

Building on progress for a brighter Hillhead

A RECOGNISED SCOTTISH CHARITY SCO29998



## Delivering what we promised!

Following extensive consultations with Tenants we identified that one of your key issues was the need to concentrate resources on upgrading fencing.

We are delighted that during 2019 we have delivered on this and our investment will continue in 2020.

Our contractor P1 Solutions has been on site since August 2019 and has been progressing well ahead of schedule and within budget. The programme is due to complete by August/September 2021.

We will write to tenants prior to work starting in their area. Please note that not all gardens will receive exactly the same type of improvements due to differing degrees of disrepair. If you have any queries or questions about the work that is planned for your area please do not hesitate to contact Malcolm Macdonald, Property Services Officer.

As the works have progressed we have received lots of positive feedback regarding the quality of the work. Many have commented on the professionalism and commitment of the ground workers who have had to work in very challenging weather conditions.

**"The men have fitted the new fence really quick – I am very happy with the end product and how it looks"**

*(Tenant, Crossgates)*

**"Thanks to the Association and contractors for the quality of the fence – I am over the moon with it"**

*(Tenant, Langmuir Avenue)*

**"I'm very pleased with my new fence and I am looking forward to the summer so I can enjoy time in the garden"**

*(Tenant, Whitehill Avenue)*



# Anti-social behaviour policy



We held a session on Anti-Social Behaviour on 11 December 2019 and a number of tenants came along to express their views. The Association is very grateful for their time and contribution. Broadly, tenants felt that we deal with anti-social behaviour well and respond promptly and sensitively to complaints. There was a recognition and understanding that many other agencies can have a role in tackling anti-social behaviour, for example,

Police Scotland, East Dunbartonshire Council, addiction services, mental health services and many others.

Following on from this productive meeting we have redrafted our Anti-Social Behaviour policy to reflect tenants' concerns and priorities, while obviously making sure that we comply with legislation and best practice in this area of our work. Our Management Committee will shortly discuss this policy and once it is approved it will be available on our website.

## Keeping Us Up To Date

**Don't forget that you must let us know if anybody moves in to become part of your household. You need our permission for somebody to move in but we won't withhold this unreasonably provided that your home is big enough for them to stay.**

If we don't know that they are living with you then this means that you and they have no rights to make changes to your tenancy, for example, for them to become a joint tenant or to take the tenancy over from you. If you have any queries on this please contact your Housing Officer.

If somebody has already moved in and you haven't told us, make sure you let us know now!

# Customer Care Group future meetings

## Would you like to become more involved with the Association?

One of the ways to do this is to come along to the Customer Care Working Groups (CCWG) which will take place on the following dates:

- Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April at 5.30pm
- Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June at 2pm
- Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> August at 5.30pm
- Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> October at 2pm

Tea, coffee, juice and biscuits are provided and every tenant attending receives a £10 High Street voucher to thank them.

If you would like to come along, please contact Kieran Tait, Corporate Services Assistant, who will make sure that you receive an invitation to the next meeting.



# HILLHEAD HOUSING ASSOCIATION RENT INCREASE CONSULTATION - OUTCOME

We received 57 responses to our recent consultation on rent levels for 2020/21. A big thank you to all tenants who responded. We entered the names of all tenants who replied into a prize draw for £50 of High Street vouchers, this was won by a tenant in Banks Road – congratulations!

This response rate is much higher than in previous years. However, it is still only 7% of all our tenants and we are very keen to involve more people in future years. If you have any ideas on how we could do this please contact Catherine McKiernan.

This year as well as the consultation document being sent to all tenants, we also ran 4 pop-up events at the Community Centre. In addition to talking to people about rent levels, we are also able to discuss repairs issues with them and offer Welfare Rights support where appropriate.



The results of the consultation were;

I want Hillhead Housing Association to maintain investment in homes and services at the planned rate by increasing rents by inflation plus 1%	
I do not agree with the proposal to increase rents by inflation plus 1%	

Agree	42	74%
Disagree	11	19%
No opinion	4	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	

We have contacted respondents individually and offered them the opportunity to further discuss any issues that they have raised. A big thank you again to all those tenants who took the time to talk to us or complete the consultation document.

Of the 57 who responded, 23 are self-payers, 5 are in receipt of partial HB / UC and 29 are in receipt of full HB / UC. However, it is not the case that those on benefits always agreed with the increase, nor did self-payers always disagree with the increase. A detailed analysis is shown below.

