

West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative Ltd



Winter Newsletter 2015

Excellent Performance from WWHC

The Scottish Housing Regulator has published its Annual Performance Statement on WWHC's performance over the year 2014/15 and the results are nothing short of fantastic. In the vast majority of areas of performance assessed by The Regulator, WWHC exceeds the Scottish average. The Regulator considers 14 areas of landlords' performance each year and the WWHC summary is:



An amazing 12 indicators are better than Scottish average!



1 indicator is equal to the Scottish average!



Only 1 indicator is below the Scottish average!

The full details of The Regulators report are contained in the WWHC Report Card which will be issued to all tenants/members and it will be published on our website.



Susan Anderson, WWHC's Chairperson commented:

"It is a delight to see such a fantastic report card from The Scottish Housing Regulator on WWHC's performance. The results are a tribute to the commitment, professionalism and diligence of our Management Committee and staff. Long may our success continue."



Paul Farrell, WWHC's Director commented:

"It is a privilege to be part of such a success story. The WWHC team, once again, has delivered a tremendous performance. The results speak for themselves. Very few landlords can match our performance. We pride ourselves in the very high standards we set, well done Team WWHC"





Biomass Energy Project **Remedial Work Update**

The programme of remedial work which began on 1st June 2015 is nearing completion with the majority of flats having most or all of the work carried out. Unfortunately, once this work had started, it became apparent that a final flush, cleanse and pressure test of the system was required in each property resulting in a further visit to some properties.

We fully appreciate the inconvenience of another visit to your home in relation to this project and an inconvenience payment of £25.00 will be made where an additional visit was required for this final flushing work. These payments will be processed once the 20% reimbursement payments are complete.

The tenant satisfaction survey on the remedial work has shown the levels of tenant satisfaction to be very high with many positive comments. Below is some information which will be of use over the holiday period.

Heat and Hot Water

If you have any problems with the heating system over the Christmas and New Year period, please contact Concierge in the first instance either via your handset or calling 646 1924.

Friendly Credit

Friendly Credit periods are specified times where your vPro meter will not stop your energy supply, even if credit runs out.

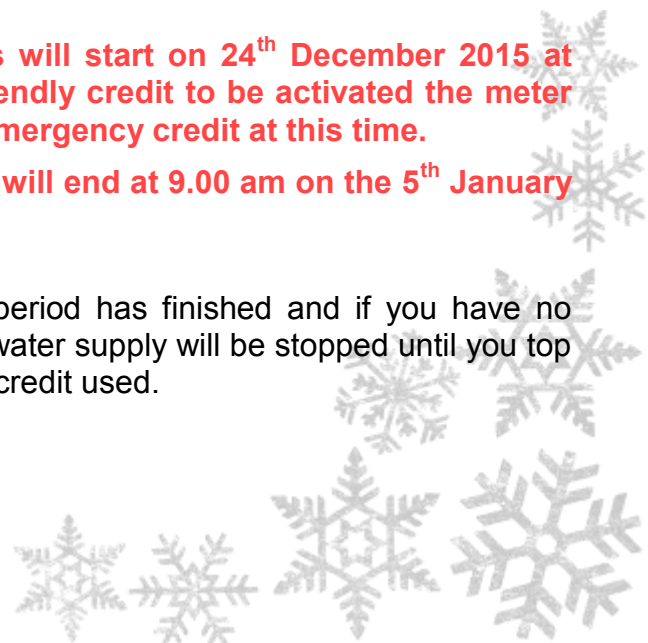
During the friendly credit period if you run out of credit **you will still be charged for your heat and hot water**, and when you next top up, the payment will pay off the amount used during the friendly credit days and any remaining balance will show as a credit on your meter.

The vPro payment and metering customer service will be closed from the 24th December 2015 to the 4th January 2016, so the friendly credit facility will be activated during this time.

The friendly credit days will start on 24th December 2015 at midnight and for the friendly credit to be activated the meter must be in credit or in emergency credit at this time.

The friendly credit days will end at 9.00 am on the 5th January 2016.

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



Emergency Credit

Emergency Credit provides a temporary amount of credit in case you are unable to top up and your credit is about to run out. The low credit alarm will sound when no credit is remaining on the system and an alert is provided at the bottom of your In-Home Display. 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 of emergency credit that is available is fixed at £5.00. When you next top up, your emergency credit fund will be topped up first so please top up more than the emergency credit.

