

The Rock Report

CASTLE ROCK EDINVAR
HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Issue 14, Winter 2008

A Scottish Charity No. SC006035

Record turnout for Service Users' Conference



OVER 160 PEOPLE WHO LIVE in supported housing or receive support across Edinburgh and the Lothians attended a recent conference to address some of the issues they face in their daily lives.

The conference was organised by Places for People Scotland Care and Support service users - adults facing a range of challenges including learning disabilities, acquired brain injury and mental health issues, who all require additional support to live as full and rewarding

lives as possible within their community.

Anne Devlin, an active member of the Midlothian Service Users' Committee (pictured with Elaine Monteith, Midlothian Project Manager), opened the event and introduced the day's programme, which included talks or workshops on sexual health, stigma, exercise, healthy eating and use of complementary therapies.

Rhona Murray, Director of Places for People Scotland Care and Support, said: "Everyone's contribution to

the conference was fantastic. "It was fun, thought provoking and emotional with a real feeling of kinship".



A member of **places for people**

Money matters at Christmas

The Christmas season is upon us and along with excited kids and mulled wine it brings the pressure of "how do we pay for it?".

This applies to us as well because our service to tenants is paid for by rental income. We can only continue to provide a good service if rent is paid.

As a result of rent not being paid over the festive season last year, our total rent arrears increased by over £26,000, which is equal to installing ten new fitted kitchens or 15 new bathroom suites!

If you find yourself with money worries, do not ignore it, as this will only make things worse.

You can ask your Housing Officer to refer you to our Income Control Team if you're having problems meeting your rent payments or our Financial Inclusion Team (previously Welfare and Support Team) if you need more detailed money or benefit advice. Or you can contact us directly on 0131 657 0600. We are happy to meet you in any of our offices or at home.

We understand the financial pressures at this time of year but bills still must be paid, including your rent. The enclosed Debt Cruncher leaflet has some useful advice. Don't fall into the trap of spending now and worrying about it later because it's not always easy to do and the sad truth is you can lose your home if you fail to pay your rent.

This won't happen to tenants who take full advantage of the range of advice and assistance we offer. We work hard to avoid eviction but if tenants are not willing to co-operate, sometimes we have no option.

We have evicted 12 households for rent arrears between April and September 2008 and several more cases are due to call in court before the end of the year. Please remember that eviction can be avoided through tenants working with staff to resolve their rent or money problems.

Paying your rent is not a choice. It is a necessity.

Seasons greetings from all at Castle Rock Edinvar

Our offices close at 12.30pm on Wednesday 24 December 2008 and will re-open at 9.00am on Monday 5 January 2009.

You can still report repairs and make rent payments by phoning 0800 432 0007. See page 2 for repairs timescales.

A word from the Chair

As the newly appointed Chairperson of Castle Rock Edinvar, I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself and my fellow Board members.

I joined the Edinvar Board in 2004, and was appointed Vice Chair of Castle Rock Edinvar in 2006. I am Vice Chair and Treasurer of the Scottish Refugee Council, Board member of the Air Transport Users' Council and a Member of the Department of Work and Pensions Ethics Committee.

I have spent 20 years as Chief Executive of a number of Scottish public sector organisations and my interests include quality improvement, governance and customer involvement.

Lindsey Robertson is Head Teacher of Castlevie Primary School. She joined the Board in August 2006 and was recently appointed Vice Chairperson. She has strong interests in developing links between schools and the wider community.

Anthony Andrew is a Chief Property Advisor to the Scottish Government who joined the Castle Rock Board in 1996. He holds several positions of public responsibility and is Scottish Area Co-ordinator for Compassion UK.

Catherine Davies joined the Board this year and is a solicitor who specialises in litigation. She was previously a Trustee of a Welsh Housing Association and Homeless Charity.

Brian Elliot joined the Board this year after recently retiring as a Land Registry Area Manager, where there is a clear focus on customer satisfaction, reliability and speed of service. Brian was previously a Parish Councillor in two English villages.

Martin Gill joined the Edinvar Board in 2004 and he is a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants. He is in charge of the Edinburgh office of PKF accountants and specialises in advising charities and the care home sector.

Munwar Hussian joined the Board this year. He has responsibility for students with additional support needs and employer engagement at a local college. He is involved with various community initiatives and innovative youth programmes and recently undertook work for the Lothian Police Board on Black and Minority Ethnic youth engagement. He is a lay member of the Royal College of General Practitioners and a board member for the Volunteer Centre - Midlothian.

