



Merry Christmas

AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!

We hope you all have a lovely time over the festive period and stay safe. Our staff will finish up for the Christmas holidays at 12 noon on Friday 22 December.

Business will resume on Thursday 4 January 2024.



EMERGENCY REPAIRS SERVICE

During the Christmas and New Year period, our contractors will be providing an Emergency Repairs Service. If you have an emergency repair during the days our office is closed, please refer to the contact telephone numbers on the back page.

Your Rent Account



While we appreciate that times are hard just now, it is very important to continue to make rent payments and keep to any arrangements over the festive period. Falling in to rent arrears means that we are required to take action against your tenancy which includes phone calls, home visits and sending letters. If rent payments are repeatedly missed it could result in a Notice of seeking possession being issued and legal action being taken.

If you are struggling to make payments it is very important to contact us as soon as possible.

For those tenants who make their payments at the office, please take note of our opening

times over the festive period. Alternatively you can make your rent payments via the allpay app or by using your rent card at any paypoint outlet. You can also pay by bank transfer. Bank: Royal bank of Scotland, sort code: 83-24-05, account number: 00690899. Please contact the office if you need to find out your tenancy reference.

If you are on our housing waiting list, it is important to note that if you have rent arrears and have not been making regular payments to reduce your arrears, you will not be considered for a transfer until you have made and maintained an arrangement. This will also apply should you have any outstanding rechargeable repairs.

If you would like to discuss your rent account or would like to make an arrangement, please contact your Housing Officer.



Bins and Recycling

East Dunbartonshire Council collects waste and recycling seven days a week.

However, over the festive period your bin collection day may change so it is important that you check the East Dunbartonshire Council website – www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk which will tell you if your collection day has changed and the day it has changed to.

Please also make sure all your household waste has been disposed of properly in the appropriate bins.

DOMESTIC ABUSE

The Festive Period can be a stressful time for some people and a time when relationships can become strained – unfortunately in some cases this can result in domestic abuse.

If you are experiencing domestic abuse, you can get confidential advice and assistance, including information on your housing options by contacting:

- National Domestic Abuse Helpline on **0808 2000 247** www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk
- Mens Advice Line (for male domestic abuse survivors) on **0808 801 0327**
- Scotland's Domestic Abuse & Forced Marriage Helpline on **0800 027 1234**

If you are homeless or threatened with homelessness you can get independent advice from **Shelter Scotland (24 hrs) on 0800 800 4444**. If you need advice and assistance about temporary or longer term housing needs, you can speak to your Housing Officer in complete confidence. Please phone our office on **0141 578 0200** or contact your Housing Officer on their direct phone number or email. Otherwise you can contact **East**

Dunbartonshire Council on 0300 123 4510.

Domestic violence and abuse can happen in any relationship. It occurs within all

ages, gender and ethnic backgrounds. Whilst women are more commonly victimised, men are also abused, especially verbally and emotionally. Abusive behaviour is never acceptable. Everyone deserves to feel valued, respected and safe.

Other organisations that may be helpful to anyone who is experiencing domestic abuse are:

- Safer Scotland (<https://safer.scot/>)
- Scottish Women's Aid (womensaid.scot)
- Domestic Abuse Helpline for Men (mensadviceline.org.uk)
- For the LGBT+ community: www.galop.org.uk
- Samaritans Scotland (24/7) on **116 123**



Get Ready... Be Prepared for Winter!



Forecasters are again predicting a long winter ahead so it's time to prepare for the worst! Here are some practical suggestions to help prepare for the months ahead:

Tips To Prevent Frost Damage

There are some simple steps to take to help prevent your pipes from freezing:

- Leave the central heating on for short periods of time throughout the day.
- Let warm air into your roof space by keeping the trap door open.
- Keep the cupboard door under the sink open, this will let warm air move around the pipes.
- Keep room doors slightly open to allow warm air to move around the house.
- Know where your stopcock is so that you can switch off your water if there is a burst. Most frozen pipes occur in the roof space and below sink units and can cause considerable damage if they burst.
- Ensure that you have insurance for your contents and personal belongings.

If You Have A Burst Pipe

Turn off the mains water supply immediately by turning the stopcock clockwise. This will stop any more water getting into the water pipes. If the burst pipe is on the main water system the rush of water will stop after a short while. You should immediately contact our Property Services Team in the event of a burst pipe within office hours only, or call our out of hours number in an emergency.



If You Have A Frozen Pipe

Thaw it out slowly by using hot water bottles or towels soaked in warm water. Do not use direct heat such as blowtorches as this may cause

permanent damage to the pipes. The use of blowtorches could also lead to a fire in the home. If in any doubt please contact our Customer Services Team to report the fault.

Going Away From Your Home While The Weather Is Cold

- If you are likely to be away for a short period please leave your heating on.
- If you are likely to be away for a long period, your house will be safer if you drain down the water pipes and switch off your heating and water. Please contact a reputable plumber or your Property Services Officer if you require advice about this.
- Ask a friend or neighbour to check the house and leave a spare key.

Structures

Be aware that snow or ice could fall from roofs suddenly. Be prepared and predict where it might fall and don't park your car, bikes or garden furniture in its path.

