

A New Face - a New Start - a New Future!

Hello, I'm Bob McDougall and I am delighted to introduce myself as the successor to Roger Trueman as Chief Executive of Trust Housing Association. Perhaps I should provide a few brief facts on my background to give you an idea of what experience I bring to the job.

Background

I started in Housing at the bottom and worked my way up, with the result that I have done most housing jobs in my time. I started my career in 1974 when I joined Motherwell District Council just after the creation of the new Councils following local government reorganisation. I was there for just over two years before leaving to join Livingston Development Corporation.

1982 saw me move to Falkirk District Council firstly as Housing Manager for Grangemouth and then as Principal Officer. After five years I moved to Ross and Cromarty District Council in 1987 as Director of Housing until local government reform in 1996 when I moved to Dumfries and Galloway Council to head up the Client Services Division. In 2000 I moved to Melville Housing Association as Chief Executive, before finally being lucky enough to be chosen to follow Roger.

The Future

So there you have it, the concise and potted history of where I came from. But what about where we're going?

This is an exciting and challenging time for all Housing Associations. But at Trust we have one enormous advantage on our side - the enthusiasm and commitment of the staff employed in the organisation. Already, in my short time with the Association I have been very, very impressed by the professionalism and the very real personal concerns that staff have for all of our clients and the services we provide. The people working for an organisation will make or break it, and in the Trust staff we have a workforce second to none!

But needs change as do people's expectations. Historically we have been providers of Sheltered Housing, which has impacted hugely on many people's lives and



improved their quality of life enormously. The last few years have seen us respond to changing aspirations by tailoring our services to better reflect the demands of our customers and clients with the inclusion of very sheltered housing, including support for dementia, care homes as well as general needs housing. People change, their hopes and aspirations change, so we need to change with them to make sure we provide the services that our customers want.

Our Approach Going Forward

The future will undoubtedly bring more rules, regulation, financial pressures and many more challenges overall - but our response is not to fear change but to relish the challenge and mould the changes to best suit the needs of our clients.

Next year offers the prospect of consolidating our achievements to date as well as

Development staff conference 2005

This year's conference was held on 12 & 13 October at the Edinburgh Conference Centre at Heriot Watt University, Edinburgh. Despite appalling weather on the first day, over 100 delegates from all our developments and a number of office staff attended the varied and interesting sessions.

For many staff, this was their first opportunity to meet Bob McDougall, our new Chief Executive, who opened the conference focusing on his vision of the future for Trust and the importance of staff to the organisation - illustrated by some interesting photographs!



George Veryan then followed with the very topical issue of Performance Standards, something which is of importance to everyone at Trust.

The mix of workshops for the remainder of the morning and the early part of the afternoon was varied with staff being able to choose between 'Fun at Work', 'Elderly Abuse', 'Telecare' and 'Occupational Therapy'. All of these had good reviews with Fun at Work being particularly enjoyable (even if you didn't win the Curly Wurly).

Jane Prior then provided an update of the progress of SVQs,

followed by Ann Love giving us an excellent ode to her experiences of studying for her SVQ4 - well done Ann!

The conference dinner was followed by Peter Murray's quiz, which has become a regular and enjoyable feature of the conference over the last few years.

The second day brought better weather and a further mix of interesting topics. Bill McSkimming opened with an update on Health & Safety Issues. This was followed by a further selection of workshops on 'Challenging Behaviour', 'Moovin' About', 'Welfare Benefits' and 'Crime Prevention'. Again, we had some of our own staff presenting three of these workshops - well done to Elspeth McLennan, Susan McLaughlin, Ros Smith and Aisha Nadeem.



The feedback from the conference has been very positive in terms of the content. We have been a little disappointed with Heriot Watt as a venue and this would appear to be the same from the feedback given. It's always difficult when you move venue and things are just not quite the same. Although no firm arrangements have been made for next year's conference, we will take on board your



After lunch, we had a very entertaining and interesting motivational speaker - Ali Atwell who spoke to us about 'Recharging your Batteries' - she kept us very entertained, with plenty to think about - laughing and then dancing in the aisles (yes, really!).

comments, particularly in regard to the venue and as soon as we can confirm details, we will let you know.

