

CHRISTMAS 2011

West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative Ltd

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New Look WWHC Website

Our website has now been re-designed to make it bigger and better!

So, check it out regularly for latest news, advice and up to date information on what's happening with the Co-operative and the local area.

There are lots of new features to make life easier for you too!

There are links for you to pay your rent or your Whitcomm bill and to tell us what repairs need done in your home. You can also find useful information about how to apply to us for re-housing, how to get involved with our Management Committee and background information about how the Co-op came about. Recent newsletters and annual reports will also be available for downloading.

If you would prefer not to contact us in person about something you can use the contact us link to email us.

It is our intention to continue to improve the website over the coming months so please, give us your comments and let us know if there's any information that you would like to see there.



www.wwhc.org.uk



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Changes to the Benefit System are coming!

The UK Government has outlined a number of changes it intends to make to the Welfare and Benefit system and these changes will have significant implications for all of the Co-op's tenants claiming benefit. The changes to the benefit system are not going to happen all at once but they will be introduced on a rolling programme from April 2013. We are currently preparing for these changes and we will keep you up to date of the relevant dates.

What is changing?

There are lots of proposed changes to the system however the two that are causing us major concern are below:-

- All working age benefits will be replaced with a single benefit called "Universal Credit", and a maximum amount of benefit per household will be applied. Universal Credit will be paid directly to you, every month in arrears. It does not look likely that you will be able to receive your benefit fortnightly anymore. If you need help to pay your rent your Universal Credit may include a "housing" payment which you will then have to pay to the Co-op.
- People, below pensionable age, living in a home that is too large for their needs will not be entitled to benefit to cover their full rent charge and it is likely they will have to pay between 10% and 23% of their charge no matter on their financial circumstances.

Other changes include—Increased Housing Benefit deductions will be taken from your Universal credit if you have grown up relatives or lodgers living with you; Changes to working Tax Credit include a drop in help with childcare costs; People in receipt of Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowances will face reassessment; Disability Living Allowance will be replaced by Personal Independence Payments; Council Tax Benefit as we know it will be abolished and a new local system introduced.

How will this affect tenants?

The benefit reforms will hit some of the poorest and most vulnerable people in our society the hardest.

An estimated 1 in 5 tenants will see their incomes reduce when the new Universal Credit is introduced - in some cases, tenants may see very significant reductions in income. An estimated 5,590 tenants in Scotland may be affected by this measure.

If you are of working age and claiming benefit you will be affected by these changes!



What are the Co-operative doing about it?

The Co-operative is very concerned about these changes and the impact it is going to have on our tenants and our organisation.

We have been supporting the Scottish Federation of Housing to fight the changes and we are looking at how we can support our tenants during the transition to the new system.

What can I do about it?

We would encourage you to help support the campaign to fight the changes too! You can register your support either online at www.sfha.co.uk or if you don't have access to a computer you can do it from our offices.

If you want to check the impact any of the proposed changes are likely to have on your household, you can discuss it with your Housing Officer.

If you are living in a property that is too big for your family you can contact us to discuss the possibility of moving to another smaller property.



HomeSwapper is the UK's largest community of social housing tenants looking to swap homes. Each year they help thousands of tenants change their lives!

The Co-operative has now registered with HomeSwapper so that you don't have to pay any fees for this service. So if you are looking to swap homes with another tenant either in this area or anywhere else in the country you can now register for free.

Once you have signed up with HomeSwapper the service automatically matches you with any potential swaps and then emails or texts you with the details of the matches.

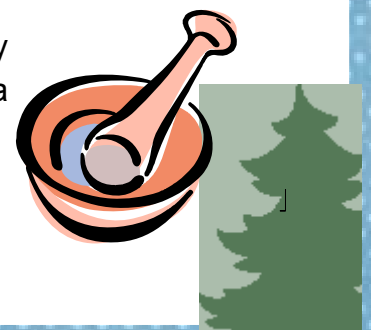
If you are interested in an exchange please contact your Housing Officer who will help you sign up or you can go to www.HomeSwapper.co.uk to sign up yourself.