WINTER GRIT BIN LOCATIONS

During the winter months, we have grit bins located in various locations on non adopted roads. Other grit bins are located throughout the area by East Dunbartonshire Council.

Locations of Hillhead Housing Association Grit Bins

- Ivanhoe Drive
- Border Way
- Mitchell Gardens
- Meiklehill Avenue
- Hardmuir Gardens
- Waterloo Gardens



PREVENTING DAMP & MOULD

Although we all want our homes to be warm, it's important to remember that a healthy home requires adequate steps to prevent damp and mould.

Many people have experienced issues with damp and mould in their property at some point. This can occur in all types of properties, including new builds and properties that are always kept warm. Mould growth can occur in various parts of the home, especially in the colder months. Most mould growth people will experience is likely to be the result of condensation.

What is condensation?

Condensation is the process where water vapor becomes liquid. It happens one of two ways: Either the air is cooled to its dew point or it becomes so saturated with water vapor that it cannot hold any more water.

Condensation moisture can be created by everyday living: cooking, showering and even breathing. It is present in the air all the time but only becomes visible when it comes into contact with a cold surface and you see the water droplets.

To help prevent condensation you can:

Ventilate your home: On dry days open some windows to allow humid air to ventilate out of the house. It is better to open a few windows a little throughout the whole house. This helps the air to move through the house. One window open wide in one room may not be

as effective. Try to do this as often as possible (2-3 times a week), but keep windows closed on wet days as damp air may increase indoor humidity. Use trickle vents located on windows

Don't seal or block extractor fans: these quickly remove damp air from moisture-dense rooms like kitchens, bathrooms and utility rooms.

Try to keep your home at a healthy temperature: On cold days try to keep indoor temperatures at least 18°C

Keep lids on pots while cooking: When cooking ensure that you cover your pans with a lid to reduce moisture being created from the water boiling

Think about the location of your furniture: Keep furniture away from walls to allow air circulation. Cool areas behind furniture will be high humidity areas conducive to mould growth. Open wardrobe doors regularly to promote air circulation.

Drying Clothes: try to avoid drying clothes in your home, if you must then do not dry over radiators, use a clothes stand, try to only dry in one room (consider the bathroom) if you can open the window and close the door to the room, this will help moisture escape outside and not into other rooms in the house.

You can also watch a video from Energy Saving Trust for further information - <https://youtu.be/ypB2Y81BP7w> This video is on the Association's website: www.hillheadhousing.org



HOW WELL ARE WE DOING?

The tables below let you see how we are performing against some key activities during the period 1 July to 30 September 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

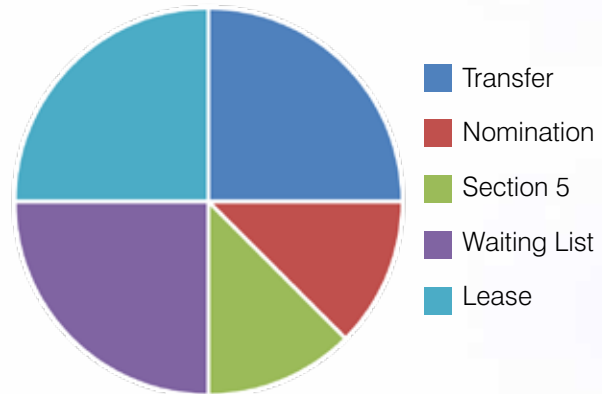
CURRENT TENANT RENT ARREARS

Month	Tenant Arrears	Level of Arrears
July	101877.77	2.39%
August	102394.33	2.40%
September	108013.22	2.53%

ALLOCATIONS

Month	No. of Lets
July	2
August	4
September	2

WHO WERE PROPERTIES ALLOCATED TO?



REPAIRS RESPONSE TIMES (excludes gas servicing)

Category/Month	% Completed within time scales		
	July	August	September
Emergency (24hours)	100%	100%	100%
Urgent (3 days)	98.03%	100%	100%
Routine (10 days)	100%	100%	98.30%
Voids (7 days)	100%	100%	100%
All Repairs - HHA 2000	99.15%	100%	99.31%

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.

