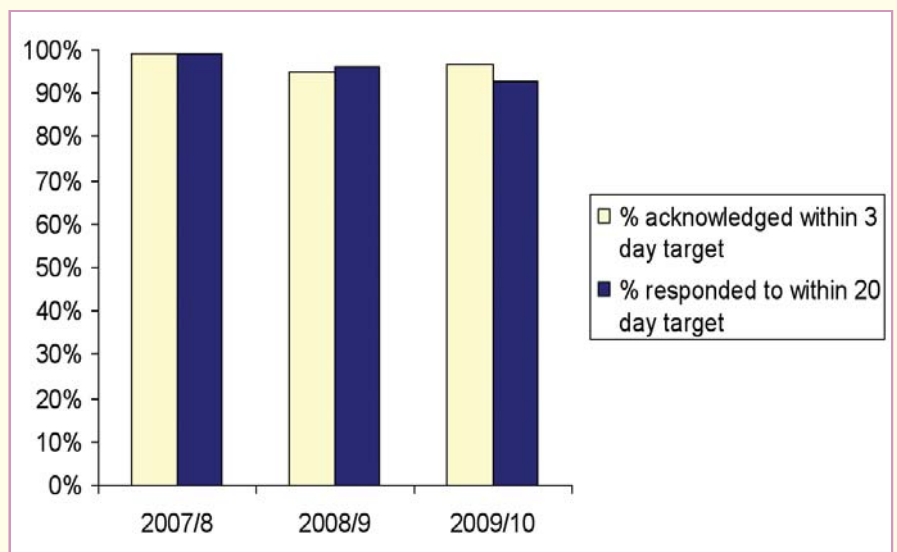


## Handling Complaints

**We aim to respond to complaints within target.**

In 2009/10, we maintained our good performance on handling complaints.

We acknowledged over 94% of complaints within target, a slight improvement from 2008/09, and responded to over 92% within target.



# Interview: Mike Rollo, The Moray Council, General Manager, Building Services

## 1. As the General Manager of Building Services, what is your role within Moray Council?

My role is to ensure that Council properties are repaired and maintained in accordance with the Housing Investment Strategy and Housing Service Delivery Plan. My main role is to manage 120 staff in Building Services DLO who provide response repairs and planned and cyclical maintenance to tenants' homes throughout Moray.

## 2. How long have you been involved in Housing Services?

I have been in local government with Moray Council in my current role for five and a half years. I also have over 20 years experience in the construction industry, previously all in the private sector.

## 3. Prior to joining the Moray Council, which other jobs have you held?

My previous job was as a Construction Manager with a medium-sized national building & civil engineering contractor. Previous roles have all been in the construction industry both locally and abroad, progressing from Assistant Estimator to Quantity Surveyor and then Contracts Manager. I am a Chartered Builder and also have an HND in Quantity Surveying.

## 4. Compared to when you first started, has your role within the Council changed? And if so how?

My role has so far remained similar in my relatively short time with the Council. Local Government is a completely different proposition to the Private Sector, with policy and procedures much more onerous and accountability to the public purse very much in the public profile.

There are a lot of good points, but in comparison to the private sector, the level of autonomy and flexibility is much more restricted.

## 5. Is there anything that you would like to change about your job?

I would like to get away from the desk more often and spend more time on site as I did in previous jobs. The nature of my job and level of management and responsibility make this difficult though.

## 6. What are your views on Tenant Participation?

Having grown up locally in a Council house, I feel that tenants now get much more say and choice in how services are delivered. I think this is excellent and would encourage more tenants to participate in their local tenants' forum, which helps us deliver a service tailored to suit their needs.

## 7. You have worked alongside Tenant Representatives on various groups and committees, but how would you encourage other tenants to get involved in Tenant Participation?

I think customer feedback is important. Participation in tenant surveys, feedback on repairs, etc. helps us improve the service

we provide, as well as gauge how well we are performing. I would actively encourage tenants to feedback their views, which can now be done in a number of ways without necessarily leaving the comfort of your home.

## 8. Moray Council is soon to embark on a programme to Design Better Services (DBS). How do you think this will benefit service users (tenants)?

I have been actively involved in the DBS programme over the past year or so. Service users as well as Council staff will see significant changes over the next few years that, in my opinion, will create a modern forward thinking organisation. Key benefits to tenants include improved access to services through modern customer access points and information technology and a more efficient works scheduling system that will provide an improved and customer focussed repairs service.

## 9. If you could have any job you wanted which would you chose and why?

Apart from my dream jobs of managing Rangers F C or being a Professional Golfer, I actually enjoy being involved in Building & Maintenance. I am a 'local loon' and really enjoy providing a service to the Tenants of Moray. The construction industry has taken me to many places even as far afield as the Falkland Islands, but working locally is the best by far and has many advantages that include a reduced golf handicap!