John Lawrie has been a member the Edinvar Board since 1973 and is a retired Investment Manager who was also previously an Edinburgh City Councillor. John was awarded the OBE in 1990 and has been involved with a great number of voluntary organisations over the years, including a period as National Chairperson for the Samaritans.

Neil Miller joined the Board of Castle Rock in 2002. He is a Chartered Surveyor and a Fellow of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and a Member of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators.

Dermott Quinn is a retired Architect and Civil Servant who joined the Castle Rock Board in 1968. He is a Board member of Lothian Homes, Director of Leith Benevolent Association and a member of Stockbridge Community Council.

Simon Shearer is a retired Actuary who joined the Edinvar Board in 1998. He is a Board member of Places for People Scotland Care & Support and Chair of Edinburgh Young Carers Project. Simon is committed to various voluntary organisations in Edinburgh.



David Fraser

Wellgate House office closure

We plan to close our Wellgate House office in the Cowgate which currently provides a housing management service to tenants in Edinburgh city centre.

The same staff will provide the service, but they will now be based at our Head Office. We intend to sell or rent out the building. We are unable to support the costs of two offices within Edinburgh and our Head Office in Craigmillar is the most suitable one to keep.

Throughout December and January we will consult tenants in the city centre on how this change might affect them and what we can do to minimise any disruption.

We will work closely with tenants to ensure this change goes as smoothly as possible and this will include opportunities to discuss any issues with other tenants and staff.

We manage tenancies throughout the rest of Edinburgh from our Head Office in Craigmillar and are confident that we can do the same for our city centre tenants.

If you live in the city centre you will receive a leaflet this month with more information and a feedback form. Please return this with your comments.

Tenant handbook

You should all have received your new Tenant Handbook by now, which includes the following leaflets:

- Our Standards
- Advice & Support
- Moving On
- Your Tenancy
- Keeping your home safe and warm
- Your Home - Repairs, Maintenance & Improvements
- Paying Your Rent
- Keeping informed and getting involved
- Your neighbourhood
- Moving to sheltered housing
- Handy Contacts

If you haven't received your handbook, or if any of these leaflets are missing, please let your Housing Officer know.

We worked closely with tenants on the Area Customer Liaison Panel (ACLP) to ensure that these leaflets were useful, informative and easy to read.

Please let us know what you think of the handbook by phoning 0131 657 0607 or email: customer@castlerockedinvar.co.uk

Mutual respect

As customers, you should expect courtesy and respect from staff, and we should expect the same from you.

This is thankfully the case most of the time but, unfortunately, there have recently been a few incidents of staff being subjected to violence, threats or intimidation from customers while at work.

This is unacceptable and a breach of tenancy conditions. We have taken, and will continue to take, legal action against all tenants who act in this way. We have a right to work without fear of harassment or violence.

Home Repairs

We introduced Home Repairs, our in-house team, in April 2008 in Mid and East Lothian and we expanded it to cover South and East Edinburgh in October.

Over the coming months we will be growing and covering more of Edinburgh.

The aim of the service is to provide a friendly and more flexible appointments based repairs service.

When will my repair be carried out?

We have three repairs categories determined by urgency.

Here's a reminder:

Priority 1: Emergency (24 hours)

Repairs that put your or others' safety, security and health at immediate risk. This includes serious floods requiring immediate attention, complete loss of power to your home (if your neighbours are also affected you should contact your electricity supplier), a blocked toilet if the only toilet in the house or an unsecured door or window.

If you report a repair in the evening we will attend the following morning in most cases unless your safety, security or health is at immediate risk. You need to make sure someone is at home to give us access to carry out emergency repairs.

Priority 2: Urgent (5 working days)

Repairs that will normally affect your convenience or comfort. This includes minor electrical faults, and slow-dripping containable leaks.

Priority 3: Routine (20 working days)

All other repairs to your property and repairs to common areas.

You can still report and query repairs on Freephone **0800 432 0007**.

TRANSFERS - how to bid for choice

Now that we operate a choice based lettings system, you have to bid for advertised properties if you wish to transfer.

Our tenants who are registered on **homehunt** or **EdIndex** can bid for advertised properties at any time, and will get priority over other applicants when an advert includes the statement:

Priority to CRE tenants only.

It is important that you only bid for homes of the size you need in the areas you want. This helps us make sure we offer properties to the right applicants.

In Edinburgh

You must complete an **EdIndex** form and it is essential that you insert Castle Rock Edinvar as the name of your landlord at **Question 8** on **Page 8** to

make sure you get priority for properties aimed at transfer applicants.