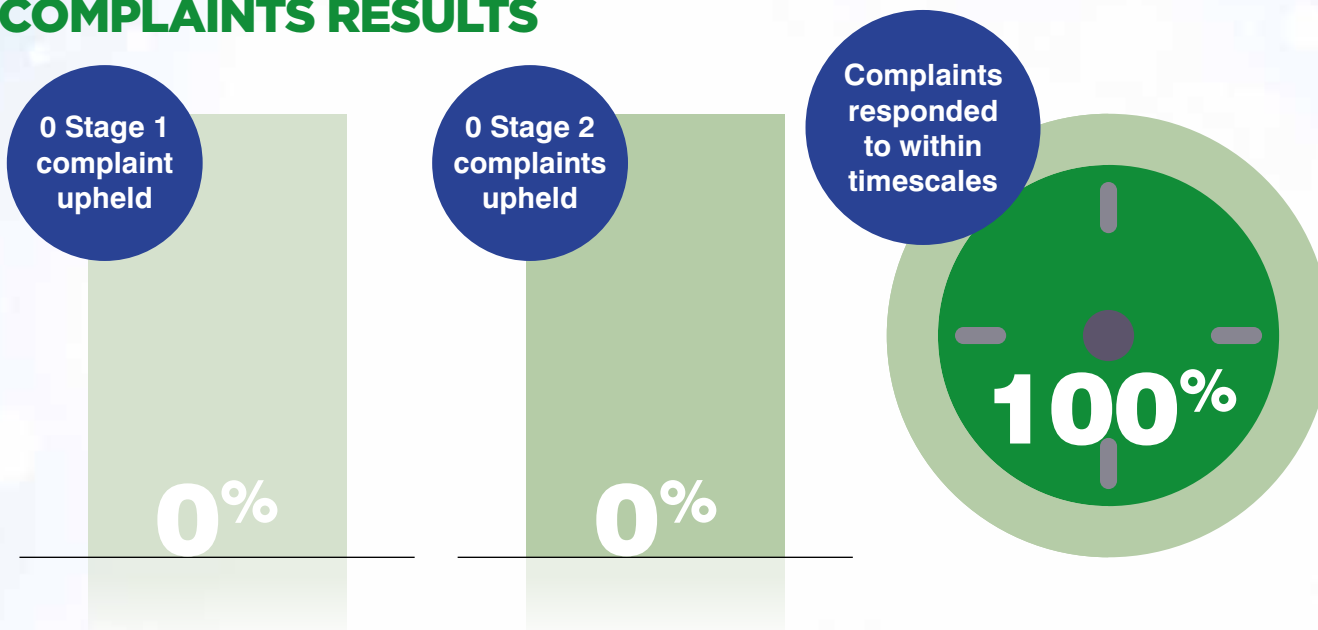
The table below lets you see how are performing against the average of this group at the end of June 2023.

Performance Area	Hillhead	Scotland Housing Network
Current Tenant Rent Arrears	3.26%	4.04%
Rent Loss for empty houses/flats	0.50%	0.86%
Average time taken to re-let a house	22.20 days	33.37 days
Average number of days to complete non emergency repairs	3.26 days	6.59 days

COMPLAINTS

Between 1 July and 30 September 2023, the Association received 4 Stage 1 complaints and 0 Stage 2 complaints.

COMPLAINTS RESULTS



COMPLAINTS BY NATURE OF COMPLAINT

Housing Quality & Maintenance	3
Access to Housing and Support	0
Customer / Landlord Relationship	1
Getting good value from rents & service charges	0
Neighbourhood and community	0
Complaints relating to equalities	0

ACTION TAKEN TO IMPROVE SERVICES

None applicable for this period.

NEW LOOK WEBSITE!

Over the past few months, we have been working with our website designers to give our site a refreshing makeover.

Our new website went live on 1 December and hope you have had a chance to visit it.

If not – why not take a look - www.hillheadhousing.org

We hope you will agree the look of the new website has been greatly improved and that it is more user friendly, as well as brighter and more colourful. We would welcome any feedback or suggestions for content. Happy surfing!

Recipe:

Christmas Rocky Road



Ingredients:

- 100g butter, cut into cubes, plus extra for the tin
- 250g Christmas biscuits, such as shortbread or chocolate biscuits
- 100g mixed dried fruit, such as raisins, cherries or glace ginger
- 75g Christmas sweets, candy canes, marshmallows, jelly sweets or selection box treats
- 400g milk or plain chocolate, or a mix of both chopped
- 140g golden syrup (weigh this straight into the pan you will use for melting)
- (optional) 75g shelled nuts, use up a bag of whole nuts, or bits and bobs from the baking cupboard
- (optional) 2 tbsp sprinkles, or more sweets to decorate

This budget recipe is a great way to use up all your leftover Christmas treats including your selection boxes, tins of biscuits and nuts. A fun activity to keep the kids occupied over the Christmas break!

Method:

Step 1

Butter and line a 20cm square tin or use a 20cm square silicone mould. Break the biscuits into pieces – they need to be no smaller than a pea, but not too chunky or your rocky road won't hold together.

Step 2

Halve any larger nuts either by snapping or carefully cutting them with a knife, then combine them with the biscuits. Halve any large pieces of dried fruit and chop or snap sweets into smaller pieces, then add these to the bowl.

Step 3

Melt 300g of the chocolate, the butter and the golden syrup carefully in a pan set over a low heat, stirring occasionally, then pour this over the biscuit and nut mixture and mix together so the chocolate covers everything.

Step 4

Tip the mixture into the tin, then level the top – it doesn't need to be completely smooth. Melt the remaining chocolate in the microwave in short blasts, or in a heatproof bowl over a small pan of simmering water, then drizzle this over the top and sprinkle with the decorations. Chill for at least 3 hours or overnight before cutting into squares. It will keep in the fridge for three to four days.

Recipe from BBC Good Food



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

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS - OFFICE HOURS

Our office will be closed on the following dates:

Friday 22 December 2023 (noon) – Wednesday 3 January 2024

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