Thank you for everyone for taking such an active part in this year's conference and we hope that you found it enjoyable and beneficial.

IT Survey IT Survey IT Survey IT Survey

Earlier this year some 85% of Customer Services staff (both office and development based staff with access to Trust's computer network) completed and returned an "IT and You" questionnaire.

The aim of the survey was to give staff the chance to self-assess their competence and confidence in using the IT hardware and software currently available to them, as well as offering the opportunity to comment on areas where they felt they individually and/or the Association at large could make more effective use of IT, as well as to identify any work related IT training needs.

Thanks to all who took the time and trouble to complete the questionnaire. Apologies for the delay in providing feedback and outcomes - issues such as retiring Chief Executives, and office moves kind of got in the way!

Some of the key responses were

- 100% of office and development staff use Email
- 96% (office) and 92% (development) use Microsoft Word
- 86% (office) and 67% (development) use Microsoft Excel, and
- 55% of office staff use IBS as essential packages in delivering their work responsibilities.
- Of the above, 36% of office staff identified Excel and IBS as software where additional training was required to improve their effectiveness.
- For development staff Outlook (25%), Excel (17%) and Word (17%) were identified for

further training.

- 91% of office staff, as against 33% of development staff felt very or generally confident in their use of IT hardware/software.

Some key themes were

- IBS is an underused resource for office staff
- How we deliver training as part of the roll out of IT to developments should be reviewed
- Speed of operation for some locations out of the Edinburgh has been problematic.

Action taken to date on the findings includes

- The Senior Management Team has considered the summary report.
- A new specification for the delivery of IT training to development based staff is almost completed and will be sent to the DBSA for comment/consideration.
- Consideration is being given to the possible benefits of Trust commissioning one specific trainer to deliver IT training to development based staff.
- Moving users onto Terminal Server and where necessary upgrading hardware is being progressed between now and the end of the financial year.
- IBS are to be commissioned to carry out a review of the Association's use of IBS and to make recommendations to the Association. The aim is to have IBS staff on site late January 2006 to carry out this evaluation.
- Commitment has been given to introducing regular training

aimed at new staff and refresher training for existing staff where required, on use of email, Calendar, File structures on I drive, use of Templates etc.

- Commitment has been given to ensuring that all job specifications and job adverts clearly set out the level of IT skills & knowledge required of new post holders.

A copy of the summary report is available on I drive at Common Files Directory / IT, or if you are not linked to the network, by contacting Maureen Green or Kat McEntegart on 0131 444 1200.

developing and building service improvements for the future. I intend getting out and about to visit our developments and to meet as many of our staff and tenants as possible. I want to hear from the consumers of our services directly, just exactly what they think of how we do our job and whether or not they think they get value for money. You also need to tell us if we are doing a good job!

With Christmas just around the corner, let me wish you a very happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

2006 brings the excitement of a brand new year and the feeling of a new start with the opportunities to really make improvements for the year ahead. I look forward to getting out to meet you and speak to as many people as possible.

With best wishes
Bob McDougall

Equal Opportunities



The work of the Equal Opportunities team has been nationally recognised in recent months and they have received the following awards/commendations for their initiatives to promote equal opportunities:

- UK Diversity awards - winner of "Excellence in Diversity Practice" award for the Happy to Translate Logo initiative
- RaceActionNet - received "Highly Recommended" certificate for the Happy to Translate Logo initiative. Communities Scotland nominated the initiative as a member organisation of RaceActionNet.
- UK Housing Awards 2005 - the Association's "Housing Equal Opportunities Programme" was a finalist in the category of Outstanding Achievement in Social Housing in Scotland.