Pharmacy Update

NHS and Greater Glasgow have now confirmed receipt of the application for a Pharmacy in Whitlawburn and are now processing it. It's not likely we will hear anything before the New Year but they are hoping a hearing will be scheduled at the earliest opportunity .

David Dryden says : "The response from the public during our period of consultation was excellent, with many residents taking the opportunity to express their view on the requirement for a pharmacy in Whitlawburn."

" We would like to thank WWHC and the residents for the support they have shown and can guarantee we will continue the hard work to bring a modern community pharmacy to Whitlawburn."



Protect Your Home

We are particularly fortunate to have such a good security system and 24 hour concierge on our estate however we all still need to be vigilant to ensure that our homes are safe. Housebreaking is a crime that we all fear, but there are a number of different ways that you can help to deter burglars.



Strathclyde Police have advised that burglars prefer to gain easy access to homes, so the harder you make it for the criminal the lower your chances are of becoming a victim. In addition, if you do become a victim, there are measures that you can take to increase the chance that your goods will be returned to you if they are later recovered by the police.

Here are some ways that you can protect your property:

- **Security mark** your property with a UV marker pen. You can use this pen to place an invisible imprint of your postcode and house number on your possessions.
- **Place a sticker** on a conspicuous window of your home that states your possessions have been security marked, this will also help to deter thieves. Ask for one of these stickers at your local police office.
- **Keep your home securely locked** at all times. Most house break-ins are committed by opportunist thieves who do not have to break-in due to a door or window having been left open.
- **Speak to the crime prevention officer** at your local police office about the safety devices (locks, timers, lighting etc) and procedures (closing curtains after dark, cancelling regular deliveries when you are on holiday etc) that you can put in place to increase the security of your property.
- **Don't put your name or address on your key ring.** If it is lost or stolen, the thief will have information that could direct them to your home and your property.
- **Change the locks** if you think a previous tenant could still be in possession of keys to your home.
- **Don't give keys to tradesmen** as they can make copies quickly and easily.
- **Don't go in** - if you see signs of a break-in at your home - like a smashed window or an open door. The burglar may still be inside. Instead, go to a neighbour and call the police and concierge who will provide any appropriate CCTV footage to the police.

Civic Award for Susan Stevely

The Co-operative is delighted to announce that South Lanarkshire Council has bestowed upon Susan the prestigious SLC Civic Award. Susan retired from the WWHC Management Committee at the AGM in September 2011 and was a founder member of West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative Ltd back in 1989.

For 22 years Susan served the community of West Whitlawburn as a volunteer and has been a cornerstone of the Housing Co-operative's outstanding success. Initially she served as Treasurer of the Management Committee, then in 1993 as Vice Chairperson and in 1995 she assumed the lead role as Chairperson. Susan has discharged all her duties with remarkable aplomb.



A bright, determined, strong character with a real sense of community interest and values, Susan is a very popular local figure. Paul Farrell, the Co-operative's Director said, "We are delighted for Susan and her family. West Whitlawburn owes Susan a great deal. Such an award, which recognises Susan's outstanding contribution to the community, is richly merited."

Susan is pictured left along with Councillors David Baillie and Clare McColl. Also pictured are Gail Anderson and Helen Gilmour who also received much deserved Community Awards for their work with the Community.

Tenants' Contents Insurance

With winter fast approaching and the mild autumn weather forecast to come to an end, we take this opportunity to remind you of the importance of having house contents insurance in place to cover you in the event of any burst pipes, flooding etc. The Co-operative offer our tenants information on two low cost tenants' contents insurance schemes.

One of the schemes recommended is the SFHA Diamond Scheme which is underwritten by Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance plc. This scheme offers tenants peace of mind along with many benefits including a choice of payment methods, no need for a bank account and no excess payable on any claim. The insurance is available to all tenants subject to scheme acceptance criteria.