## 10. Outside work what are your interests? And what do you do to relax?

I have a family of 4 and spend a lot of time with my wife and family. My main hobby is golf and I play regularly at Elgin Golf Club, where I am also a Committee Member. For relaxation, I watch football and occasionally spend some time at the 19th hole.

## 11. And finally, we have to ask, would you quit your job if you won the Lottery?

Having already won it, a tenner that is, I have no intention to quit until such time as I make at least a £1million.



# Summer Security Tips

Securing your home needn't be expensive, or turn it into an unattractive fortress. There are lots of simple things you can do to deter both the opportunist and the determined thief.

Accessible windows and external doors at the rear of houses that are out of sight of neighbours or the general public are especially vulnerable. Ground floor windows and windows accessible from balconies, walkways and adjacent roofs are clearly more at risk than upper level windows that are out of normal reach.

Remember, someone attempting to break into a house endeavours to do so quickly and with the minimum of noise.

Keep your doors and windows locked at all times, even when you are in the house. This will prevent an opportunist thief from sneaking into your home. Houses that appear empty are more at risk than houses that appear to be occupied. If you are leaving your home unattended for any length of time, use timer switches to switch on internal lights automatically, to make it look as if there is someone at home. Remember to cancel all deliveries, and, if possible, have a trusted neighbour collect mail daily to prevent it piling up behind the door.

As additional security measures, you may wish to fit intruder alarms or exterior lighting which activates when movement is detected. Prior to fitting these features you should contact your Area Housing Office to ask if they are ok.

Sheds should be fitted with a good quality hasp and lock and non-returnable screws or coach bolts to the hinges.

Or why not consider joining or setting up a Neighbourhood Watch scheme? This is a partnership where people and organisations, including the police, come together to make their communities safer. It aims to help people protect themselves and their properties and to reduce the fear of crime by means of improved home security, greater vigilance, accurate reporting of suspicious incidents to the police and by fostering a community spirit.



Remember, you must NEVER challenge someone behaving suspiciously or put yourself at risk. If you see something that concerns you, contact:

**Grampian Police**

on

**0845 600 5 700**

or,

**in an emergency,**

**dial 999**

Alternatively, the registered charity Crimestoppers can be contacted on 0800 555 111.

Crimestoppers are independent of the police and government. Callers don't have to give their name or any personal information and calls cannot be traced.

If you require help or information regarding anything mentioned in this article, contact your local **Crime Reduction Officer, PC Ray Walker, on 01224 307110 or call in at Elgin Police Station.**

# Get set for switchover



## What is switchover?

Digital TV switchover is the biggest change in television since the introduction of colour. Analogue signals are about to be switched off and replaced with new digital services. This will make Freeview available to almost every home in Morayshire.

Digital UK is the independent organisation set up by the broadcasters to lead the switchover. It provides an advice line and website to help with general questions about getting digital TV and preparing for the switchover.

Switchover will happen in two stages. If you currently receive your TV signal through an aerial, in either analogue or digital format (e.g. Freeview, Top Up TV, BT Vision), then you'll need to make a note of the information below. Televisions connected to a satellite service are not affected.

**Stage one – 8 September 2010:** In the early hours, analogue BBC Two will be switched off and replaced with a new digital signal. Local 'relay' TV transmitters will also start to broadcast the BBC's other digital channels for the first time.

Readers switching to digital for the first time via Freeview, Top Up TV or BT Vision will now be able to set up their equipment. Homes already watching these services should retune their digital boxes or IDTVs.

## Stage two – 22

**September 2010:** All remaining analogue channels will be switched off and replaced with additional digital services. Everyone watching Freeview, Top Up TV or BT Vision will need to retune their equipment again to receive all available channels.

On both dates, these changes will happen

overnight. For most viewers, services will be restored by the morning. Households receiving their TV signal from local relay transmitters will receive new digital services later in the day and should tune in for the first time or retune from this point.

To watch a short video showing you how to retune, and for specific re-tuning instructions for the most popular Freeview products, visit [digitaluk.co.uk/retuning](http://digitaluk.co.uk/retuning).

## Getting digital TV

If you only receive five or fewer analogue channels through an aerial on any of your sets, you'll need to think about converting them for switchover – otherwise you risk being faced with a blank screen once analogue signals are switched off.

There are three main ways to go digital:

- Convert your existing analogue TV using a digital box (e.g. Freeview, Top Up TV or BT Vision).
- Have a digital TV service, such as satellite or broadband TV, installed for you. Providers include Sky, freesat and Tiscali TV.
- Buy a new TV with digital (Freeview or freesat) built in.

Virtually any TV set, including black and white ones and those without Scart sockets, can be converted using a digital box.

## Common questions

**What about my video recorder?** After switchover, video and analogue DVD recorders will still play back and record, but you won't be able to record one channel while you watch another. If you want to continue doing this after switchover, the simplest way is to get a digital TV recorder. These also allow you to watch one channel while recording another, record a whole series at the touch of a button, and pause and rewind live TV.