Top Ups

If your automated top up has not taken place within a reasonable amount of time, you can enter the vend code directly. Simply select HEAT on your vPro unit and you can enter your vend code (which can be found on your receipt) using the touch screen key pad.

If you have topped up by Payzone your 20 digit vend code will be printed on your receipt.

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 payment card by using the unique payment card reference number.

It would be useful for you to keep a note of this.



Our Commitment to Equality and Diversity

As part of our ongoing commitment to our tenants, all staff and committee have undertaken equality and diversity training. This training covered the legal aspects of equalities legislation but also how we make sure our tenants feel able to access our services on a day to day basis.

So whether you're a tenant or an applicant you can be assured that you will receive the same level of customer service without discrimination or prejudice.

Discrimination can be against a person's gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion and belief, gender reassignment, marital/civil partnership status or because of pregnancy.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you think that we can do something different to make your tenancy at WWHC easier. This could include accessible print, translated documents, using gender neutral pronouns etc. Please contact your housing officer to discuss your requirements in accessing our services.





A tribute to Billy Hunter 1949 -

Billy was the salt of the earth, a diamond who had no time for bureaucracy and a fierce campaigner for social justice. A man of unswerving principle who would never shy away from fighting for what was right. A warm heart, blessed with humour and compassion made Billy a very endearing and hugely popular person, these characteristics, coupled with an incisive mind, and a tremendous intellect made Billy a formidable adversary for those who opposed Billy's view of what constitutes real social justice.

Director of WWHC Paul Farrell

A lust for life, a huge personality, a razor sharp intellect and the most roguish laugh ever. Sorely missed.

Teresa Burns, Housing Officer at WWHC



Everyone at WWHC has been deeply saddened by the untimely passing of Billy Hunter, on 22nd August 2015, at Hairmyres Hospital East Kilbride.

Billy has been a pillar of WWHC for over 20 years and all staff and Committee members who have had the privilege of working with Billy so fully appreciate the enormous contribution Billy has made to WWHC, the Whitlawburn Community Resource Centre and Whitcomm.

Billy was the 3rd Chairperson of WWHC and was very well known and respected within the social housing and Co-operative communities across the UK.

WWHC marked Billy's passing with a scattering of his ashes and a tree planting ceremony on 20th November 2015 within the WWHC Millenium Gardens. Billy's tree is planted beside his great friend Phil

Billy was a man I looked up to & admired. He was a man who strived to try to make his community a better place to live

Susan Anderson, Chair of WWHC

ute to Hunter 2015

Welsh's commemorative tree. They were a great double act and regularly presented training sessions at housing and co-operative conferences and seminars, in their inimitable style.

Billy's ashes were also scattered at a favourite spot of Billy's in Kilkeel, County Down, Northern Ireland on 20th October 2015 by Billy's cousin Dick Geater and Billy's friend Robert Totten.

WWHC, in conjunction with Billy's family, will be developing an annual "Billy Hunter Award for Learning" with a local school and also establishing the "Billy Hunter WWHC Staff Training Fund" with regard to Billy's focus on knowledge and education.

Billy will be sadly missed and his contribution to the great successes of WWHC is testimony to the tremendous and forceful character Billy was.

WWHC will not be the same without Billy.



“ Billy always said he was a toff as he and his family lived at the top of Park Street at no.2, myself and my family stayed at no.58 Park Street when we were young. We played together after school then both of us went on to work in Clydebridge Steelworks.
Billy and I had a great relationships as cousins going on holiday to Abervan in Wales, Weymouth and Antwerp in Belgium visiting relations.
Dick Geater, Billy's cousin ”

“ I came to know Billy in our time in Clydebridge steel works as young men. Billy worked as assistant chief pay officer all this time he was known as an honourable and trustworthy employee. He carried those attributes throughout the whole of his life. Willing to help any person in need, just a lovely person, it was my privilege to know. He loved helping West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative, what a fabulous ambassador for the working class.
Council Russell Clearie ”

“ Billy was a man of vision. He was passionate about everything he believed in. Sadly missed by all who knew him.
Anne Anderson, Vice Chair of WWHC ”



Performance Report– How are we doing

Tenancy Services

Turnover and Allocations

At 27th Sept 2015, there were 132 applicants on the housing list and 91 on the transfer list.