There are reduced rates for tenants who are aged 60 and over in receipt of state retirement benefit with cover starting from £6,000. For all other tenants the cover starts at £9,000 up to £35,000.



A similar scheme, Crystal Insurance, is offered by Jardine Lloyd Thompson. Information on both schemes, including premium charges, is available from the Co-operative's offices.

Severe Weather Emergency Plan

Following the service disruptions due to severe weather in 2010, we have put in place an emergency plan to minimise possible future disruptions as far as possible. Staff will always make best efforts to attend work during periods of severe weather however at times we may need to operate with reduced staff numbers

1. Office Closure

During periods of severe weather, the Director will determine if the office is to close in consultation with the Chairperson.

2. Service Levels

At periods of minimal attendance, staff will deal with emergency items. Appointments will be covered where possible and cancelled with as much notice as possible, where cover is not possible.

3. Concierge Service

The Concierge Manager will endeavour to ensure there is concierge cover at all times. At times of reduced staffing, concierge will prioritise work and deal with emergency items.

4. Gritting and Snow Clearing

We will ensure that paths are kept as clear as possible. At times our ability to do so may be dependent on our contractor's ability to travel to the area.

5. Resource Centre

Service levels will be determined based on which staff are present. eg. the centre may be open but the café closed. If the Centre is closed, user groups will be informed with as much notice as possible.

Out of School Care -Locally based OOSC staff will attend and maximise service provision and minimise disruption as far as possible. We will extend the service where possible to offer childcare for periods when schools are closed due to severe weather.

Avoid frozen pipes this winter

It is that time of year again when the temperature drops and with it comes the big freeze! Unfortunately this causes major problems such as frozen pipes and when the thaw arrives, pipes burst which can cause severe flood damage to homes.

If your pipes freeze or you are unfortunate enough to experience a burst pipe, you should contact the Housing Co-operative's office's repair line on 0141 404 6288 or, out with office hours, the 24 hour Concierge Station on 0141 646 1924 .

Scottish Water provide the following advice to prevent frozen pipes:

- Lag water pipes
- Leave a key with neighbours or family if going away at the weekend
- Leave heating on in properties at a low level at all times
- Leave the attic hatch open (if you have one) to allow warmer air to circulate if pipes are not properly insulated
- Know where your stop valve is in case of an emergency
- If pipes do freeze, Scottish Water recommends turning the water off at the mains stop valve. Scottish Water also advise collecting cold water in the bath for washing and toilet flushing.

Location of Stop Valves

For MSF tenants the stop valve is behind the bathroom panels and you should contact the Co-op's office who will arrange for someone to come out and turn the water off for you. Other tenants can easily access the valves themselves. For our new build tenants they are located under the kitchen sink and for low-rise tenemental tenants, the stop valve is located in the hot water cylinder cupboard.

In the event of a burst pipe, you should turn off the water and electricity supply at the mains, switch off any water heater and turn off the central heating system.



Scottish Water's Customer Helpline can be contacted on 0845 601 8855 for advice on how to stem the flow.

Kitchen and Bathroom Replacement Works

As tenants will be aware, The Co-operative recently concluded the stock condition surveys where we determined the condition of kitchens and bathrooms in all of our properties.

Condition scores were given on the following basis:

- 1 - Fitment has reached end of useful life and is failing
- 2 - Fitment is nearing the end of useful life
- 3 - Fitment still has useful life left
- 4 - Fitment is in good condition and does not require renewal at this time
- 5 - Fitment has almost all of its useful life left and is in very good or excellent condition

Funding has now been agreed to allow the progression of the kitchens and bathroom elements noted as being conditions 1 and 2 with continued discussion ongoing with regards to those noted as condition 3.

Property staff have commenced individual march-ins to those properties identified as requiring replacement at this time and your co-operation in providing access is appreciated.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss the matter further, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Property team at the main office who will be happy to assist.

HNC Placement- Peter Traynor



The Co-operative welcomes Peter who is with us until May 2012 as part of his study towards an HNC in Housing Law and Community Development, having previously worked as a Safety Inspector with Amey.

