



West Whitlawburn
Housing Co-operative

Newsletter - December 2023

Festive Period Office Closure

The office will close on **Friday 22nd December 2023**
and re-open on **Thursday 4th January 2024** at
9.15am.

For emergency repairs, please contact Concierge
using your handset or by phoning **0141 646 1924.**



Merry Christmas

BEST WISHES

And a Very

Happy

New Year



Staff Update This year we welcomed new members of staff and wished farewell to others...

Welcome

Matthew Cryans

Matthew started working with us in November 2023 as a member of the Concierge team.

He joins Team A and we are sure that our tenants will soon become familiar with Matthew!

Nicola Carrigan

In October 2023 we welcomed Nicola Carrigan into her new role as Head of Housing Services.

Nicola is a very experienced housing professional who has previously worked for Milnbank, Reidvale and Glasgow West Housing Association's, as well as Glasgow City Council in roles as a Housing Officer, Asylum Project Support Worker and as an Antisocial Behaviour Investigation Officer.

Nicola is settling in well and is looking forward to working with all of our tenants, members and service users.

farewell

Kathleen Nisanci

Kathleen made the decision to retire at the end of November 2023 after nearly 16 years of working at the Co-operative.

Kathleen worked as part of our Property Services team handling repairs and maintenance.

"Having spent many years working in housing I can hand on heart say that West Whitlawburn has been the best! I admire my colleagues for going above and beyond, all the time. I will miss everyone but I am looking forward to this new chapter in my life".

Thank you and Goodbye Kathleen!

Danny Boland

We also said goodbye to Danny in November 2023. Danny also made the decision to retire after 17 years of working at the Co-operative.

Danny was a valued member of the Concierge team who worked tirelessly to support tenants 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

We wish Danny all the best and thank him for all his hard work throughout his time at WWHC.



We are delighted to announce that we have been successful at securing a defibrillator for the Whitlawburn area.

Located at the Concierge Station, this life-saving piece of equipment is registered nationwide and is available for anyone in the community to use - including those who are not tenants of WWHC.



A defibrillator is a device that gives a high energy shock to the heart of someone who is in cardiac arrest. More information can be found on the British Heart Foundation's [website](#).

We want your feedback...

Allocations Policy Consultation

We are in the process of updating our allocations policy. As this directly affects tenants and applicants, we must formally consult on the changes to the policy. Information was published on 1st December 2023 and the consultation is open until **15th January 2024.**

To ensure we are able to gather as many views as possible, we have:

- Contacted all WWHC tenants, inviting them to share their opinions
- Contacted everyone who is on our housing list; and
- Added a link to our website to invite other parties to share their views.

The new policy was developed by the Allocations Working Group, and the proposed changes were approved by the Performance, Assurance and Risk Sub Committee in November 2023.

If you wish to share your views in-person, please call into the office.

Rent Consultation 2024/25

Our annual rent consultation has been published and we are consulting on a 5% rent increase. You can respond to the consultation online by scanning the QR opposite with your smartphone.



Why not join our tenant focus groups?

Tenants are invited to share their views at focus groups on **Monday 8th January 2024** in Whitlawburn Community Resource centre.



Session 1	1pm – 2pm
Session 2	4.30pm – 5.30pm



Our Performance June to September 2023

Tenancy Services

Turnover and Allocations

There were **349** applicants on the housing list and **252** on the transfer list.

Throughout the period we let **17** properties. **41%** of these went to direct applicants, **6%** to transfers and **53%** to South Lanarkshire Council referrals.

The average time to re-let properties for the period was **46.5 days** which was above our target of **21 days**. We aim to improve our re-let times as we continue to navigate the current economic challenges and through procurement of our maintenance contracts.

Rent Collection and Arrears

Current and former tenant arrears were sitting at **4.14%**, with **99.5%** of rent collected during the year.

If you need any help or advice regarding your account or benefits please contact your Housing Officer. This is particularly important if you claim Universal Credit.

Estate Management

Housing Management and Concierge staff work closely with other agencies to resolve neighbour and estate difficulties as quickly as possible.

We received **60** reports of anti-social behaviour and also had **6** abandoned tenancies.

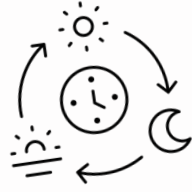
All our Concierge Officers are first aid trained and provide emergency help to our more vulnerable tenants through our housing alarm service. If you think you would benefit from a housing alarm being installed in your home, contact your Housing Officer.

Property Services

We carried out
73 emergency
repairs...



...and 356 non-
emergency
repairs



The average
time taken to
complete
emergency
repairs was 3.5
hours.

The average
number of
working days to
complete non-
emergency
repairs was 3.85
days.

Complaints

During Quarter 2, we received a total of **19** complaints.

14

Were dealt with at
Stage 1

4

Were dealt with at Stage 2

1

Was escalated to the
SPSO

39%

of complaints were upheld or
partially upheld

91.4%

Of complaints were resolved within the
appropriate timescales

Car Parking at West Whitlawburn Properties

There are no designated car bays for the low rise properties or the towers. Anyone can park in any vacant car bay. **The only designated car bays are the Disabled Car Bays marked in yellow.**

Please be courteous of other road users and tenants by adhering to the following:

- Park within the marked parking bay lines
- Do not block lock-ups / garages / bin rooms at the low rise and high rise properties
- Display the appropriate badge when using the Disabled Car Bays
- Do not park on the yellow painted areas as these are for Emergency Service Vehicles only

Thank-you for your co-operation.