**Will I need a new aerial to receive**

**Freeview?** Most rooftop aerials will be fine after switchover but a small proportion of aerials are likely to need replacing to receive Freeview. Digital UK recommends that you wait until after switchover to see if your aerial needs replacing in order to avoid having unnecessary work carried out. You can check whether your existing aerial is likely to be suitable for receiving digital by visiting the aerial test page on teletext page 284.

**Where can I find a good aerial installer?**

Look for a Registered Digital Installer (RDI) with the 'digital tick' logo. Go to [rdi-lb.tv/installers.html](http://rdi-lb.tv/installers.html) or call Digital UK on 0845 650 50 50 for more information. If you can't find an RDI locally, look for someone with Associate RDI or CAI Plus status – or ask your local electrical retailer.

**Where can I get face-to-face advice on**

**switchover?** Digital UK has been working closely with charities to organise local advice points during switchover. These will be staffed by trained volunteers and are open to everyone. There are also Digital UK roadshows in the region. To find out where your local advice point or roadshow will be, visit [digitaluk.co.uk/stvnorthevents](http://digitaluk.co.uk/stvnorthevents) or call 08456 50 50 50.

**What channels will I get?** Which channels you receive will depend on which transmitter you receive your signal from. Viewers served by a local 'relay' transmitter will receive around 15 Freeview channels for the first time. These will include BBC One, BBC Two, STV, Channel 4 and Five, plus all the other channels from the BBC (those funded by the licence fee) and some other services from the public-service broadcasters.

Viewers served by a larger 'main' transmitter will receive these channels as well as some extra services from commercial broadcasters. These extra channels are also available via satellite. You can check which Freeview channels are available in your area by using the postcode checker at [digitaluk.co.uk](http://digitaluk.co.uk), or by calling 08456 50 50 50. This also gives you information about satellite options in your area.



## Digital Switchover: Key Questions for Moray Council Tenants

**What happens if we have our own TV aerial?**

The Council does not normally provide TV aerials for individual properties. In some cases, however, some flatted dwellings or those in areas of poor signal strength have previously been provided with communal TV aerials. If you have your own individual aerial at present, then it will be up to you to upgrade the existing aerial to receive digital TV.

**What will happen if we have an existing communal TV aerial system?**

The Council has carried out a survey of all its known communal TV aerial installations. During this year, the Council will carry out a programme of phased works based on the outcome of this survey.

Where old inoperative systems have been found, these will be removed where tenants have clearly made their own arrangements to receive TV signals either through a satellite dish or their own individual aerial.

Some installations in locations such as our sheltered housing schemes or some larger flatted blocks have already been upgraded, and are ready to receive digital broadcasts.

In locations where it has been impossible to be completely accurate on the number of people still connected to some of the systems or indeed the extent of the system, a phased shutdown of some systems will be implemented. If this results in a loss of signals to properties, the Council will either arrange to upgrade whole or part systems or provide a cash contribution to tenants in order that they can use this as part payment towards making their own arrangements to receive digital signals. The Council will keep tenants affected by this situation fully informed of its plans as they progress.

# Managing Anti-Social Behaviour

Asking you what you think of our services is the first step to making them better. We recently introduced changes to the way we monitor your satisfaction with the way we manage anti-social behaviour complaints. In managing such disputes, the Council employs a range of tools to help resolve matters. In more complex cases this can involve working with other agencies, such as the Police and the Community Mediation Service, to enable outcomes to be reached and the dispute resolved.

Earlier this year, we started sending out questionnaires to tenants, asking for feedback on the effectiveness and overall satisfaction levels on the service we offer in managing complaints of Anti-social Behaviour. The views we gather from these questionnaires will be used to improve how we manage anti-social behaviour and neighbour disputes. Therefore, if you have recently had cause to contact us about a neighbour dispute and received a service from us, it is vital that you take the time to complete and return the questionnaire. We will review the feedback and take action to improve the service we offer you in managing these complaints.

**For further information, please contact your local Area Housing Officer.**

## Is someone you know COMMITTING BENEFIT FRAUD?

The Government estimates that Welfare Benefit Fraud costs each and every family in the United Kingdom £104 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 they are single but actually live with a partner
- People who claim from an address but do not live there
- 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**,

e-mail [fraud@moray.gov.uk](mailto:fraud@moray.gov.uk)

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.**

## FastFacts

Did you know that in  
**2009/10?**

- We carried out over 20,000 repairs to our properties – an average of 3.5 repairs per house
- We re-let 298 houses
- We serviced 4,135 gas appliances in our properties
- We processed 2,567 new applications for housing
- We received 901 applications from homeless households
- We sold 38 homes through Right to Buy (68 in the previous year)
- Our Housing Stock at 31 March 2010 was 5,809
- We evicted 5 tenants for rent arrears