Peter is working with us on Mondays and Tuesdays of each week and although he is based in the Co-op office he is working closely with the Resource Centre. We hope that his time with us will be of benefit towards his qualification.

New play equipment for Hilton Terrace play area



As tenants will be aware, the equipment at the play area adjacent to Hilton Terrace was removed some months ago in error by South Lanarkshire Council.

However, we have been in contact with them over the past few months regarding replacement equipment and are pleased to advise that replacement equipment has now been installed.

We apologise for the delay but hope you appreciate that this was outwith our control. We hope that the new equipment will be welcomed and well used.

Out of School Care Gets Great Grades in Inspection Report

Out of School Care had it's annual inspection from Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland in August and got a glowing report.

The inspection from SCSWIS looked at two main areas of the Out of School Care service: quality of care and support and quality of staffing and we are pleased to report that the Out of School Care achieved Grade 5 - Very Good in both of these areas.

The conclusion of the inspection?

"The service offers a nurturing and relaxed environment for children. It offers opportunities to children to empower them to make decisions for themselves. Children enjoyed learning about themselves and they contribute effectively."

Well done to Liz Jamieson and all the Out of School Care Team!

CHI Health tips for young people



Do you want to learn more about how to be fit and healthy? Are you interested in what's best to eat, healthy drinking, handling stress, feeling

good? Want to come along to some fun interactive events to find out more about these things?

If you are aged 12 to 25 years and live in Cambuslang and Rutherglen, sign up for our free CHI Health Tips Text Service direct to your mobile and CHI Health Tips workshops now. Contact Bernie at CHI:



The Parent Café

The Parent Café is a drop in centre open each Wednesday 11.30am - 1.30pm.

For £2 per week we provide a relaxed and friendly environment where you can meet other parents of babies and enjoy light refreshments while getting practical help and support.

For further information contact Lesley on 0141 646 0123 or email to lesley@healthynhappy.org.uk

Please note that the times, dates or venues are subject to change or cancellation.



CHI ,working with promoting the smoke free everyone, particularly children within Cambuslang and Rutherglen.

NHS Lanarkshire, is benefits of creating homes and cars for

So what does that mean? It means we can help you to make positive, informed choices when thinking about smoking in the home or car.

This is not about us asking people to stop smoking, it is about reducing the exposure of smoke to others, but hopefully it can lead to people thinking about quitting smoking.

Shake Rattle 'n' Roll

Do you have a child aged between 6 weeks – 3 years?



CHI is bringing you a brand new baby exercise class in the Whitlawburn Community Resource Centre!

They started on 11th November 2011

and are on every Friday from 10.30am to 11.30am.

Cost of each session is £3.50

Telephone Lesley on 0141 646 0123 or email to lesley@healthynhappy.org.uk to book your place

Places are on a first come first served basis

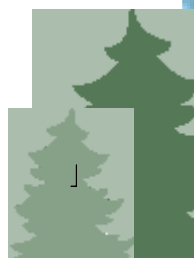


What's On in The Community Resource Centre?



We have a Zumba class running from 7.30 – 8.30 on Tuesday evenings.

For all the latest news and information point your browser to www.whitlawburncrc.org.uk



Santas Grotto and Christmas parties!



Santa will be in his grotto in the Resource centre on 14th December between 2pm and 4pm to meet any babies and children under 5 years old. Every child will get a gift from Santa! Tickets are free and available from the Resource Centre

The Annual Seniors Christmas Party will be held on Wednesday 7th of December in the Resource Centre. Festivities will kick off at 5pm with entertainment and lots of food and drink.

A Christmas Party will be held for children aged 5-12 on the evening of the 14th too! Tickets for this event are also free and available from the Resource Centre.

Contact Lexi for further info 0773 480 1039



COME ALONG TO OUR OPEN DAY

At the Parent and Toddlers group

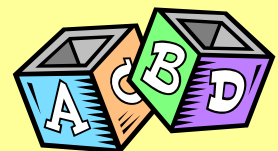
14th December 2-4pm

Tea, Coffee provided and juice for the kids

Come and hear about the new parent toddler group

Every Tuesday 12:30-2.30pm

Fun and games for the tots including face painting and story telling, it also gives parents the time to relax and chill out.