All properties are advertised at www.keytochoice.scotsman.com in Monday's Evening News and in the **EH-Key to Choice** supplement available free from council and housing association offices and local libraries.

You can bid for up to three properties each week and you must make sure you are bidding for a property advertised for a **Mover (M)** or **Starter/Mover (S/M)**. You can do this on the website or by returning the slip in the Key to Choice supplement.

In East, West and Midlothian

You must complete a **homehunt** registration form - you should have already been registered if

you were previously on our transfer list.

Once registered, you will receive an information pack and details of priority passes.

All East and Midlothian properties are advertised in the Musselburgh News, East Lothian News, Lothian Times, Peebles Times & Midlothian Advertiser.

All West Lothian properties are advertised in the Herald and Post.

To bid for a property, log on to www.homehunt.info phone us on 0131 657 0679 or write to **Home Finder** at our Head Office quoting your homehunt reference, the property reference and address. Bids must be received by the closing date on the advert.

Shared equity opportunities

Edinburgh - Peffers

We have now sold all homes in the first phase of refurbished properties at the Peffers through the shared equity scheme.

Flats in the second phase are now for sale. The full sale prices range from £85,000 for a 2nd or 3rd floor one bedroom flat to £115,000 for a main door two bedroom flat, which means that a 60% share could cost you as little as £51,000.

This fantastic price includes a fitted kitchen, good size bedrooms, shower over bath, gas central heating, double glazing and floor coverings.

Midlothian - Newtongrange

Former miners cottages in Newtongrange are also for sale through the shared equity scheme for a full sale price of £135,000, which means a 51% share would cost as little as £68,850.

These two bedroom semi detached bungalows have a garden to the front, side and rear, gas central heating and double glazing.

For more information on these properties and the income thresholds, or for an application form, please contact Lynne or Moira in the Home Finder team on 0131 657 0600.

You'll be amazed at what you can afford with Shared Ownership



Prices from £23,750 (25% share)



For more information contact Home Finders Team on 0131 657 0679 or visit www.homeadvantage-edinburgh.co.uk

Harvesters Way, Wester Hailes

On behalf of Castle Rock Edinvar Housing Association, Lothian Homes are marketing Shared Ownership for sale at our development at Harvesters Way, Wester Hailes. There are 12 properties ranging from one to three bedroom.

Prices here range from £95,000 for a one bedroom to £132,000 for a three bedroom, with shared owners able to purchase at 25%, 50% or 75% of these values, and pay an occupancy charge on the remaining share.

Example: You choose a 2 bedroom property at £115,000

Purchase share	Amount you need to find from mortgage/savings	Occupancy charge
... if you purchase a 25% share	£28,750	£175.39/month
... if you purchase a 75% share	£86,250	£76.76/month

To be eligible for this development, applicants must earn under £22,000 for single applicants and £32,541 for larger households.

Priority will be given to Council or Housing Association Tenants and First Time Buyers.



ACLP Scotland



In the past few months we have welcomed four new members to the panel, increasing our diversity and becoming more representative of the tenant population.

You do not require prior skills or knowledge to become an ACLP member, as long as you are willing to learn about the organisation and take part in the meetings. Staff are very supportive and arrange training as required.

We recently benefited from Meeting Skills training, delivered by a professional trainer who observed one of our meetings first to help her focus the training on what she felt would be of particular benefit to us.

If you're interested in getting involved please contact Sarah Chianta on 0131 657 0606 or email customer@castlerockedinvar.co.uk for details of the next meeting. If you would like to contact me directly, Sarah will pass my details on.

Best Wishes
Bernard

Make your voice heard!



Richard Carr of Tranent was the lucky prize draw winner of £50.00 shopping vouchers for taking part in a 'Voice' customer survey.

'Voice' is a group of customers throughout the UK who have volunteered to give us honest feedback. The great thing about it is that it is a 'virtual' consultation group, which means you don't have to attend any meetings and can comment by post or email from the comfort of your own home.

If you want to join 'Voice' please contact Karen Lee on 01772 897253.

Getting a residents' association up and running - our story



L-R: Jeanette Finney, Carol Moore (Secretary), Sarah Jane Welsh, Evelyn Troup (Chair), Walter Robertson (Treasurer), Joe Henderson (Vice Chair), Pauline Leishman, Robert Kemp, Robin Slade (Vice Treasurer)

Cornton in Stirling is a new venture for Castle Rock Edinvar following the recent regeneration of the area. 86 new tenants moved into their brand new homes in 2007 and a number of these residents have worked together to set up a Registered Tenants Organisation (RTO). Here's their story.