In addition, a joint application from Trust, Hanover and Bield has been successful in securing funding of £108,000 over three years from Communities Scotland and the Capital City Partnership. The funding will be used to employ a part-time member of staff in the newly created post of Job Opportunities Support Officer to work on the associations' equal opportunities programme. The objective of the project is to improve access to job opportunities in housing and public sector by Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) communities in Edinburgh and the Lothians. The project will start in January 2006 and we will be making contacts with individuals and organisations in the New Year.

For further information on the project please contact Rohini Sharma on 0131 444 4950.

Mini profiles

Name: Terri Mullen
Position: Finance Assistant
Development/office: Edinburgh
Length of time at Trust: 5 years
What job did you do before joining Trust: payroll in a hotel
Hobbies/interests: drinking, clubbing, sports esp. running
Favourite holiday destination: Las Vegas
Favourite food: Chinese food

Name: Alec Gunn
Position: Sheltered Housing Co-ordinator
Development/office: Stockbridge, Edinburgh
Length of time at Trust: 5 years in total (previously relief at Abbeyhill)
What job did you do before joining Trust: 20 years with Scottish Ambulance Service
Hobbies/interests: golf, football - watching not playing
Favourite holiday destination: Cyprus - been 12 times
Favourite food: a large steak

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 2006

Glasgow

Monday	2	Jan
Tuesday	3	Jan
Friday	14	Apr
Monday	17	Apr
Monday	01	May
Monday	29	May
Monday	17	July
Monday	25	Sept
Monday	25	Dec
Tuesday	26	Dec

Edinburgh

Monday	2	Jan
Tuesday	3	Jan
Monday	17	April
Monday	25	Dec
Tuesday	26	Dec

Inverness

Monday	2	Jan
Tuesday	3	Jan
Monday	6	Feb
Friday	14	April
Monday	17	April
Monday	3	July
Monday	2	Oct
Monday	6	Nov
Monday	25	Dec
Tuesday	26	Dec

Congratulations to:

Gerry Brennan, Housing Officer in Edinburgh, and his wife Nicola on the birth of their daughter Katie in June.
Angela McGuinness, Housing Assistant in Glasgow, on the birth of her daughter, Olivia, in July.

Gail Mathison, Housing Officer in Glasgow, on the birth of her daughter, Isla, also in July.

Tenant Participation award



Trust in partnership with Hanover (Scotland) Housing Association has won the Participation in Supported Housing award, sponsored by TPAS Scotland, Chartered Institute of Housing in Scotland, Communities Scotland and the Lovell Partnership.

The Good Practice Award recognises the work of the Associations whose approaches to tenant and resident participation have been particularly innovative. The award

was received by Diane McDonald, Tenant Participation Officer and Gail Gourlay, Head of Housing Services. Their work also gives landlords, tenants and residents an opportunity to share and learn from the achievements and successes of others.

Lesley Baird, Chief Executive of TPAS, said: "Hanover and Trust's tenant participation programme overcame the difficulties of many tenants' lack of physical ability, confidence

and motivation. It has generated the impetus for the development of a number of new tenant associations, with positive drive and enthusiasm for change."

Diane said: "Tenant participation was hesitant at the beginning of the initiative, but in the first year Trust has registered 4 new tenant organizations, organised a programme of training, involved tenants in policy reviews, consulted over development of the newsletter and even helped tenants get involved in lobbying at a national level."

FOR DEVELOPMENT STAFF

If you wish to put up candles in the Communal areas, consult with your Housing Officer first and secondly if you put candles in the communal areas ensure staff extinguish them and don't leave it to tenants.

Mission Place, Motherwell

Construction of Trust's newest development is well underway in Motherwell. The development as a whole will provide high quality mainstream housing to enhance the housing choices available to people in the area and Trust is responsible for the construction of a very sheltered housing unit. The project has been designed in partnership with



Persimmon Partnerships and Hypostyle Architects based on principles of sustainability and energy consciousness.

The development is progressing well and all mainstream houses have been completed and sold. Our own development is slightly behind programme but the contractor is optimistic that it will be finished in May 2006.