Agree	Full HB	22
	Part HB	4
	Self-payer	16
Disagree	Full HB	5
	Part HB	0
	Self-payer	6
No opinion	Full HB	2
	Part HB	1
	Self-payer	1
		<b>57</b>

# Universal Credit and Rent Increase

**If you are a Universal Credit Claimant, it is your responsibility to keep the DWP informed about any changes to your rent. Your rent is due to increase on 28 March 2020, and you will have been sent a separate letter telling you what your new rent is going to be.**

Any change of circumstances you

report to the DWP take effect for the whole of your Assessment Period, so it is important to report the change as soon as possible.

This year, as in previous years, the DWP are going to set a 'To-Do' for you in your journal about your rent increase. This is likely to appear in your journal at the beginning of April, which is after the rent increase.

If you fail to update your journal



before the end of your Assessment Period which includes the rent increase, you will have to make up the shortfall between what UC will pay towards your rent, and the new rent amount.



My name is Bob. My UC Assessment Period is 29th- 28th of each month. I waited until April to report my new rent. I now have to pay extra this month to make sure I don't get into rent arrears!



My name is Sue. My UC Assessment Period is 29th- 28th of each month. I reported my change of rent promptly on the 28th March, and my whole rent was covered by my UC!

If you'd like any help with your UC and reporting your change of rent, please do not hesitate to contact the office, and the staff will be happy to help you. If you'd like any help with your Universal Credit, contact either of the Welfare Rights Officers, Moira & Morag, for further help.

# Tenancy Support Service

**Our Tenancy Support Service offers a wide range of additional support to people who are taking up a tenancy with us, or who already have a tenancy but are experiencing difficulties for whatever reason. The service is delivered by Heather Montgomery who works for Simon Community Scotland.**

Below Heather provides an example of somebody that she has helped recently.



*Miss A was referred as she had been residing in Women's Aid due to fleeing violence from her previous partner. Miss A suffered from depression and anxiety due to past trauma. Miss A had no personal belongings as she left them in her previous tenancy. Miss A was offered a new tenancy and a fresh start by Hillhead HA.*

*We completed her welfare fund application and a furniture referral. She was awarded £1050 and two floor coverings. Miss A also had been offered a bed and a couch from donations. I organised a removal van to transport these items to her new tenancy. I supported Miss A while the carpets were being measured and fitted due to her anxieties of being around unfamiliar people.*

*I applied for a Council Tax Reduction to help reduce Miss A's living costs.*

*I supported her to spend her welfare fund on the appropriate items. I followed up on repairs that needed carried out and set up her gas and electricity accounts.*

*Miss A was ready to move into her property. Using the Tenancy Support Service had taken a lot of the stress out of moving.*

*Miss A advised she would like to address her past trauma so a referral was made to the appropriate services to look into counselling. Miss A will continue to be supported until she feels that she is more confident in managing her tenancy.*

If you think you would benefit from some support to help with all the issues involved in running a home and manage a tenancy please contact the office and ask for Heather. Or if you simply want more information on the service please just ask.

# New Smoke and Heat Detector Regulations

The Scottish Government has introduced new rules aiming to reduce the amount of deaths caused by household fires in Scotland. All Scottish homes will now be required to have smoke, heat and carbon monoxide detectors fitted. These new improved standards require:

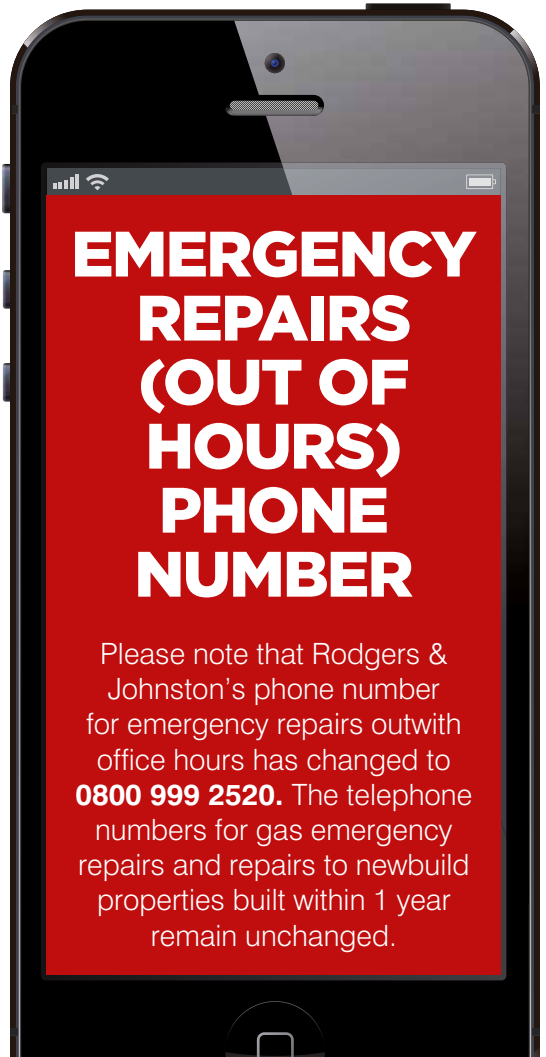


- One smoke Alarm installed in the room most frequently used for general living purposes
- One smoke alarm in every circulation space on each floor, such as hallways and landings
- One heat alarm to be installed in every kitchen

All alarms should be ceiling mounted and interlinked. There is also a requirement for carbon

monoxide detectors to be installed where there are carbon fueled appliances such as a boiler.

Our estates team will be carrying out the installations of these new alarms within the area. If you wish to arrange an appointment to have these fitted please contact our office. These works will take up to half an hour to complete, but will however ensure that your home is up to Scottish safety standards.



**EMERGENCY  
REPAIRS  
(OUT OF  
HOURS)  
PHONE  
NUMBER**

Please note that Rodgers & Johnston's phone number for emergency repairs outwith office hours has changed to **0800 999 2520**. The telephone numbers for gas emergency repairs and repairs to newbuild properties built within 1 year remain unchanged.

# Landscape Maintenance Contract

During the course of 2019 McDermott Contract Services was taken over by Nurture Landscape Ltd who are due to commence with works during the growing season at the end of March 2020 until October 2020.

The programme involves grass cutting every 2 weeks to open spaces and private gardens. When the contractor is working in private gardens please ensure that all areas are free from dog mess, garden furniture, toys etc and where access to the garden is available.



# Bulk Uplifts

## Safety & The Law

Under no circumstances should bulky items be left inside the common close areas or next to your building as this can create a potential fire hazard. Hillhead Housing have a duty under the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 to review risk presented by items left in inappropriate areas and will take action where deemed necessary. We will endeavour to identify the party responsible for the item and provide the suitable advice in the first instance.

## East Dunbartonshire Council - Bulk Uplift Service

**It is your responsibility to arrange the removal of any bulk refuse you would like to dispose of and this can be done by:**

- Calling **0300 123 4510**
- or through the East Dunbartonshire Council website.

Ensure you obtain a reference number to help track your enquiry.

Collections of bulky waste items will take up to 28 days so please ensure these items do not obstruct roads, fire exits or pathways while awaiting collection.

If you are unsure of the bulk waste collection point for your home please contact the Estates Services Team on **0141 578 0200**.

## Fly-Tipping

Leaving any larger items in a public space is considered fly-tipping and can result in a fine imposed by East Dunbartonshire City Council. To report instances of fly-tipping please call East Dunbartonshire Council on 0300 123 4510 or go to their website and fill in fly-tipping form, giving as much information as possible.



## Charity Collection from inside your home

There are local organisations that would be pleased to receive suitable furniture items, in a reasonable condition, that could be used by someone else. Please check the internet to explore this further. You could consider The Prince and Princess of Wales Hospice (0141 429 9884) or similar.

# Your rubbish, your responsibility



## General Litter

**How can we help reduce the amount of litter on our streets??**

One of the main causes of litter appears to be over filled wheelie bins, bins that are overflowing mean the litter on top is blown onto the street.

Ensuring your wheelie bin is not overfilled and that your lid is closed properly will help. If your bin does blow over, please help by lifting the rubbish.

Encouraging our young people to ensure any litter they have is disposed of properly will also help. Crisps

packets, sweetie papers and juice cans are often found along hedge and fence lines.

**Community litter picks** - we often arrange community litter picks and would love to see new faces attend, keep an eye on our facebook page and website to see when the next litter pick will take place, come along and meet new people, enjoy the fresh air and help keep your community tidy.