Festive Fire Safety

Christmas is a time when people decorate their homes, celebrate with friends and family and eat good food. It is important to remember that many of the things we enjoy over the Christmas period can be fire hazards and, in the excitement of the season, accidents can happen.

Here are some tips to help make sure you're safe this Christmas:

Christmas Tree

- Choose a spot for your Christmas tree carefully, away from any open sources of flame or heat.
- Artificial trees are less-prone to catching fire than real trees. If you choose a real Christmas tree, select one that is fresh and green and keep it watered so that it doesn't dry out.
- Christmas decorations and cards can burn easily. Keep them away from fires and other heat sources such as light fittings.

Christmas Lights

- Make sure the wiring of Christmas lights are in good condition, with no visible signs of wear and tear.
- Check your Christmas lights carry the British Safety Standard sign.
- If possible, purchase LED lights. They are the safer as they operate at cooler temperatures.
 - Never overload electrical sockets or use too many extension cables.
 - Always switch Christmas lights off and unplug them before you go to bed.



Candles

- Never leave burning candles unattended – make sure you put them out before going to bed.
- Think carefully about where you place candles. Keep them away from decorations, presents and your Christmas tree.
- When using candles ensure they are placed in candle holders designed and fitted for the candle itself.
- Keep candles, matches and lighters away from children.

Cooking

- Most fires start in the kitchen. Always be present in the room whilst food is cooking.
- Give yourself enough time to prepare and cook Christmas dinner to avoid hot fat, boiling water and sharp knife accidents that come from rushing.
- Children, tipsy guests and anyone not helping with dinner should be kept away from all cooking.
- Avoid cooking when under the influence of alcohol.
- Switch off cooking appliances as soon as you have finished using them.

Visitors

- Make sure your family and visitors know how to escape in an emergency.
- Check in on older relatives and neighbours as they are at greater risk from fire.

Biomass Heating & Hot Water System - MSF & Low Rise Properties

Friendly Credit Arrangements over the Festive Period



Friendly credit periods are set times when your vPro meter will not stop your energy supply for your heating & hot water system—if you run out of credit. During the friendly credit period you will still be charged for your heat and hot water. When you next top up, you will be required to pay off the amount used during the friendly credit days.

Friendly credit days will start on **Thursday 21st December 2023 at 6 p.m. until Wednesday 3rd January 2024 at 8 a.m.**

Your meter must be in credit or in emergency credit at this time for the friendly credit to activate.

Once the period has finished, if you have no credit, your heat and hot water supply will stop until you top up more than the friendly credit used.



You will still be able to top up via the automated telephone line on 0121 621 4027, online or at any Paypoint shop as normal.

Emergency Credit

Emergency credit provides a temporary amount on your meter in case you are unable to top up. The low credit alarm will sound when no credit is remaining on your meter and an alert is shown at the bottom of your In Home Display unit. Please click this alert and press OK to confirm that you accept the emergency credit.

You can also enable Emergency Credit through the Heat Usage Account Screen. The amount is fixed at £5.00.

When you next top up, your emergency credit fund will be paid first so please top up more than this amount.

Top Ups

If your automatic top up has not taken place within a reasonable amount of time, you can enter the vend code directly. Select 'HEAT' on your vPro unit and enter the code on your receipt using the touch screen key pad.

The payment card is unique to your meter so there is no risk of losing any credit if you lose your card. You can still top up without your card by using the Paypoint card reference number so it is useful for you to keep a note of this.



Fuel Bank Foundation Partnership

We are delighted to announce that we are a partner of the [Fuel Bank Foundation](#). An information leaflet containing advice and further support is available on our [website](#).

If you are in fuel crisis and use a pre-payment meter to top up your gas and/or electricity please contact us. We will ask specific questions to determine if a referral can be made. Urgent assistance is offered via the Fuel Bank Foundation on an extraordinary basis and is intended as a one-off measure to support energy use for up to 7 days. Vouchers can be split between gas and electricity meter's or added to one specific meter.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

WORD SEARCH

Find and circle the words.

M	T	R	D	B	Y	B	A	G	Y	T	A	R	T
R	E	I	N	D	E	E	R	N	S	E	L	O	M
U	R	B	I	K	N	R	A	H	D	O	D	L	I
T	C	E	L	E	B	R	A	T	E	G	N	H	S
R	E	C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S	H	A	T
X	Y	Z	D	U	L	O	R	H	A	U	A	G	L
H	O	L	I	B	A	U	B	L	E	I	N	D	E
U	X	G	B	R	A	E	T	Y	K	R	T	A	T
W	R	E	A	T	H	M	A	S	P	E	A	L	O
P	G	O	R	N	A	M	E	N	T	S	N	T	E
K	T	Y	O	S	T	O	C	K	I	N	G	L	M

- reindeer
- wreath
- bauble
- christmas
- stocking
- mistletoe
- celebrate
- ornaments