Evelyn says

We set up the RTO because we were interested in what was going on in the area and wanted a say in how things are run. A group of residents who want to tackle neighbourhood issues has more impact than one voice.

It has been a challenge, starting with chapping doors and leafleting local residents to drum up interest, which was a bit scary but got a very positive response.

The amount of information we had at our first meeting was overwhelming! Some things seemed insurmountable, like setting up a bank account, writing a constitution and code of conduct, and selecting office bearers but we

overcame this by dealing with it in tiny bites instead of big. It was all in place ahead of our inaugural meeting in November.

Walter says

I've come out of the meetings feeling really positive. It's important to work together and we need to make sure all the money spent on regenerating Cornton doesn't go to waste.

Setting up the group has brought new challenges for all of us but I get a buzz from the meetings, knowing we can really achieve something.

Carol says

I wasn't scared to chap on people's doors, I was really looking forward to the challenge! Evelyn's a good Chairperson and we have a good group of people to work with.

Robin says

It's historical in Cornton that people don't mix with residents in different blocks or streets. The RTO gives a great opportunity to improve community spirit in Cornton and get to know other people in the area.

Joe says

We have so much to achieve but we need to take one thing at a time, we can't run before we can walk! Any disagreements within the group are discussed with no animosity. It's good camaraderie.

Sarah Jane says

One of the first big issues for us is making sure the new play park, due for completion in December, is looked after and used properly because the kids are bored and need somewhere to play. I think people can worry that an RTO will be cliquy but we have done well to avoid this with people from most streets joining up. We're all in this together!

Evelyn sums up

Whatever our motivations for setting up a group, working together makes our goals more achievable. It is hard work, but the enthusiasm is encouraging. It's not just the opinions of the committee members that count and we are looking at how we can reach out to everybody who lives in the area. We have big hopes for what we can achieve!

West side story

Our tenants in West Pilton have endured a number of problematic issues since building work started in 2002. There has been some interest in setting up a tenants' group in the past but this has never got off the ground until recently.

12 tenants in the area, including Zoe Black, have been proactive in getting things up and running and the inaugural open meeting of the group is set for January 2009. The tenants have enjoyed working together for the benefit of the community and have arranged a children's Christmas party thanks to the generosity of John Lewis Stores Ltd. They hope to arrange more social events in future.

Zoe says: I got involved with tenant participation because I want to help build a friendly community, meet my neighbours and improve where I live. I see the group being the voice of the community and I hope that more people will listen to West Pilton tenants and our views on local issues that affect local people. I have found the process of setting up our group very easy because of everyone's commitment and their desire to improve the local area. It doesn't take a lot of time and the benefits are rewarding.

The benefits of setting up a tenants' group include forging friendships and building a good community spirit so we are keen to support tenants to achieve this. We encourage tenants in other communities to consider setting up their own groups.

Please contact your Housing Officer if you want advice or assistance.

Creative Cafe



Our Creative Café runs twice a week mixing crafts, chat, coffee and cake! Photography, felt and jewellery making workshops have produced gorgeous crafts, and there's much more to come.

The free café is run in partnership with Impact Arts and Pilton Youth and Children's Project (PYCP).

If you live in the North Edinburgh area and would like to join our friendly group just come along to the PYCP on West Pilton Brae on Tuesdays or Thursdays 10am - 1pm, or telephone Adele Conn on 0131 659 2933.

More than just homes - *our wider role*

Our vision is to create neighbourhoods where people choose to live, work and prosper. To achieve this we must focus on more than just the homes we provide. We must focus on you, your neighbours and your communities. Having access to the Scottish Government's Wider Role fund enables us to support people to find employment, help tackle poverty and improve our communities.

We received £266,438 of wider role funding this year to support the following projects;

- £123,888 for a Financial Inclusion Project providing free impartial money advice to tenants of five Edinburgh housing associations.
- £35,171 for a Social Care Academy providing pre-employment support to assist people into work in the social care sector.
- £15,232 for Haywired Information and Communication Technology and Digital Inclusion, providing support to increase the range of training opportunities for local residents in Craigmillar.
- £11,200 for Kids In The Street (KITS) supporting the project to extend the number of football sessions they provide in Craigmillar.
- £13,700 for a Creative Cafe at Pilton Youth and Children's Project, providing twice weekly sessions allowing local residents to explore their creative skills.
- £12,337 for an Employability Study supporting Edinburgh housing associations to develop sustainable projects that tackle unemployment.
- £20,274 for parent support groups in East Lothian to help parents with the challenges of bringing up children.
- £4,350 for Gardening Courses in Newtongrange
- £23,522 for a Community Builder in Stirling and Twechar engaging with people in transition neighbourhoods and supporting them into their new homes.
- £6,733 for a Breakfast Club in Twechar for primary school children.