# West Dunbartonshire Councils Antonine Wall project

## Do You Want To Play Like A Roman?

As part of the Rediscovering the Antonine Wall project, a new Roman themed Playpark will be created in Peel Park in time for the summer school holidays. Funding from the National Lottery Heritage

Fund, Kelvin Valley & Falkirk LEADER Programme and East Dunbartonshire Council will see a new Playpark with a Roman style fort and other equipment replacing the existing play area in Peel Park. Peel Park is the site of a fort on the Antonine Wall and the Wall runs

through the park. The Playpark was designed with input from local schoolchildren. The Peel Park Playpark will connect with other Roman themed play parks being built by the project, including one at Auchinstarry Quarry.

# Management Committee Away Day

The Management Committee and senior staff had an Away Day in November to review the organisation's future strategy, direction and values that are important to us. We will

be consulting with tenants, customers and partners over the next few weeks so please look out for more information on how to get involved.



We are teaming up with Paths for all to promote healthy living and active travel within Hillhead. We will be organising community litter picks, canal clean ups and other walking related activities. If you are interested in taking part please contact Marie at the Association 0141 578 0200.



# TENANT SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE WINNERS



Our latest winners of the monthly prize draw are;

- December – Mr Gray, Marmion Drive
- January – Mrs Bell, Friars Croft
- February – Miss Love, Waverley Crescent

Please remember that returning your tenant satisfaction questionnaires (which are posted to you each time your report a repair) automatically enters you in a prize draw with the chance of winning £100 in High Street Vouchers. Each questionnaire sent to you includes a reply paid envelope which means no need for stamps!

## TENANTS LOYALTY SCHEME

Please note that this scheme operates a prize draw every 2 months – with the chance to win £100 in High Street Vouchers.

December and February's winners were Ms Neilson, Highfield Road and Ms Burns & Mr Hattie, McFarlane Place.



*Please remember we will be running our annual garden competition during the summer months so start putting these green fingers to use!*



**December's winner Ms Neilson collects her vouchers from Gail Fitzpatrick, Corporate Services Assistant**



# HOW WELL ARE WE DOING?

The 4 tables below let you see how we are performing against some key activities during the period to January 2020.

Remember, we always want to hear from you, whether it is good or bad. We can only improve our service if we hear from you. Please use our Comment Cards which are in our reception area.

## KEY HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE PERFORMANCE STATISTICS

### RENT ARREARS

Month	Tenant Arrears	Level of Arrears	Rent Arrears Target
Nov	£138324.03	3.78%	4.0%
Dec	£152962.20	4.16%	4.0%
Jan	£142406.42	3.91%	4.0%

### RENT LOSS

Month	No. of Empty Houses/Flats	Rent Loss as a % of the Yearly Rent Roll	Target Yearly Rent Loss %
Nov	5	0.70%	1%
Dec	5	0.79%	1%
Jan	3	0.89%	1%

### ALLOCATIONS

Month	No. of Lets	Monthly Average No. of Days to Let a House/ Flat	Target Number of Days
Nov	4	0.75%	5 days
Dec	7	3.86%	5 days
Jan	4	7.25%	5 days

### REPAIRS RESPONSE TIMES (excludes gas servicing)

Category/Month	% Completed within time scales		
	November	December	January
Emergency (24hours)	100%	100%	88.88%
Urgent (3 days)	100%	98.87%	97.93%
Routine (10 days)	98.36%	96.96%	95.04%
Voids (7 days)	100%	100%	100%
All Repairs - HHA 2000	99.45%	98.93%	95.55%

## HOW WE COMPARE TO OTHER HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS

We compare our performance against those of 8 other housing associations across Scotland every quarter. The table below lets you see how we are performing against the average of this group at the end of December 2019.

Performance Area	Hillhead	Housing Association Group
Rent Arrears	4.16%	3.52%
Rent Loss for empty houses/flats	0.79%	0.69%
Average time taken to re-let a house	27 days	22.44 days
Average number of days to complete non emergency repairs	2.54 days	2.40 days

# COMPLAINTS

The following table presents complaints resolved between 1 October and 30 December 2019.

