

Hillhead NEWS

HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Building on progress for a brighter Hillhead

A RECOGNISED SCOTTISH CHARITY SCO29998

Green Light for newbuild at Fauldhead Road



We are pleased to be able to confirm that the Association will be in a position to move forward formally with a commitment to build 41 homes for rent at the CALA homes development currently under construction at Fauldhead Road, Kirkintilloch.

The site forms part of a much bigger development being built for sale by the Developer.

Before a site start on our homes can begin the Association needs to formally receive an Offer of Grant from the Scottish Government, arrange a new private loan for the balance of the funding and sign a building contract with the builder.

We are aiming to have all of this completed over the next 8 weeks so we can make a start on site in November. The first homes would be expected to be handed over next Autumn.

The housing mix (right) comprises some houses, cottage flats and flats. All are for social rent..

FAULDHEAD, KIRKINTILLOCH

House Type	House Size	No. of Properties	Total Bedspaces
Apartment	2 apt 2 person	8	16
Apartment	3 apt 3 person	8	24
Apartment	3 apt 4 person	8	32
Cottage Flat	3 apt 3 person	2	6
Cottage Flat	3 apt 4 person	2	8
House	3 apt 4 person	7	28
House	4 apt 5 person	6	30
Total Affordable		41	144



Garden Fires



It is not against the law to have a domestic bonfire in your garden, however it can cause problems depending on what is being burned and how often it happens.

If you must have a **CONTROLLED** fire in your garden at home, please make sure it is a good distance from buildings, vehicles, trees, hedges, fences, power lines, telecommunications equipment and sheds - and you must ensure that the smoke does not cause a nuisance to neighbours or that flying embers endanger neighbouring properties.

There are also laws around burning certain types of waste.

Fire can easily spread to fences and buildings and can scorch trees and plants. Exploding bottles and cans would be a hazard if rubbish is burned.

Our general advice is that you avoid garden bonfires altogether.

Your household details

Please ensure that you keep your household details up to date. It is important that we know the details of all occupants in your household.

If you would like to remove anyone from your household please put this request in writing and we will be in contact with you once this has been received.

If you would like to add someone to your household, please contact us and we will send you out an application form to complete and return to us. Please be reminded that failure to do so may impact on your ability to make changes to your tenancy agreement and for others to succeed to the tenancy. If an application is approved the new household member will be deemed as living at the property from the date of approval regardless of how long they have resided at the property.

Terminating your tenancy

There has been an increase in the number of tenants arriving at the office and handing back keys for their property without giving the correct notice period.

If you would like to terminate your tenancy;

- The Association requires 28 days written notice.
- A pre termination inspection must be arranged and carried out.
- You will require to make good any damage to the property and its fixtures and fittings, with the exception of normal wear and tear.
- You must ensure that your property has been cleared, if you leave any items in the property you will be recharged for the cost of removal. If there are large items you will need to arrange a Special Uplift from East Dunbartonshire Council.
- You must ensure that any rent and arrears up to the termination date are paid in full.

If you would like to terminate your tenancy or would like more information on the process, please contact the office.



Changes at Hillhead

As you know, Stephen Macintyre is our current Director. He joined the Association in June 2003 and helped the Management Committee get the Association set up and prepared for the housing stock transfer that took place at the end of June 2004.

Stephen will be taking early retirement next year, and Hillhead must follow the requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) when a director leaves or retires. The SHR is the independent regulator of housing associations and council housing in Scotland. Their statutory role is to safeguard and promote the interests of tenants, owners, homeless people and gypsy/travellers. They do this by monitoring the performance of landlords on an annual basis.

The SHR expects an "options appraisal" to be carried out. This gives tenants and the committee of Hillhead the chance to review how they work, and whether there should be any changes to your services, how your rent money is spent and our priorities going forward.

Hillhead appointed an independent company, Allanpark, to help find out your views and what is important to you moving forward. The consultant met with members of our Customer Care Working Group earlier this summer. She has also had two group sessions with members of the Committee and the Management Team.

With the help of Allanpark, the Committee reviewed its current strategic plan and has reaffirmed its commitment to remaining an independent housing association. This will ensure that we can continue to invest in our housing stock as planned and be in a sufficiently financially strong position to manage the current wider economic difficulties including inflation, high interest rates, etc.

More importantly it means that Hillhead Housing Association will continue as the only community run housing organisation within East Dunbartonshire.

The Association's current Strategic Plan covers the period 2021 to 2026 so the exercise has provided a useful mid-way review of our Plan. The review has also been supported by a detailed financial review of our longer term finances which takes account of current economic conditions.