Streetwork Youth Team and activities have included building your own bike at The Bike Station, and then racing it on some fearsome tracks at Glentress. Every fortnight young people of East Craigs show off their footy skills on a portable football pitch run in partnership with Lothian and Borders Police. Activities are jointly run by Community Sports Leader volunteers trained and supported by the Streetwork Youth team. Streetwork are planning a Christmas party with music, DJs and lots more fun stuff.

Streetwork are working with the Scottish Commissioner for Children and Young People (SCCYP) looking at young people's use of space in their community and will be running some exciting groups to get young people involved in the decisions made in their local community.

You can let them know what you would like to see happening in your community by phoning 0131 476 2023 or mailing them on Bebo.

East Craigs is a neighbourhood of choice for many but boredom and a lack of activities can result in some young people hanging out at the park or getting into trouble. Until now: Streetwork's Youth Team are in East Craigs offering street based activities to young people.

The project started in August and is aimed at 11-21 year olds providing informal education, access to services, advice and much more. They also provide one-to-one sessions for those who need extra support, looking at issues such as anti-social behaviour, running away from home, education, volunteering and employment opportunities.

There's never a dull moment with the

Have your say on tackling worklessness

Over 65% of our customers are not in employment. Many people face real challenges in terms of accessing employment and, with recent and upcoming changes to the welfare system, we want to make sure we provide the right support and advice to help people access good quality employment opportunities.

Over the next three months we will be researching the barriers our customers face in getting into work and what we and other housing associations can do to help them. We want to hear your experience of looking for work, including difficulties you have faced.

Please call Heather to have your say.



If you'd like the chance to work with an interior designer to develop the ideas and skills to turn your flat or house into a home, FabPad could help.

We could give you a budget to spend on paint, furnishings and materials so your design ideas can become a reality!

We currently run weekly workshops:

Tuesdays **Wester Hailes and Cornton**
Wednesdays **Muirhouse and Culterhove**
Thursdays **Craigmillar**

Please contact Clare for more information. For the Edinburgh workshops you can also contact John McCann (Fab-Pad Co-ordinator) on 0131 659 2933 or email: john@impactarts.co.uk

Green fingers

If you live in Newtongrange and want to understand the basics of gardening, we are running free taster courses for people with little or no experience.

Please contact Heather for more information.

We consulted residents of Roxburgh Street, Pleasance and Drummond Street about the communal area at the back of their homes in October.

Several families are keen to help us rejuvenate the tired shrub beds and make improvements to the area.

There will be another chance for you to share your views on Tuesday 2 December at the Pleasance Day Centre on West Adam Street anytime between 3pm and 7pm.

Just call in or contact Clare to let us know what you think.



Life in Rosewell

Rosewell is the latest area to be covered by one of our Neighbourhood Plans.

If you live, work, or play in the village we want to hear what you think of it and what it's like to live, work or play there. The good, the bad and the ugly!

Please contact Clare if you want to take part or if you know of someone we should talk to.

Need to develop IT Skills to get work?

Haywired IT Centre in Craigmillar is a free community learning resource that provides training courses, public access and information relating to Information Technology.

As part of our wider role support we are providing funding to enable the centre to become part of the Edinburgh Community Technology Academy (ECTA). ECTA offers free IT training to job seekers in the Edinburgh area. For example you can study to become a Microsoft Office Specialist or a Cisco Certified Entry Network Technician. Both these qualifications will help you get employment.

If you are interested in these or other courses please contact Karen Malone on 0131 442 1400 or visit the website www.ecta.org.uk

If you have any ideas for projects which would make a difference in your area or would like further information about any of the projects mentioned above please contact Heather or Clare in the Neighbourhoods team:
heather.macnaughton@castlerockedinvar.co.uk - 0131 657 0633 or clare.halliday@castlerockedinvar.co.uk - 0131 657 0668

Culterhove



We have completed the first phase of a mixed tenure development in Culterhove, including improved community and recreational facilities, with support and funding from the Scottish Government and Stirling Council.

We have been working with the Council and local residents since 2004 on a programme involving demolition of hard to let and difficult to live in Council owned properties and the building of new homes and community facilities, and it was officially opened on 2 October 2008.

