



**West
Granton**

Housing Co-op
sustaining and championing
the co-operative way

WINTER 2019

newsletter



Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

WGHC would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Our office is open on Monday 23rd December till 4pm. We are closed from Tuesday 24th December 2019 and re-open at 9.15am on Friday 3rd January 2020.

Pay your rent, before it's spent!

Your home is important. Make sure you put paying your rent top of your Christmas list this year.

We know Christmas is an expensive time of year, but please ensure you do not delay paying your rent or arrears. Every year, some people fail to pay at

Christmas – then find it a real struggle to catch up in the New Year.

If you really can't pay, contact us as soon as possible. We can help signpost you to Welfare Rights assistance for support and financial advice.



However, if you choose not to pay, we will take action.

Emergency Repairs over the Festive period

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

Please remember to only report Emergency Repairs over the holiday period.



Heating Emergencies Lothian Gas on 0131 440 4666

Upgrading of smoke alarms in WGHC stock

The Scottish government has introduced new legislation in relation to the requirement for fire protection in housing. This came about after the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower in London. The new standard requires a minimum of the following:

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

All alarms should be ceiling mounted and interlinked. There is also a requirement for carbon monoxide detectors to be fitted where there is a carbon-fuelled appliance – such as boilers, or a flue.

To meet this requirement WGHC advertised for interested contractors to bid for this work and a successful contractor has been appointed. We plan to start this work in early January 2020 and hope to have it completed later in the year. We have specified the use of wireless detectors which should mean very little disruption in your home.

Citizens Advice Edinburgh

Citizens Advice Edinburgh have recently opened a new office at the North Edinburgh Resource Centre, 31-33 Pennywell Road.

Citizens Advice provide free, independent and impartial advice and advocacy on any issue, but primarily in relation to Welfare and Employment Rights, Debt and Money Advice, Immigration and Housing. They have also been funded by the Department of Work and Pensions to provide support for anyone claiming Universal Credit.

Their office generally holds drop in sessions in the morning and

appointments in the afternoon. Due to limited resources and availability of volunteer advisers, they cannot guarantee to see everyone at drop in sessions. They operate these sessions on a first come, first served basis. Alternatively, telephone: **0131 510 5510** or Email: **muirhouse@caed.org.uk** to make an appointment.

Citizens
Advice
Edinburgh



Updated website

As part of our preparations for the introduction of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act, we have re-vamped and upgraded the amount of information available on our website

www.westgrantonhousing.coop

Clicking the 'About WGHC' link at the top of the home page will take you to

Minutes of our monthly Committee meetings, and the Publications link will direct you to all WGHC Policies as well as a wealth of further information about the work of the Co-op.

Any thoughts or feedback on our website would be gratefully received.



Brr... How to protect yourself from the cold



If you start to feel unwell, even if it's a cough or cold, don't wait until it gets more serious. Seek advice from your pharmacist.

Follow these tips on keeping well in the cold:

- find out if you can get the flu jab for free on the NHS
- wear several layers of clothes rather than one chunky layer – clothes made from cotton, wool or fleecy fibres help to maintain body heat
- use a hot water bottle
- have at least one hot meal a day – eating regularly helps keep you warm; and make sure you have hot drinks regularly
- try not to sit still for more than an hour or so indoors – get up and stretch your legs
- stay active – even moderate exercise can help keep you warm
- wrap a scarf loosely around your mouth when outdoors – add a hat and wear shoes with a good grip, too. If you have a heart or respiratory problem, stay indoors if you can during very cold weather

How to keep your home warm

Follow these tips to keep you and your family warm and well at home:

- if you're not very mobile, are 65 or over, or have a health condition, such as heart or lung disease, heat your home to at least 18°C
- keep your bedroom at 18°C all night if you can
- during the day you may prefer your living room to be slightly warmer than 18°C
- to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), babies should sleep in rooms heated to between 16°C and 20°C
- if you're under 65, healthy and active, you can safely have your home cooler than 18°C, if you're comfortable
- draw curtains at dusk and keep doors closed to block out draughts

If there is an electricity power cut call the new number: **105**

In case of a gas emergency call **0800 111999**

Staffing news

WGHC said farewell to Eilidh Moohan in November. Eilidh was our Administration Assistant who proved very popular with both staff and our tenants. Following the birth of her baby girl, Eilidh understandably decided not to return to work. We will shortly be starting the process of recruiting a new Administration Assistant. We wish Eilidh and her new family all the very best for the future.

Our Tenancy Manager, Fiona McIntosh, is currently on planned sick leave and we

hope to welcome Fiona back at the start of February in the New Year.

Jane MacDonald, Housing Officer, is also currently off work and is unlikely to return before the New Year.

In the meantime, we have Lorraine Gahagan covering the Housing Officer role with David Macadam covering reception and administrative duties.



**West
Granton**

Housing Co-op
sustaining and championing
the co-operative way

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 find a copy of the Minutes of every Committee Meeting from April 2019 on our web site

www.westgrantonhousing.coop.

Over the past quarter, 3 Committee Members, each for their own personal reasons, have stepped down from the Committee of Management. Both WGHC and the Chair, Lorna Brown, would personally like to thank Jim Hemphill, Marilyn Sinclair and James Moir for their tremendous commitment in giving up so much of their own time to serve on the Committee. Their contributions have been invaluable and all three Members will be very much missed. We wish them all the very best with their future endeavours.

As at December 2019, WGHC has 10 full serving Committee Members and 1 co-opted member. If you have the time to volunteer and would enjoy a governance role why not think about joining the Committee of Management? An induction session and full training is given. If you want to know more please contact Alan McKee (Depute CEO) or Larke Adger (CEO) on **0131 551 5035** or mail@westgrantonhc.co.uk

The October Committee approved WGHC's Annual Assurance Statement which was required to be submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator by 31st October 2019. This is the first year all Scottish Social Landlords have had to produce an Assurance Statement. This is a statement of compliance assuring the Regulator that the landlord is

compliant with all of its legal and regulatory requirements. The key issue for the Regulator is that the Committee are happy with the assurance based on the evidence and reports presented to them. West Granton Housing Co-op have declared they are compliant. A full copy of this statement can be viewed on our website at www.westgrantonhousing.coop under the Publications Link.

Committee also approved the new wording in the WGHC Logo of "Sustaining and Championing the Co-operative Way". Committee have decided this is to be the Co-op's new mission statement moving forward and will formally be presented in the final draft of the Business Plan at the February Meeting.

Finally, as the year closes we would like to thank all our tenants for continuing to support the work of the Co-op and take this opportunity to wish you all a wonderful Christmas and all the best for 2020.

Police Scotland Survey

Police Scotland are currently running a survey and would like to know what issues you think they should prioritise, nationally and in our local area, as well as the best methods for communicating with you. To have your say, please search: consult.scotland.police.uk/surveys/your-police – a paper version is also available.

The consultation closes on 31 Dec 2019.