



Rent Increase 2024-25

Following our annual rent consultation and subsequent decision taken by your Committee on 21st February 2024 all tenants were notified in writing on Tuesday 27th February 2024 of the changes to the weekly rent which takes effect from **Monday 01st April 2024**.

A rent increase of 7% was approved. WGHC experienced it's highest, ever, return of rent consultation slips from tenants, receiving 89 returns. 62% of tenants providing a return were in favour of the 7% increase proposed.

WGHC continues to offer one of the lowest rents for a social landlord in the Edinburgh area.

All rent payments are due on a **weekly basis** or by payment in advance. You can choose to pay your rent by monthly direct debit (payments will be taken on the 1st day of each month), cash or debit card in the office, over the phone by debit card or bank standing order.

As always, if you wish to discuss changes or payment options, please contact the Housing Management Team on **0131 551 5035** or alternatively you can email the team at hm@westgrantonhc.co.uk

We are aware that the cost of living crisis is impacting people in various ways and we are trying our best to provide real help to those that most need it. If you are worried or struggling with your rent, please do contact the office. We are not here to judge you we are here to help you, but equally, it is important you do engage with us if you are experiencing difficulties so as to prevent putting your tenancy at risk.

Universal Credit – Your Journal – Act now

Please find the details below on what you are required to do when updating your journal to advise that there has been a rent increase. This must be completed to ensure that Universal Credit will be paying the correct amount to your rent account. If you

require assistance with this, then please contact us on **0131 551 5035** as this is something that we will be able to assist you with. **Please start to update your Universal Credit Journal throughout March 2024.**

Confirm your housing costs

Date of change

Did your housing costs change on 1 April 2024?

Check the letter from your landlord for the date of the change.

Yes

No

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Confirm your housing costs

Changes to your rent

You previously told us the total rent for your property is £150.00 per week

Your landlord should have written recently with details of changes to rent or eligible service charges.

Are you still charged weekly for your rent?

Yes

No

How much is your new rent per week?
Do not include any service charges or rent arrears.

£

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Confirm your housing costs

Changes to your service charges

You previously told us the total eligible service charges for your property are £5.00 per week

Your landlord should have written recently with details of changes to rent or eligible service charges.

Are you still charged weekly for your service charges?

Yes

No

How much are your new eligible service charges per week?
Only include 'eligible' service charges. They will be listed separately on the letter from your landlord.

£

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Welcome Brontë Bishop & Tracey Smith

We wish to advise that one of our Housing Officers, Lorraine Gahagan left WGHC in mid-January 2024. The position of a new Housing Officer is being advertised for recruitment in March 2024. In the interim and to continue provision of services to WGHC tenants, Brontë Bishop has been appointed on a fixed term contract, commencing at the beginning of March through until mid-September 2024.



Tracey Smith is currently providing temporary assistance to WGHC in the role of a grade 7 Housing Officer. Tracey has worked within the Housing Sector for many years and is well experienced, especially, with tenant welfare and benefits. Tracey has only been onboard for a few weeks but has already met many tenants and has assisted with various tenancy issues.



Both Brontë and Tracey are proving valuable assets to the HM team and we wish them a warm welcome to the WGHC team.

Asset Management Visits

Last year, a post card was inserted and hand delivered within the Summer newsletter. The software required to undertake these visits has now been tested and can be viewed either on a tablet or mobile phone. WGHC staff have access to the software and arrangements will be made with tenants commencing in the new financial year, i.e. from 01st April 2024 onwards.

We will require your assistance to allow us to access your home to perform the visit that will be undertaken every 2 years. It is a vital element to our overall strategy of protecting your home and ensuring we are compliant with ever changing housing and safety legislation.

WEST GRANTON HOUSING CO-OP
 26 Granton Mill Crescent | Edinburgh EH4 4UT
 t 0131 551 5035 e hm@westgrantonhc.co.uk

Assessing the condition of our properties helps us plan how best to maintain your home in keeping with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard. This helps us to make financial decisions about any future programmes of works which keep homes safe and in good condition. Committee have approved a rolling programme of visits to your home **once every 2 years**.

WGHC's only income is rent. It is therefore important that any major investment project is undertaken using up to date and accurate information.

The visit will take around 30 minutes. We will need to look in the loft space. We will ask you to tell us about any maintenance issues you think need attending to. We will write out to individual tenants nearer the time when we plan to visit your home.