Care Commission Inspections

As many of you will be aware, and for those of you for whom this is news (where have you been?!), the Care Commission has been inspecting some of Trust's developments over the last couple of months. The reports are beginning to come in and they are very good, so well done to all of you and thank you for your hard work.

One of the issues that the care commission has identified is that the staff have not been provided with enough information about which branch your development is in. Below is a list of the developments with the branch number to aid you in identifying which branch your development belongs to and who the branch manager is.

Branches

Branches are the collective term that the Care Commission has used for a group of developments, which are managed by a Housing Officer or "Branch Manager".

Arran **Fay Reid** MacKelvie Rd, Arran Glen Estate, Arran

Branch 1 **Julia Leonard** Donald Caskie Sqr, Bowmore • East Kirk Crt, Greenock • St Margaret's Crt, Greenock • Strathtay Ave, Netherlee, Glasgow • Leodamus Pl, Port Ellen • Manse Gds, Strachur • Eastwood Cres, Thornliebank • Glen Iosal, Tobermory

Branch 2 **Stephania McGrath** Victoria Court, Ayr • Parkhead Crt, Dumfries • Old Street, Girvan • Fineview Cres, Glenluce • Greenbank Crt, Langholm • Ashgrove Crt, Newton Stewart • Dalrymple Crt, Stranraer • Drumlanrig View, Thornhill

Branch 3 **Jackie McLean** Dunrobin Gdns, Airdrie • Appleyard Crt, Bellshill • Forrestfield Gdns, Caldercruix • Germiston Cres, East Kilbride • Miller Pk, Hamilton • Hunthill Rd, High Blantyre • Ravens Crt, Motherwell • Houldsworth Crt, Wishaw

Branch 4A **Catriona Robertson** Waterside Rd, Carmunnock • Ramillies Crt, Clydebank • Ashcroft Drive, Croftfoot • Crown Ter, Glasgow • Church Place, Old Kilpatrick • Shawholm Cres, Pollokshaws

Branch 4B **Ann Love** Lochar Crescent, Pollok

Branch 5 **Lorraine Fitzsimons** Schaw Crt, Bearsden • Abercromby St, Calton • Collins Crt, Darvel • Elder St, Govan • Main St, Newmils

Branch 6 **Carol Fraser** Farr Cres, Helmsdale • Lower Kessock St, Inverness • Kirk Road, Lochinver • Whinnieknowe Gds, Nairn • Shulishader Beag, Portree • Mathison Road, Stornoway • Lewis Street, Stornoway

Branch 7 **Gerry Brennan** Bedford Crt, Alloa • West Lodge Gdns, Alloa • The Loaning, Chirnside • Kirkriggs Crt, Forfar • Beech hill Crt, Forfar • Cornmill Road, Galashiels • South Gardens, Lauder High St, Tillicoultry

Branch 8 **Sheila Hook** North Church St, Callander • Montrose Ter, Edinburgh • Bingham Dr, Edinburgh • Kirk Loan, Edinburgh • Queens bay Cres, Edinburgh • Deanhaugh St, Edinburgh

Branch 9 **Neil Wilkinson** St Andrew's Ct, Burntisland • Whitelaw Crt, Dunfermline • Manse Crt, East Calder • Viewforth Crt, Kinghorn • Crusader Crt, Livingston • Balbirnie Crt, Markinch

Halloween parties



A number of developments held Halloween parties for staff and tenants and the photos are of Loanhead and West Lodge Gardens' events - scary!



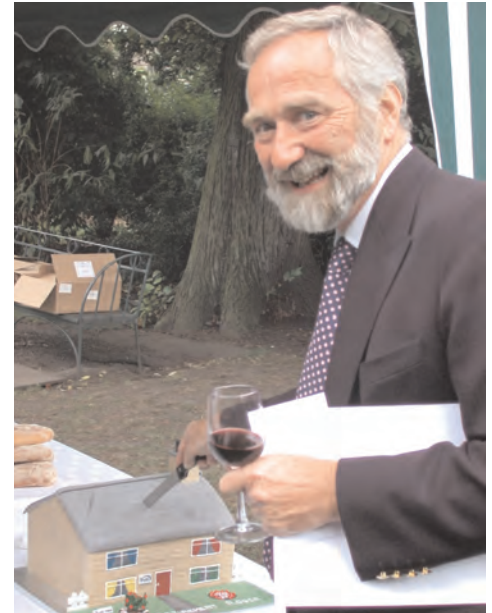
With Christmas fast approaching, don't use a two or three way adaptor to plug in your lights and decorations, use a fused extension board (unless it is brand new, it should require PAT testing also) as it is much safer.