Since 17 th March 2015, 38 properties have been re-let. The average void time for each property was 28 days which is an increase from 25 days in 2014/15 and above our target of 21 days. We are currently working to improve this area.		2014/15	15/16 to date
	Re-lets	95	38
	Direct applications	48%	41%
	Transfers	19%	19%
	SLC referrals	29%	25%

Rent Collection and Arrears

Arrears	2014/15	15/16 to date	During the financial year to date we collected 97.3% of the rent due, compared with 98.2% during 2014/15. If you need any help or advice regarding your account or benefits please contact your Housing Officer.
Current Tenants			
Target	4.0%	4.0%	
Actual	4.6%	4.8%	
Former Tenants			
Target	1.0%	1.0%	
Actual	2.6%	3.4%	

Estate Management

Housing Management and Concierge staff work closely together and with other agencies to resolve neighbour and estate difficulties as quickly as possible. Concierge staff also manage the housing alarm service and respond to calls through the system and all officer are first aid trained. Since April, 5 of the calls required emergency action.		2014/15	15/16 to date
	Abandoned tenancies	8	8
	Anti social behaviour	3	3
	Estate management	273	129
	Concierge incident report	181	39
	Housing alarm calls	304	24

Property Services Report

Reactive Repair Timescales

Item	April to September
Reactive Repairs	
Instructed	1067
Emergency	132
Urgent	321
Routine	613
Total within Target	
Emergency	93.60%
Urgent	92.64%
Routine	93.02%

Out of 132 emergency repairs reported between 1st April 2015 to 30th September 2015, there were 7 out with target timescales. Details as follows:

1 repair reported in June 2015 at the new build properties was 1 hour and 15 minutes over due.
1 repair was a due to a fault that was identified as part of our annual safety checks carried out, the repair was 18 minutes out with target.
1 was due to a delay with parts for a door entry panel. The repair was carried out the next day (one day overdue)
4 of the emergency repairs recorded between June and July 2015 will be re-categorised at the year end which will show a slight improvement on this statistic



**Corporate Services Report
WWHC Revenue Income and Expenditure for the period April to September 2015**

Revenue Income			Revenue Expenditure		
	Budget	Actual		Budget	Actual
Net Rents Receivable	1,546,573	1,563,627	Management Costs & Maintenance Overheads	817,786	772,484
Other Income	197,149	197,861	Planned Maintenance - Direct Costs	67,310	56,864
Bank Interest Received	1,000	1,137	Reactive/Voids - Direct Costs	288,708	291,186
			Property Depreciation	79,337	79,337
			Other Costs	138,981	134,522
			Bad Debt Written Off	2,543	2,543
			Private Finance Loan - Interest Payments	84,632	84,632
Totals	1,744,722	1,762,625		1,479,297	1,421,568
Outturn Summary			Budgeted Surplus for the period		265,425
			Actual Surplus for the period		341,057
			Variance/Surplus for the period		75,632



An Award for Muriel



Employers in Voluntary Housing (EVH) has honoured our Treasurer, Muriel Alcorn with a distinguished long service award at a recent awards ceremony in Glasgow. Muriel has served on the Executive of EVH for over 15 years and is the only remaining original member of the WWHC Management Committee, long service indeed. Muriel is pictured receiving her award at the recent event. **BIG CONGRATULATIONS** to Muriel on this outstanding achievement.



What's on in the Resource Centre

WHIT RECYCLE

The Whit Recycle Project has expanded and now has a shop which is open to the public from Monday to Friday 9am – 12pm. The project also accepts donations of unwanted household goods and passes them onto people who have nothing at all or are in desperate need of specific items. Donations of unwanted non-electrical household items which are in good condition are very welcome. For further information contact Geraldine on 0141 641 5005.

WHIT FOOTBALL

The Whit Football project has been running for the past two years and has proved to be extremely popular. The project is aimed at youths from 5-17 years and normally runs on Friday, Sunday and Monday evenings. Contact reception on 0141 641 5005.