Leylandii Trees – an ‘interesting’ update

We are aware that the 50' tall Laylandii trees on the land bordering the WGHC estate cause many WGHC tenants upset and worry. These trees affect the light to many WGHC tenant's gardens, causing damp, dank, dark conditions. Equally, they drop many needles that block gutters and drains.

It was assumed that the trees were owned, jointly, by the owner occupiers in West Pilton Drive and West Pilton Green and, as such, it would be their responsibility to maintain the trees. The Committee previously authorised the CEO, Larke Adger, to submit an application under the High Hedges (Scotland) Act 2013. This cost the co-op £5,750. The City of Edinburgh Council have now returned this sum of money to WGHC as it transpires that it is they, i.e. the Council, that own the land and trees. As such, it now becomes their responsibility to attend to the trees. As the saga unfolds and more news becomes available, we will update you accordingly.

EDINBURGH
 THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

Larke Adger West Granton Housing Co-Op 26 Granton Mill Crescent Edinburgh EH4 4UT	Date 01 March 2024 Our ref 23/01245/HIGH
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Dear Mrs Adger,
 ADDRESS OF HEDGE: 18-21 West Pilton Green and 21-39 West Pilton Drive

HIGH HEDGES (SCOTLAND) ACT 2013

Following registration of your High Hedge application, the Council's legal team have researched the land ownership status of the gardens containing the hedge. It has been determined that, due to a faulty conveyance when the homes were initially sold off, the land all remains in the ownership of the Council.

This means that we are no longer able to assess your case, as a High Hedge application requires attempts to be made to resolve the matter with the land owner. We will close and refund your case and refer you to the Council's Parks team. The relevant team within Parks is the Forestry Service and you can contact them on forestry.service@edinburgh.gov.uk. If you are unable to reach an acceptable solution with them you are welcome to submit another High Hedge application.

Please contact us by email to provide a bank account, sort code, and name of account holder, to allow us to refund your fee.



Spring has sprung!

WGHC strives to keep our homes and the surrounding area looking good. During the warmer months grass cutting is important and we would like to remind all tenants with responsibility for a garden area to regularly cut the grass and remove weeds.

As well as cutting the grass, it is important not to have rubbish (black bags, old furniture etc) in your garden

or to leave food out for birds/animals as this can attract vermin. There are foxes and rats in the area, but you are not likely to see them in your garden unless there is a source of food available for them. If you are struggling to maintain your garden, do not have access to a lawnmower or have any concerns re vermin, please contact the housing management team on hm@westgrantonhc.co.uk or **0131 1551 5035**.

Planned Maintenance, the next 6 months



Last year, we undertook the 1st tranche (50%) of a boiler and radiator replacement programme in the Granton Mains areas (Gait, Avenue, Wynd, Vale, Bank, Court and Brae). Over summer 2024, we will be undertaking and completing the 2nd tranche (50%) of the same boiler and radiator replacement programme in the same areas of the WGHC estate.

In addition to the above, new boilers and kitchens are due for installation in the Forth Quarter areas of the WGHC estate, i.e. Waterfront Park & Colonsay Close.

Please expect survey letters in due course from the WGHC maintenance department and follow up survey letters from the principal contractor, Everwarm. Surveys will likely be undertaken commencing throughout April. Works will be undertaken during May, June and July 2024.

Grass Cutting Service



Committee have previously approved for upto 50 x tenants to receive grass cutting services during the cutting season in the year. There are pre-set agreed criteria to qualify for receipt of these services.

Application forms have been sent out and the deadline will have passed by the time this newsletter

is delivered. A 'chase up' exercise will be undertaken to ensure all tenants that qualify are not missed or overlooked. If you feel you qualify and didn't receive an application, please either e-mail hm@westgrantonhc.co.uk or call **0131 551 5035**.

Your Committee members are:

Colin Fraser (Chair)	Wendy Riordan (Vice Chair)	Jim Hemphill (Vice Chair)
George Thomson	Liz Robertson	Amanda Aitchison
Morag Orr	Lynn Jameson	Cameron Durance
Alan Lamont	Elizabeth Stewart	James Matthews (Co-optee)

Our Committee are now more representative of WGHC as we have more members than we have ever had in our 34-year history and from different areas within our estate. Minutes of all Committee Meetings are on our website.

If you are interested in a position on the Committee, either as a Casual Vacancy or a Co-optee and want to have a say in your local community, please get in touch with **Larke Adger**, CEO or **David Mills**, COO – either of whom, will be delighted to help you.