The local community has been involved in both shaping and delivering the project. See page 4 for an example of how this has brought the community together.

Roseberry Park



We completed our Roseberry Park development in Deans South, Livingston in January which was part-funded by the Scottish Government and West Lothian Council.

It was officially opened on 4 September 2008 when residents and children from a local primary school buried a time capsule and we planted a tree to mark the spot.

Roseberry Park provides much needed housing for tenants displaced from the Deans South Estate as well as a children's play area and amenity space.



Comparing and switching gas and electricity suppliers is so simple using our online calculator.

By entering information from your recent bills you can make an accurate comparison and save money. You can even save your quote for up to 90 days, during which time any price updates are automatically applied.

Best of all the service is completely free and as a domestic customer you are free to change energy suppliers at any time.

Try it out www.placesforpeople.co.uk/save



Freecycle helps you dispose of unwanted items and ask for things you need. It's run by volunteers who put people in touch, saving money and keeping things out of landfill.

There are loads of things on it from computers and washing machines to jam jars and baby clothes.

And it's all free! No money changes hands.

Join the Edinburgh group, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FreecycleEdinburgh>

You can pop into one of our offices for help if you don't have internet access.

We also sometimes advertise household items that tenants leave behind.

Benefits - new backdating rules

Housing & Council Tax Benefit

If you are 60+ and you don't have a partner who is claiming Income Support or income based Job Seeker's Allowance, the Council can backdate these benefits 3 months from the date of your claim.

They should do this automatically but may need earlier income or savings details.

If you're under 60, and have a reason for being unable to claim earlier, you can request backdating for up to 6 months, but this will only be paid if you can show you had 'good cause' for failing to claim at the right time.

This rule also applies to men aged 60-64 in receipt of Income Support or Job Seekers Allowance.

Good cause could include being unable to manage personal affairs due to physical

or mental health problems, personal trauma or bereavement, difficulty communicating in English, difficulty reading or writing, or receiving incorrect information from an adviser from a relevant organisation.

Lone Parents and Income Support

You will no longer receive Income Support for being a lone parent unless your youngest child is younger than 12 years old, reducing to younger than 10 in October 2009, and younger than 7 in October 2010.

This will not affect lone parents who receive Income Support for another reason, such as incapacity for work.

If you have any difficulties with the above, please contact the Financial Inclusion Team on 0131 657 0600 for advice and assistance.



Savings Scheme

We have joined forces with Dunfermline Building Society to offer a savings scheme exclusively for tenants and sharing owners who wish to save.

Benefits of the scheme include:

- you only need £1 to open an account
- DBS will even provide a £1 voucher to open the account
- You can save as much or as little as you like
- It has a competitive rate of interest
- It gives you instant access to your money
- You'll get a LINK card allowing you to withdraw cash from cash machines and ATMs (automatic teller machines)

To open an account you first of all need to contact your Housing Officer who will provide confirmation that you are a tenant or sharing owner and will explain what you need to confirm your identity.

They should also be able to give you a leaflet that includes a £1 voucher.

The next stage is to complete an application form, which you can get from us or from any DBS branch, and take it to a branch with your voucher and relevant identification.

You can even keep the savings account and the same interest rate if you move house or are no longer a tenant.

Visit www.dunfermline.com or call 0845 402 0398 to find your nearest branch.

Open an account by the end of January 2009 and we will enter you into a prize draw to win a luxury hamper!

Green energy

I have been a tenant of this housing association for over 10 years and, until recently, I was a researcher with a Social Inclusion Partnership in Edinburgh.

I have a longstanding interest in environmental issues and I am a supporter of the Campaign Against Climate Change.

The last issue of the Rock Report included suggestions for greening your lifestyle. As this is a topic of great importance to me, I'd like to share some more suggestions.

You can change your electricity provider to one that supplies more green energy. This works by electricity being produced from sources such as; wind, solar, hydro, wave and tidal power which do not cause carbon emissions that increase climate change. www.greenelectricity.org

Energy comparison sites also give you the option of selecting green suppliers in your search.

Edinburgh Community Energy Co-operative (ECEC) Ltd was formed at the end of 2007, to give Edinburgh residents a vehicle to develop and promote renewable energy in Edinburgh. ECEC encourages

people from all walks of life to be part of the 'renewable revolution', to get involved in the race against climate change and help prevent the consequences of increasing global temperatures and rising sea levels.

www.edinburghcommunityenergy.btik.com

The Transition Towns movement has been set up to raise awareness of climate change and peak oil issues and the effects they will have on a global scale and smaller communities, but also to develop the resilience of individuals and communities. www.transitionedinburgh.org.uk

Changeworks provide people with the information they need to make choices that lessen their impact on the environment. They have developed a number of useful resources to reduce impacts on the environment and save money. www.changeworks.org.uk

I was pleased to be given the opportunity to share my views via the Rock Report. I hope you find this information interesting and useful.