WAINZ WORLD

Wainz World Out of School Care provide morning and after school care. If you are interested in a place for your child/children or require further information please contact Mary Fleming on 07564913467 or email maryf183@gmail.com

WHITLAWBURN COMMUNITY CAFE

The cafe is open Monday to Friday 9am – 2pm and Saturday 9am – 12pm. It offers a wide range of food from a breakfast roll to our homemade steak pie, and has a kids' lunchtime menu for your little ones on their lunch break from school. On Fridays from 2pm you can also have a game of bingo! If you are looking for catering for any events just give us a call! Contact reception on 0141 641 5005.

REACH

REACH Lanarkshire Autism is a charity based in Lanarkshire established in 2012 to bridge the gap in provision for children and young people with autism. REACH offers a wide range of activities throughout Lanarkshire for children and young people affected by ASD along with their siblings.

Whether it be in dealing with Health Professionals, Education, Social Work or just having a chat, REACH are here to support each other. For further details contact the Resource Centre on 0141 641 5005.

WHIT MONEY

CAB Outreach

Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays 10.00am – 3.00pm. Please contact reception on 0141 641 5005 for an appointment.

Blantyre & South Lanarkshire Credit Union

Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays 12pm – 1.30pm. Please contact the Credit Union on 01698 711112 or Centre reception on 0141 641 5005.

Digital Drop-in

Monday & Wednesday 10am – 4pm. Just "drop-in" no need for an appointment!

UTD SPORTS

Utd Sports run a number of clubs in the Centre including soccer tots football classes and Hip-Hop tots dance class. As well as this UTD Sports also run football/multi-sport parties in the Centre. Take the stress away from the big day and let us organise everything, right down to singing happy birthday!

Contact Utd Sports on 07738305195.

Whit Recycle

Whit Recycle is a project to help people in financial difficulties, which may be due to a recent move, a flood, a fire, or a low income. All items are in good condition and all have been cleaned and are all available for a low cost or even no cost! If you wish a referral please contact your Housing Officer. There is clothing for men, women and children of all ages and from smart to casual.



Items available:

Household items

Pots and pans
Crockery
Cutlery
Lamp shades
Vases and pictures
Bedding and Curtains
Towels
Rugs and Soft furnishings

Other

Hats and scarfs
Coats and jackets
T-shirts and jumpers
Shorts and trousers
Skirts and shirts
Dresses and suits
Shoes and bags
Kids toys & Board games



Universal Credit information

What Is Universal Credit?

Universal Credit (UC) is a new single monthly benefit for those of working age who are on a low income or who are out of work. It will replace six existing benefits including JSA, Tax Credits and Housing Benefit. Working age is between 18 and Pension Credit age.

At first, only single people making a new claim will be invited to claim UC and to be eligible you must have a bank, post office or credit union account that accepts electronic payments.

When will it start?

It has now been rolled out to Cambuslang so all new claims will now be UC.

How Do I claim Universal Credit?

Claims will be made online. If you do not have a computer or access to the internet you could use one of the computers at the Digital Drop-In Session at the Whitlawburn Resource Centre.

Alternatively, you can go to the Job Centre, the Library or Citizens Advice Bureau. CAB have an outreach project in the Whitlawburn Resource Centre. Please phone 0141 641 5005 for up to date times for the Digital Drop-In as well as for CAB appointments.

How will Universal Credit be paid?

It will be paid monthly, in arrears, directly into your bank account. The payment date will vary from tenant to tenant.

What happens about my rent if I receive Universal Credit?

If you are in receipt of UC you will not be able to claim Housing Benefit. Instead your UC payment will include money to pay your rent. It will then be your responsibility to pay your rent to the Cooperative. Only in exceptional circumstances will the DWP pay your rent directly to the Co-operative.

What do I need to do?

It is important you keep up to date with your rent - it keeps a roof over your head. Being paid monthly, in arrears, means that rent arrears can quickly escalate and become out of control. To protect your tenancy and your home you need to discuss your future rent payments with your Housing Officer.

What if I struggle to manage monthly?

If you are finding it difficult to manage your money you can get advice from:-

- Money Matters at CambusGate (Tel : 0303 123 1008)
- Citizens Advice Bureau at Kyle Court (Tel : 0141 646 3191)
- Whitlawburn Resource Centre (Tel : 0141 641 5005)
- Blantyre and South Lanarkshire Credit Union at WRC on Mon, Tues and Wed

What else should I know about Universal Credit?