Method of Complaint	Nature of Complaint	Complaints resolved within policy timescales?	Outcome	Service Change / Improvement required
Email	Area in untidy state due to works being carried out.	Yes	Area now cleared and Contractor reminded to keep area tidy	Property Services Staff to monitor
Email	Issue re dampness in bathroom	Yes	Property Services Officer emailed to arrange inspection. No response and no further contact	N/a
Tenant Satisfaction Return	Quality of repair work	No	Contractor instructed to return to rectify works	Property Services Staff to monitor via post inspections
Email	Condition of area, and items dumped	Yes	Housing Officers have visited tenants and are taking action to resolve situation	Housing Officers will continue to monitor
3rd party	Condition of fence and general disrepair	Yes	Following inspection, fence to be included in environmental works	N/a
3rd party	Damage to property after flood, and only decoration allowance offered	Yes	Following investigation, confirmed all necessary works had been carried out	N/a
Complaint Form	Request for compensation following previous complaint re dampness	Yes	Advised any claim should be made via home contents insurance, and reference to previous correspondence	N/a
Text	Unhappy with text message re rent arrears	Yes	Letter sent addressing tone and language used in complaint, and confirming arrears situation	N/a



# CORONAVIRUS

**You will be aware of the outbreak of the above virus which was first reported from China on 31 December 2019.**

We would advise everyone to stay aware of the latest information on the COVID-19 outbreak, available on the World Health Organisation website and through your national and local public health authority. Most people who become infected experience mild illness and recover, but it can be more severe for others. Take care of your health and protect others by doing the following:

## **Wash your hands frequently**

Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water.

**Why?** Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands.

## **Maintain social distancing**

Maintain at least 1 metre (3 feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.

**Why?** When someone coughs or sneezes they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing has the disease.

If you have been to an affected place in the last 14 days or had contact with somebody with Coronavirus and have any symptoms including cough, fever, shortness of breath – please call NHS 111 for expert advice. Please let us know if you have been advised to self isolate.

Please also be aware that in relation to repairs and maintenance, some parts are delivered from various regions of Europe and there could be unavoidable delays due to export restrictions. We will keep you advised of any further updates which may affect you as our tenants.

**Please note that this information is current at this time and is subject to change. Stay informed and follow advice given by your healthcare provider and national and local public health authority.**

# Useful Telephone Numbers

Below is a list of contact telephone numbers that we hope you will find useful

**Advice and Response EDC**  
0141 775 1311

**Emergency Housing EDC**  
0141 578 2133 / 0141 578 8000

**Kirkintilloch Integrated Care Centre**  
0141 232 8200 /  
0141 304 7400 / 0141 355 2200

**EDC – The Hub**  
0800 901 057

**Housing Benefit**  
0800 901057

**Caledonia Housing, Kirkintilloch**  
0141 578 0260

**Police Station, Kirkintilloch**  
0141 532 4400 or 101

**Special Uplift**  
0300 1234515

**Cleansing and Recycling**  
0300 1234514

**Environmental Protection  
(including dog fouling, dog  
barking, antisocial noise)**  
0300 1234510

**Fire Station**  
0141 776 6263

**National Grid (formerly Transco)  
Gas Emergency**  
0800 111 999

**DWP (Cumbernauld)**  
01236 786500

**Local MP, Stuart McDonald MP**  
01236 453 969

**Local MSP, Rona Mackay**  
0141 776 1561

**Citizens Advice Bureau**  
0141 775 3223

**Crimestoppers Scotland**  
0800 555111

## How to contact us:

Hillhead Housing Association,  
2 Meiklehill Road, Hillhead,  
Kirkintilloch, G66 2LA

**Tel: 0141 578 0200**

**Fax: 0141 578 4817**

Email: [admin@hillheadhousing.org](mailto:admin@hillheadhousing.org)

Web: [www.hillheadhousing.org](http://www.hillheadhousing.org)

Free Phone Number: 0800 0523 188

Text Number: 07491 163429

**KEEP US  
UP TO DATE!**

Please remember to let us know of any changes in your circumstances, for example change of name, change of number in household etc.



## OUT OF HOURS EMERGENCY REPAIRS CONTACT NUMBERS:

(Gas Heating repairs–James Frew Ltd)	<b>01294 468 113</b>
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(all other repairs–Rodgers & Johnston)	<b>0800 999 2520</b>
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For tenants of new build properties built within 1 year call NPA	<b>0345 6016 084</b>
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### Public Holidays - Office Hours

Our office will be closed on the following dates:

- Friday 10 April – Monday 13 April
- Friday 8 May
- Friday 22 May – Monday 25 May

Please let us know if you require any information within this newsletter in larger print, Braille, cd/tape or in another language.