The Committee and Management Team participated in two business planning workshops and completed an individual scoring exercise. Once all of these are combined the Management Committee are now convinced that:

- the current strategy of improving performance, services and resilience remains appropriate and even more relevant today as when it was first developed some 3 years ago; and
- across all criteria and taking into account the interests of all key stakeholders (especially tenants), remaining fully independent and improving is the preferred option at this time. This does not preclude continuing to collaborate when it makes good sense to do so.

The Management Committee also reaffirmed its commitment to the following strategic objectives:-

1. Enhance our customer services.
2. Improve quality of life.
3. Strengthen local decision-making.
4. Encourage wider community engagement.
5. Maximise our use of digital technologies.
6. Safeguard our financial position.
7. Combat climate change.
8. Being aware and open to opportunities for growth

Finally, the Association will shortly be advertising for a new Director to take over after Stephen retires in March next year. We will keep you updated once a new appointment has been made.



Gas Safety Annual Check



The Association has a legal responsibility to ensure that all our properties which contain a gas appliance or pipework, are serviced on an annual basis. This is required by law and is for the safety of both the tenant and their neighbours.

When you receive an appointment letter it is essential that you check this date is suitable for you to give our contractor James Frew access to your property. If the appointment is inconvenient, please call our Property Services Assistant on **0141 776 8625** to arrange an alternative appointment.

Where we have taken reasonable steps to gain access to your property and have failed to do so, we will take the appropriate measures to potentially force access to your home or cap the gas supply. If we are required to forced access to your property you will be liable for all costs associated with the required works.

Our gas contractor is James Frew – Gas Sure and can be contacted on **01294468113**.

Following a gas safety check your property may be selected to be audited by our contractor Argon Technical, who will contact you by letter to advise of an appointment.

TEST IT TUESDAY

We provide smoke alarms in all our houses, and they are also subject to annual checks. However, you should test these weekly to make sure that they are always working.

(TEST IT TUESDAY) If there appears to be a fault, you should report this to our Property Services Team.



Electrical Safety Checks

It is a legal requirement for every property to have an electrical safety check carried out every 5 years. This check is carried out within your property and seeks to identify any faults that may be present. These faults are rectified to ensure the property is safe. AC Gold are working with us to ensure we are 100% compliant throughout all our properties. If you have received a missed call, text, or have been carded at your property, please contact the Property Services Team to arrange an appointment. We operate a flexible appointment system.

ESTATE WALKABOUTS - Shaping the area you live in

We would like to ask for your help identifying things we can do to help to improve the quality of your neighbourhood. Why not walk round with the Estate Co-ordinator so that you can point out issues that are important to you?

It would be good to hear your opinions and ideas. If you would like to join in on the next estate walkabout on **Thursday 5th October at 2pm**, could you please contact Diane on 578 0200 or email admin@hillheadhousing.org to confirm.





PLAYPARK RE-OPENS!

We are pleased to report that the playpark at Highfield Road was re-opened last month following repairs to the wetpour rubber surfacing which had been vandalised.

Unfortunately the repair took longer than expected due to further vandalism to the surfacing.

FIRE SAFETY - CLOSES AND STAIRWAYS

All residents are reminded that the common close is not an extension of your home to store or display items. Please ensure that bikes, prams, household rubbish and any other items are removed within the common close.

Primarily this is to ensure a clear escape route in the event of a fire for all residents and visitors to these properties (see Fire Safety Guidance below).

Please also remember to test your Smoke Detectors weekly.

The common stair is your only means of escape in the event of a fire.



Have you ever thought what you would do if fire were to break out in your stair? It may not necessarily be in your flat! A fire started in a common stair could kill you and your family. Even a small bag of rubbish can create enough smoke to fill a whole stair. Items left in a common stair are often deliberately set on fire.

Keep it clear

- Get rubbish, old furniture, etc out of the building
- Make sure storage areas are kept locked
- For advice on uplifting items contact your local Council

If fire does start

- Keep doors closed to prevent smoke filling your house
- Dial 999 and ask for the Fire and Rescue Service, giving as much information as you can

For free home fire safety advice
CALL 0800 0731 999
or visit our website at
www.firescotland.gov.uk



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland

HOW WELL ARE WE DOING?

The tables below let you see how we are performing against some key activities during the period 1 April to 30 June 2023.

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.