You will need to sign a "claimant commitment" which is a contract confirming what you will do to find a job while receiving UC. If you don't manage to keep to the agreement you may be sanctioned and your benefit will be cut for a period of time. You can appeal a decision to sanction your benefits.

West Whitlawburn Roolz.....OK!!!! (apologies for the spelling)

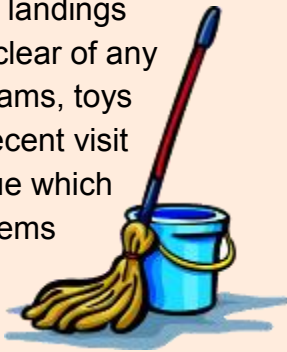
WWHC, like all Registered Social Landlords in Scotland, is governed by a set of rules which are agreed by WWHC Management Committee, WWHC Members/Tenants and ratified by The Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, The Scottish Housing Regulator and The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. The current WWHC Rules were agreed at the WWHC AGM in September 2015. A copy of the current Rule Book is being sent out to every member/tenant.

Forget me not...



Landings

Please remember to keep all landings and sub-landings clean and clear of any belongings such as bikes, prams, toys or rubbish. We have had a recent visit from Scottish Fire and Rescue which highlighted problem areas. Items being stored on the landings are a fire hazard and could obstruct people from evacuating the building if necessary.



Chute Rooms

This is a reminder that all tenants throwing rubbish down the chute should be considerate of others when doing so. Please bare in mind other tenants work patterns and young family who might be sleeping. It is advisable that you do not throw anything down the chute between 8pm and 8am.



DIY

We understand tenants wish to make their house their own and this involves a touch of DIY. You are entitled to make some modifications to your house, but please ensure you have the correct tools and tradesperson if applicable, to do the job. Please contact the Property Team at the office for advice/permission. Please be considerate of neighbours when carrying out DIY and there should be no works being carried out after 8pm.



Use of the Laundry

Tenants are reminded that when you use the laundry you don't leave your items unattended. If belongings are being left for a long period of time, they will be removed and disposed of.

Please check any items left in the laundry and make sure they do not belong to you.

Thank you!



A Lightbulb Moment

Free lightbulbs from Npower



Npower has kindly donated free energy saving lightbulbs for WWHC tenants. If you wish a couple of free lightbulbs simply pop into the office and collect some, remember and check which type of fitting you need. i.e, a screw or a bayonet fixture.

Screw Cap



Bayonet



Rent matters, don't risk losing your home



Take the hassle out of remembering to pay your rent, set up a Direct Debit with date that suits you.



Through the Allpay Payment App, visit their website for more information:
allpay.net/app



Over the phone, Online or by text
0844 557 8321 | allpayments.net
Allpayments.net/text



With cash over the counter. Pay weekly, fortnightly, 4weekly or monthly.



We can accept card payments in the office or on the phone. All we need is your long card number, expiry date and 3 digit security number on the back of your card.

We can send you out a receipt in the post or email it over to you.

Office Opening

The housing office will close on Christmas Eve and will re-open again on Tuesday 5th January 2016 at 9:15am. If you have any emergency repairs over this period please contact the concierge on your handset or on the number shown below.

The Resource Centre also closes on Christmas Eve and re-opens again on Wednesday 6th January 2016.



Seasons greetings to all members/tenants from all
at WWHC!

Useful Numbers

Benefit Enquiries	0845 608 8645	Community Resource Centre	0141 641 5005
Cambuslang Q&A	0303 123 1012	Concierge	0141 646 1924
Cambuslang Citizens Advice	0141 646 3191	Housing Benefit/Council Tax	0303 123 1011
Police	101	SLC Dog Fouling	0845 740 6080
Scottish Gas (Emergency)	0800 111999	NHS24	111
Scottish Water	0800 077 8778	Tax Credits	0845 300 3900
SLC Land Services (Bulk up-lifts)	0303 123 1020	Scottish Welfare Fund	0303 123 1007
Social Work Department	0141 613 5000	Scottish Power– Power cut	0845 27 27 999