If you are pregnant, please notify HR and Corporate Services so that we can assess your work area.

Recent retirals

It certainly has been a year of change and progression and this was highlighted in the recent retirals of two long-serving members of staff. Both Roger Trueman, former Chief Executive, and Gordon Ritchie, former Company Secretary, retired in September and November respectively, after 52 years combined service. Roger is enjoying a more relaxed pace of life, although he has joined the Committee of Scottish Borders Housing Association in a voluntary capacity. Meanwhile, Gordon is relocating to Kinloch Rannoch to support his wife in her new job.

Roger's retirement barbecue was held in the Forres St office's gardens while Gordon had his send-off in the new Edinburgh office. The events were attended by both development and office staff, current and past.



Breast cancer pink day

Throughout October staff and tenants of Trust participated in the Breast Cancer Campaign by wearing something pink and making contributions to this very worthwhile cause. As you can see from the photographs we had great fun while at the same time raising £312.95. Special thanks to Janean Johnstone the co-ordinator and pink cowgirl at our Bingham development and other staff who helped make this event such a success.



FOR DEVELOPMENT STAFF

Try and ensure that only flame resistant or flame retardant decorations are used in the developments, warnings should be on the boxes or wrappers.

FOR OFFICE STAFF

Keep your floor space around your desk as clear as possible, many accidents in offices are due to slips and trips and poor housekeeping.

Choco-frolics

Jenny Coull, Housing Assistant at the Glasgow office, was recently the lucky winner of a year's supply of chocolate. Jenny entered a competition with one of our stationery suppliers and will receive the hoard in four batches. The next delivery is due just before Christmas so she may find herself becoming very popular in the next few weeks!



Achievements and awards

Congratulations to all the following staff who, through blood, sweat and occasionally a few tears, have recently gained qualifications:

SVQ level 4

Elspeth McLennan, Project Manager at Kilncraigs House, Alloa
Isabelle Perrie, Project Manager at Buchanan House, Callander
Jim Roach, Senior Care Officer at Kilncraigs House, Alloa

Registered Manager's Award

Elspeth McLennan, Project Manager at Kilncraigs House, Alloa
Isabelle Perrie, Project Manager at Buchanan House, Callander
Janet McLaughlin, Co-ordinator at Airdrie

SVQ level 3

Helen Bowes, Care Assistant at Callander
Sheena Innes, Care Officer at Callander

Gerry Brennan and Catriona Robertson, both Housing Officers, have passed the Postgraduate Diploma in Housing Management Studies though Glasgow University.

Gill Whalley, Human Resources, successfully completed the Postgraduate Diploma in Human Resource Management & Development this year, following 2 years attendance at university.

Did we miss you out? If you have a recent achievement or qualification don't be shy! We'd like to hear about it so it can be included in the next staff newsletter.

Painting party

Mary Thompson, co-ordinator at Corstorphine and a keen artist, held a painting party at the Edinburgh office. The night began with a painting demonstration to show how easy and effective it is to paint in oils.



Mary chatted about how she got into painting and the parties

and answered questions about how the techniques are achieved. After the painting was finished there was a good selection of original artwork to be viewed and purchased.

Mary has now done six parties and is willing to come to developments to demonstrate her work. The development will receive the painting that is done on the night and 10% of the proceeds is given to charity or the tenants' fund.



If you have any comments on this newsletter or articles and photos for the next issue please contact Gill Whalley, Human Resources.