Stephen

Cure for the cold



Our repairs line is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, even at Christmas, so we will be on hand to help if you do have burst or frozen pipes this winter, but here are some tips to help prevent them:

- Try to keep the temperature around 15°C (even when your home is empty).
- Drain your heating system if you're going to be away for a while, and make sure a neighbour has a key or knows how to contact someone who does in case of an emergency.
- Know where your 'stopcock' is so you can shut off the water supply to your home if you have a burst pipe. It is usually, but not always, under the kitchen sink and usually turns clockwise to shut off the water supply.
- If you live in a flat, please check that your neighbours' water supply is not affected when you shut off the stopcock.
- You can phone us on **0800 432 0007** if you can't find your stopcock, it is difficult to turn, or you don't know how to drain your heating system.

If you have a frozen pipe (no hot or cold water from your taps):

- Phone **0800 432 0007** to report it.
- Turn off your stopcock, immersion heater and central heating and allow solid fuel fires to die down.
- Drain the system by opening cold taps but never hot taps as this could cause your water cylinder to collapse.
- Check for obvious burst or sprung joints and gently thaw using a hairdryer, fan heater or heated cloths.

DO NOT:

- Use an intense heat to thaw the pipe, as this could burst it.
- Switch on the central heating boiler or immersion heater to thaw out the pipe.

If your pipes burst:

- Phone **0800 432 0007** to report it.
- Turn off your stopcock and turn on your taps to drain the system.
- Turn off your boiler or immersion heater connected to your hot water system.
- Collect water in a basin to minimise water damage to your home, and store it in the bath or another large container for washing, flushing toilets, etc.
- You can do a temporary repair to a burst pipe by binding it tightly with a cloth or tape, but it is important that a proper repair is carried out by a qualified plumber as soon as possible.
- Turn off the electricity supply if there is a chance water is coming into contact with electrical fittings or wires - water and electricity can be a deadly combination!
- And finally, if water is collecting in your ceiling, you can prevent further damage by piercing the bulge and collecting the water in a basin.

Inspection

The Scottish Housing Regulator, part of the Scottish Government will inspect Castle Rock Edinvar and the services we provide in March 2009.

The Regulator is there to protect the interests of tenants and service users, to ensure continued provision of decent homes and services, value for money, financial viability and to maintain the confidence of funders.

They will assess our performance against Performance Standards set by the Government. We periodically assess our own performance against these standards and are in the process of doing this at the moment in preparation for inspection.

We want you to help us by testing our performance against the standards and we'll be making arrangements to do this early next year. We plan to run sessions in the offices but you can also get involved by post and email. Please complete and return the tear off slip if you want to take part.

We will write directly to tenants groups and tenants who have already told us they'd like to participate in assessing our performance. There will be more information in the Spring Rock Report due out in March. For more information contact Shelley Hutton on 0131 657 0607 or email shelley.hutton@castlerockedinvar.co.uk

You can read about the Scottish Housing Regulator and the work they do by going to their web site www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk

I am interested in testing your performance against the following standard/s (please tick)

Equal opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	Policies and procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	Continuous Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>
Governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Resource management	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homelessness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Procurement	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sustainability	<input type="checkbox"/>
Property Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	Responsiveness to service users	<input type="checkbox"/>
Property Maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Information and advice	<input type="checkbox"/>
Services for Owners	<input type="checkbox"/>	Complaints and appeals	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tenant Participation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Performance Reporting	<input type="checkbox"/>
WiderRole	<input type="checkbox"/>	Openness and confidentiality.	<input type="checkbox"/>

I'd like to get involved in the following way:

Attend meetings with staff

Postal feedback

Email feedback

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Return to: Freepost RLXE-CSKC-AJAJ, Castle Rock Edinvar Housing Association Ltd, 1 Hay Avenue, Edinburgh, EH16 4RW

Good Neighbour of the Year Award

We are surrounded by people who do good things everyday. Star Awards recognises the outstanding achievements of our colleagues and our customers.

Do you know a Castle Rock Edinvar customer who gives up their time for their neighbours and gives something back to their community? If so, why not nominate them for the "Good Neighbour of the Year" award.