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Camglen Radio are delivering FREE SQA courses in Radio Feature Production:

To find out more or to book your place call Martin on 0141 646 0123 or pop into the CHI offices at the Whitlawburn Community Resource Centre.

CHI and West Whitlawburn Housing Co-op have managed to secure funding to continue providing local residents the opportunity to study towards an SQA qualification in Radio Production. Camglen Radio, in partnership with North Glasgow College, have been delivering the SQA courses for the last 18 months from the Whitlawburn Community Resource Centre. WWHC and Rutherglen and Cambuslang HA residents will get priority places but we have extra spaces. Our 35 hour courses start regularly throughout the year so get in touch to book a place.

Dog Fouling—Bag it and bin it!

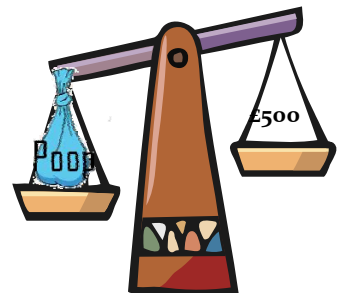
There have been several complaints about the amount of dog fouling on our property recently so, with this in mind...

Always carry something to clean up after your dog - a plastic bag or a 'poop scoop' device will do. Dispose of poo bags in a dog poop bin or any public litter bin. If you don't clean up after your dog your details can be passed to South Lanarkshire Council Environmental Services where they can issue a £40 fixed penalty - This will rise to £60 if not paid in 28 days and the maximum fine is £500!

YOU DECIDE - Scoop the Poop or pay?

Facts

- ◆ A dog will poo on average 23 times per week
- ◆ Dog poo contains roundworm eggs - These eggs can linger in your soil or grass for years before hatching and can therefore be transmitted onto humans without knowing.
- ◆ Roundworm eggs can cause stomach upsets, sore throats and other illness in adults and children



**If you see anyone not picking up after their dog please contact
[South Lanarkshire Council Environmental Services on 08457 406080](mailto:South.Lanarkshire.Council.Environmental.Services@scotland.nhs.uk)**

**Free Poop Scoop Bags available from the
Main Office or Concierge**

CONTACT DETAILS

Office Opening Times for Christmas

The office will close on Friday 23rd December 2011 12.30pm and re-open 9:15am on Wednesday 4th January 2012. If you have an emergency during this time please contact our 24 hour concierge station via your handset or by telephone 0141 646 1924.

Jeśli potrzebują Państwo pomocy tłumacza, aby uzyskać od nas informacje na którekolwiek z poniższych tematów, prosimy o kontakt z naszą centralą w celu zaaranżowania spotkania z udziałem tłumacza:

- Konto opłat czynszowych
- Zasiłki
- Zażalenia
- Naprawy
- Przeprowadzka

SLC– Bulk Uplift	0303 123 1020		
Cambuslang Q&A	0303 123 1012		
Benefit Enquiries	0845 608 8645	Housing Benefit/Council Tax	0303 123 1011
Tax Credits	0845 300 3900	Community Police	0141 207 4101
Cambuslang Citizens Advice	0141 646 3191	NHS24	08454 24 24 24
Concierge	0141 646 1924	East Whitlawburn TMC	0141 641 3484
Scottish Power (Emergency)	0845 2727999	Community Resource Centre	0141 641 5005
Scottish Gas (Emergency)	0800 1119999	Repair Line	0141 404 6288

NEW TELEPHONE NUMBER FOR REPORTING REPAIRS

Please note that there is now a new number for directly reporting repairs.

It is 0141 404 6288

If you have an Out of Hours Emergency Repair, you should still report this to Concierge.

Please note Tradesmen morning visits are scheduled between 9am and 1pm and afternoon visits are between 1 and 5pm.