KEY HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE PERFORMANCE STATISTICS

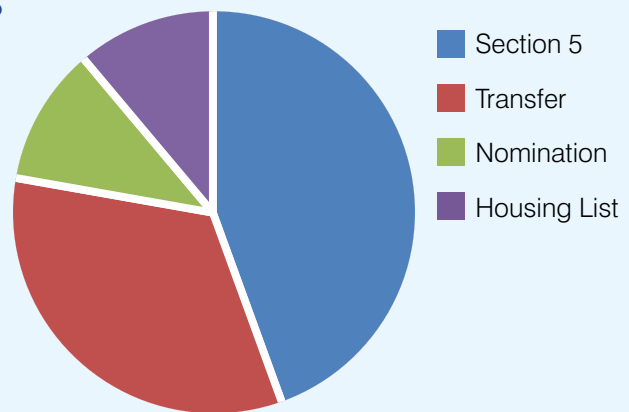
CURRENT TENANT RENT ARREARS

Month	Tenant Arrears	Level of Arrears
April	110625.28	2.59%
May	110723.42	2.59%
June	101343.45	2.37%

ALLOCATIONS

Month	No. of Lets
April	4
May	4
June	1

WHO WERE PROPERTIES ALLOCATED TO?



REPAIRS RESPONSE TIMES (excludes gas servicing)

Category/Month	% Completed within time scales		
	April	May	June
Emergency (24hours)	94.11%	95.83%	100%
Urgent (3 days)	100%	95.71%	97.50%
Routine (10 days)	97.10%	96.25%	95.71%
Voids (7 days)	83.33%	100%	100%
All Repairs - HHA 2000	96.40%	96.27%	97.33%

HOW WE COMPARE TO OTHER HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS

We compare our performance against those of other housing association members of Scotland's Housing Networks every quarter.

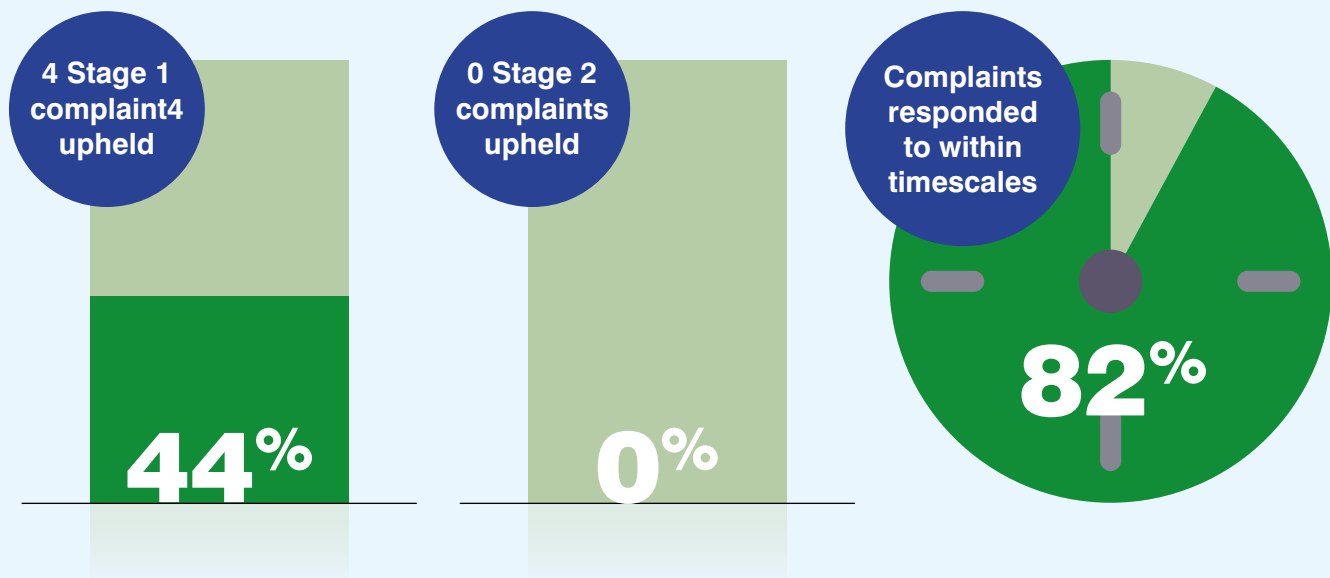
The table below lets you see how we are performing against the average of this group at the end of June 2023.

Performance Area	Hillhead	Scotland Housing Network
Current Tenant Rent Arrears	2.37	3.06
Rent Loss for empty houses/flats	0.47	0.78
Average time taken to re-let a house	22.3	30.07
Average number of days to complete non emergency repairs	3.58	6.85

COMPLAINTS

Between April and 30 June 2023, the Association received 9 Stage 1 complaints and 2 Stage 2 complaints.

COMPLAINTS RESULTS



COMPLAINTS BY NATURE OF COMPLAINT

Housing Quality & Maintenance	8
Access to Housing and Support	0
Customer / Landlord Relationship	2
Getting good value from rents & service charges	0
Neighbourhood and community	1
Complaints relating to equalities	0

ACTION TAKEN TO IMPROVE SERVICES

The upheld complaints were due to issues with repairs. Property Services Staff continue to liaise with contractors in these situations and monitor work until resolution.