You can download a nomination form www.placesforpeople.co.uk/starawards or you can ask your local office to send you a form.

All entries must be received by March 2009, when the shortlist for nominees will be selected.

The winner and runner up will be invited to an Awards Ceremony in May 2009.

All is calm

It is worth remembering that, as well as being a time of joy and celebration, Christmas can be a difficult time with lasting consequences for many people.

It is even more important to show consideration for our neighbours at this time of year.

Noise disturbance from a Christmas party can cause as much distress as at any other time so we must all respect the fact that some people like to have a quiet Christmas.

Complaints about anti-social behaviour are not treated less seriously by us or by the police just because of the time of year.

So please make sure that we all have a happy Christmas and new year but more importantly a safe and peaceful time.

We are happy to translate this or any other Castle Rock Edinvar document into other languages. Please telephone 0131 657 0600 for more information. Telephone interpretation is available.

আমরা এই বিজ্ঞপ্তি বা অন্য কোন কাসল রক এডিনভার (Castle Rock Edinvar) সম্পর্কিত বিজ্ঞপ্তি অনুবাদ (বাংলায়) করে দিতে পারলে খুশী হব। বিশদ ভাবে জানার জন্য দয়া করে 0131 657 0600 - এ ফোন করুন। টেলিফোন সংলাপে ভাষান্তরের সুবিধা আছে।

我們很樂意將這份或其他Castle Rock Edinvar (城堡岩石)的文件翻譯成(語言)。請打電話到0131 657 0600來得到更多的信息。我們有電話解釋(口譯)。

سنكون سعداء لترجمة هذا المنشور أو أي من منشورات كاسل روك اينڤار Castle Rock Edinvar إلى اللغة العربية. للمزيد من المعلومات يرجى الاتصال هاتفياً على الرقم 0131 657 0600. الترجمة من خلال الهاتف متوفرة عند الحاجة.

ہم "کاسل راک ایڈنوار" کی اس دستاویز یا کسی دوسرے کاغذات کا اردو میں ترجمہ کرتے ہوئے خوشی محسوس کرتے ہیں۔ براہ مہربانی مزید معلومات کے لیے ٹیلیفون نمبر 0131 657 0600 پر فون کریں۔ ٹیلیفون پر ترجمانی کی سروس بھی دستیاب ہے۔

Z przyjemnością przetłumaczymy każdy dokument z Castle Rock Edinvar na język obcy. Więcej informacji uzyskasz pod numerem telefonu 0131 657 0600. Możliwe są również tłumaczenia telefoniczne.

We would like to apologise for any problems you experienced reporting repairs on our Freephone number on Saturday 8 November 2008. Phone lines were reported down shortly before 10am and normal service was resumed by 7pm. We are very sorry for any inconvenience or distress caused by this failure.

Can You Read This?

We can provide all Castle Rock Edinvar documents in large print, Braille or audio tape. If you would like to request this service contact Elinor Baines on 0131 657 0605

HEAD OFFICE

1 Hay Avenue
Edinburgh
EH16 4RW

0131 657 0600

CENTRAL EDINBURGH AREA OFFICE

Wellgate House
200 Cowgate
Edinburgh, EH1 1NQ

0131 225 2299

MID/EAST LOTHIAN AREA OFFICE

79 Main Street
Newtongrange
Midlothian, EH22 4NA

0131 660 5754

WEST LOTHIAN AREA OFFICE

Pentland House
Almondvale South
Livingston, EH54 6NG

01506 436 530

Opening hours:

Monday - Thursday
9.00am - 5.00pm
Friday
9.00am - 4.00pm

Monday - Thursday
9.00am - 12.30pm
1.30pm - 5.00pm
Friday
9.00am - 12.30pm
1.30pm - 4.00pm

Monday - Wednesday
9.00am - 12.30pm
1.30pm - 5.00pm
Thursday
10.00am - 12.30pm
1.30pm - 5.00pm
Friday
9.00am - 12.30pm
1.30pm - 4.00pm

Monday & Wed-Friday
9.00am - 12.30pm
Tuesday
10.00am - 12.30pm
Telephone Contact
Only:
1.30pm - 5.00pm
(4.00pm Friday)

Repairs Number Freephone 0800 432 0007

email repairs to: contactcentre@placesforpeople.co.uk

Internet: www.placesforpeople.co.uk/customerservices

Please be advised that when reporting an emergency repair you should phone the freephone number to ensure it receives priority

Email: customer@castlerockedinvar.co.uk (general enquiries)