



**West
Granton**

HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE
Rebuilding a Community

SPRING 2019

newsletter



Dates for your Diary

The WGHC Office will be closed for Public Holidays on:

Friday 19th April 2019

Monday 22nd April 2019

Monday 27th May 2019



Rent Increase WEEKLY RENTS 2019-20

In February 2019 all tenants were notified in writing of the changes to their rent which take effect from **Monday, 1st April 2019**.

All rent payments are due on a weekly basis or by payment in advance.

You can choose to pay your rent by cash or debit card in the office, over the phone by debit card, or by bank standing order or monthly direct debit.

If you pay by Bank Standing Order please remember to advise your bank to change your rent payment for the week beginning 1st April.

If you wish to discuss changes or payment options please contact the **Housing Management Team on 0131 551 5035**.

If you claim Universal Credit you should inform the DWP of the new rent through your Journal on **Monday 1 April**.

Emergency Repairs

Whilst the office is closed please telephone your emergency repairs through to **Hanover Telecare on 0800 917 8039**.

Please remember to only use the Emergency Repairs Service when our office is closed.



Gas Emergencies Lothian Gas on 0131 440 4666

Gas Safety

Every year, West Granton Housing Co-op are required by law to service the gas appliances they provide and carry out a safety check of the gas supplies.

This means that every year you will receive a letter from **Lothian Gas** confirming arrangements to get access into your home to carry out the above. If you are unable to make the appointment, please contact them urgently on **0131 440 4666** to arrange another date/time.

The check and service are so important that if Lothian Gas are unable to carry them out, the tenant details are referred immediately to the WGHC Maintenance Team. If the Team are unable to successfully negotiate access, WGHC will raise legal action to allow us access into the property to have the works carried out.

To discuss any concerns that you may have concerning the gas appliances supplied by WGHC please contact the **Maintenance Team** on **0131 551 5035**.

What do I do if I smell gas?

DO NOT turn electric switches on or off

DO NOT smoke or use a naked flame

DO turn off the gas supply at the meter

DO open doors and windows to get rid of the gas

Phone National Gas Emergency on **0800 111 999** but do not use the phone in your home if that is where the smell is.



Our Power



Our Power Energy was the first utility company in the UK to operate on a non-profit distribution basis. It was supported by Scottish Social Housing Associations, including West Granton Housing Co-op.

Some of WGHC's own tenants' gas and electricity has been supplied by Our Power. On 25th January Our Power went into administration and Utilita is now the supplier for all former Our Power customers.



Go Live! Date

The new Scottish Housing Regulatory Framework

The Scottish Housing Regulator's **new Regulatory Framework** and **Statutory guidance** for social landlords will take effect from 1st April 2019.

The Regulator will award one of 3 status markers to a social landlord:

- **'Compliant'** status will mean the RSL meets the new standards.
- **'Working towards compliance'** states the RSL does not meet the Standards but is working to achieve compliance.
- **'Statutory action'** is given to RSLs which do not meet the standards and the Regulator will use its statutory powers to address the non-compliance.

All social landlords must prepare and publish an **Annual Assurance Statement** to confirm to their tenants and to the Regulator that they are meeting regulatory requirements and the Standards of Governance and Financial Management.



Complaints Report April to December 2018

Definition of Stage 1 & Stage 2 Complaints

→ STAGE 1 Complaints

This is a frontline complaint. It is usually minor in nature and generally resolved on the same day with an 'on the spot' apology. We have up to 5 working days to resolve.

→ STAGE 2 Complaints

This is a more serious or complex type of complaint which requires investigation. We have up to 20 working days to resolve.

In total, WGHC received 18 complaints in the period 1st April 2018 to 31st December 2018.

STAGE 1

WGHC received 17 x stage 1 complaints within the period.

16 out of the 17 were resolved within the target of 5 working days.

1 complaint was not resolved within target due to difficulties making contact with the tenant.

STAGE 2

There was only one Stage 2 complaint within this 9 month period. This was resolved within the target of 20 working days.

SCOTTISH PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN (SPSO)

There were no complaints referred to the Ombudsman this quarter.

Special Uplift Services



Please help keep your neighbourhood looking tidy by arranging an uplift of any unwanted household items. You can do this through WGHC or the City of Edinburgh Council. You will find the contact details below.

City of Edinburgh Council

FREE uplift for large household items in good condition that **can be recycled** such as:

→ Beds, Sofas, Tables, Chairs & Bikes

Phone re-use line: **0800 0665 820**

Uplift of household items that **cannot be reused** such as:

→ Mattresses, Furniture, TVs, Washing machines, Fridge freezers, Carpets

Cost £5 per item.

Register with **www.MyGovScot** and fill out the online form.

WGHC

Please telephone our office on **0131 551 5035**. We can pick up a reasonable amount of items for a cost of £20 per uplift.

Think you need to claim Universal Credit? Get advice first!



A change of your circumstances from when Universal Credit (UC) full service was introduced on

28th November 2018 could mean that you are moved from Housing Benefit onto UC.

Or you may have a change of circumstances that allows you to stay on your old benefit.

If you do make a claim for Universal Credit, please contact the Housing Management Team at the office to discuss rental payments as this will become **your** responsibility. We can also signpost you to local advice providers.



**West
Granton**

HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE
Rebuilding a Community

West Granton Housing Co-op | 26 Granton Mill Crescent | Edinburgh EH4 4UT

t 0131 551 5035

e mail@westgrantonhc.co.uk

w www.westgrantonhousing.coop

Out-of-office emergencies: 0800 917 8039

Committee Matters

**The Committee of Management of WGHC is its board of directors.
Unlike most social landlords, all WGHC's committee members are tenants.**

As well as this quarterly report in the Newsletter you can also now find a short report after every committee meeting on our web site www.westgrantonhousing.coop. The last newsletter detailed Committee news up to the end of December 2018.

In February, Committee met on 3 separate occasions. Two meetings were to receive training on Governance, Self-Assessment and the Scottish Housing Regulator's new Regulatory Framework.

Committee then met again to hold their usual meeting of business where they worked through a full agenda. They went through the 3rd Quarterly Financial and Performance Reports. There were no concerns reported and noted that WGHC's financial position continues to grow stronger.

Committee discussed an update in the organisation's Treasury Management position and noted that Our Power (the utility company providing gas and electric for some tenants of social landlords) has gone into administration.

Committee appointed MenCO to carry out the Co-op's Landscape Maintenance

and Garden Aid Service for 2019-20 and gave their approval for WGHC to seek the procurement of an Internal Auditor and to appoint a surveyor to carry out WGHC's next Stock Condition Survey.

Further information was given in regard to the Replacement of Doors and Windows in Area One. WGHC used the Scottish Procurement Framework to procure the Contractor for this project. Committee further noted that WGHC has now had emergency lighting installed in all of its stairwells and it is expected that WGHC will undertake a programme of works to have all tenants' homes smoke – alarms linked (as per Scottish Government Guidance) over the next two years.

Finally, Committee noted that Research Resource were well underway with the large-scale tenant satisfaction survey works, that WGHC Staff were carrying out both a paper survey and office based consultation session on how it allocates its empty properties (as required by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 and they approved a donation request from the local community Prentice Centre.

Join Us

Would you like to join the Committee?

Please contact Larke Adger or Alan McKee on **0131 551 5035** for an informal chat.