Falls Prevention Awareness Week, with a theme of "From Awareness to Action," is September 18-22, 2023.



Falls are not an inevitable part of ageing. There are several things that you can do to reduce the risk of you or a loved one having a fall. The simple actions below can help with improving your general health and well-being and reduce your risk of falling by keeping you Strong, Steady and Safe.

1. Keeping active and exercise –

Daily to increase strength and balance, and don't sit for too long.

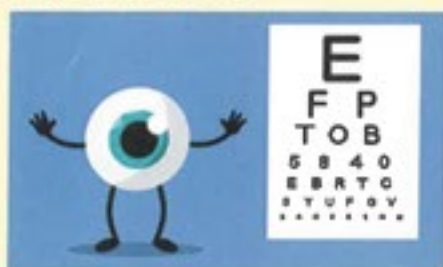


2. Medication review –

If you think your medicines are making you dizzy or confused, please contact a Pharmacist for advice. Pharmacists are available in Community Pharmacy and GP practices.



3. Arrange an eye test –



4. Moving safely –

Check you have enough space to move around safely and there are no tripping hazards. If you use a walking aid check that it is in good working order and that the rubbers are not worn.



5. Look after your feet –

Ensure you are wearing appropriate footwear and you look after your feet.



6. Nutrition and diet –

Eat well and ensure you drink plenty of water to keep hydrated.



If you would like more information, please have a look at the following links:

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/preventing-falls/why-falls-matter>

<https://managemeds.scot.nhs.uk/for-patients-and-carers>

<https://www.healthscotland.com/uploads/documents/23464-UpAndAbout.pdf>

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COLORING BOOK



GARDEN COMPETITION WINNERS

This year saw an increased number in nominees for our garden competition and it was lovely to visit the gardens and see the effort that has been put into them, despite the amount of rain this summer!

It was very difficult to choose as they were all lovely - however the standout gardens this year were:



Mr & Mrs Magennis, Blackdyke Road



Mrs Kelly, Highfield Road

GARDENING TIPS

If you have any gardening tips and advice that we can share in future newsletters, please contact Diane either by phoning the office or email admin@hillheadhousing.org

All our winners were awarded gift vouchers for Caulders Garden Centre, and we were grateful to receive a donation from our landscape maintenance contractor DSMcG in contribution towards these.

Thank you to everyone who submitted nominations for this year's competition.



Ms Boyd, Hillhead Road



Mr Seyf, Blackdyke Road

FLYTIPPING

Flytipping is unsightly, a potential health hazard and ruins surrounding residents pride of their area. It also encourages other anti-social behaviour.

Due to financial pressures everyone is experiencing with the increased costs of living, it can be difficult to find the financial means of getting unwanted items from your household removed. East Dunbartonshire Council's website provides information regarding special uplifts and recycling centres – www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk. If you wish to report a case of flytipping in your area, please contact Diane, Estate Co-ordinator on **578 0200** or email admin@hillheadhousing.org

Tips for getting rid of unwanted items

Sell it online

Sell your unwanted, good quality items online on websites like Facebook Marketplace, Gumtree or eBay.



Donate it to charity

Charities are always on the lookout for second-hand items in decent condition like clothes, toys and furniture. Check your local area to see which are near you - some might even come and collect it from your house.



RIGHT BIN? PUT IT IN

GENERAL WASTE

All household waste (rubbish) that cannot be recycled.



PAPER AND CARDBOARD

- Paper
- Newspaper
- Cardboard
- Junk Mail
- Magazines
- Catalogues
- Telephone Directories



PLASTIC, GLASS AND CANS

- Glass jars
- Glass bottles
- Aerosol cans
- Food tins
- Drink cans
- Tin foil
- Plastic bags
- Plastic bottles
- Plastic trays
- Plastic pots
- Plastic tubs



GARDEN WASTE

- Flowers
- Plants
- Grass cuttings
- Shrub/Hedge clippings
- Leaves
- Weeds (not invasive plants like Japanese Knotweed)
- Twigs/Branches
- Straw or animal bedding

FOOD WASTE

- ALL food waste
- Cooked food
- Raw food
- Bones
- Shells
- No liquids



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

Email: admin@hillheadhousing.org

Web: www.hillheadhousing.org

Free Phone Number: 0800 0523 188

Tel: 0141 578 0200 • Fax: 0141 578 4817

Text Number: 07491 163429

Our phone lines are open between 9.00AM
and 12.30PM and from 1.30PM to 5PM.

**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)	01294 468 113
(all other repairs–Rodgers & Johnston)	0800 999 2520
For tenants of new build properties built within 1 year call NPA	0345 6016 084

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS - OFFICE HOURS

Our office will be closed on the following dates:
Friday 22 September and Monday 25 September

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