

West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative Ltd

May 2016 Newsletter



FREEZE

WWHC rents frozen for 2016/2017

FREEZE

WWHC heating and hot water charges frozen for 2016/2017

FREEZE

Whitcomm Co-operative charges frozen for 2016/2017

West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative, following consultation with its tenants and members, has decided to freeze rents, fuel costs and communications costs (for Whitcomm customers) for the forthcoming year.

Paul Farrell, the Director of the Housing Co-operative said "We are acutely aware of the very difficult economic circumstances our tenants and members are facing at this time. The levels of hardship and poverty we are witnessing are severe. Our aim is to provide the highest possible quality of housing, energy and ancillary services at a rent which people can afford.

Susan Anderson, Chairperson of WWHC said:

"Hopefully our tenants will appreciate we are doing our utmost to help those in greatest need. By skilful financial planning and cost control we do not need to raise rents, fuel charges or Whitcomm communication charges this year."

WWHC meets energy standards ahead of schedule

Over the past few years the Scottish Government has set demanding targets for all Social Housing Landlords in Scotland to meet energy efficiency standards. These targets are in compliance with the recent Paris summit on worldwide energy targets to make best use of scarce resources and counter climate change. WWHC is delighted to announce that we have met these challenging targets **4 YEARS** ahead of the Government target date of 2020.



Stephanie Marshall, Depute Director of WWHC said:

“It is fantastic to see all the hard work and investment we have made over the years in our properties paying off in such a spectacular fashion”.

Grant Clayton, Assistant Director (Property) said:

“WWHC will be the envy of many other landlords across Scotland in meeting this challenging target with 4 years to spare”.

Anne Anderson, Chairperson of the Property Sub Committee said:

“This is an outstanding achievement. All our staff and Committee deserve great credit for planning and implementing a complex investment programme and delivering outstanding results”.

Important information about Universal Credit



STOP! If you are in receipt of or about to apply for Universal Credit you could be receiving less money than you are entitled to!

Universal Credit (UC) is a new single monthly benefit for people of working age who are on a low income or who are out of work. Working age is between 18 and Pension Credit age.

Currently, only single people making a new benefit claim are being awarded UC. You must also have a bank, post office or credit union account that accepts electronic payments. It replaces six existing benefits including JSA, Tax Credits and Housing Benefit.

Some of our tenants who have recently applied for UC have been given the incorrect amount of money. That's why it's important that you come in and speak to your Housing Officer to make sure you are getting everything you are entitled to.

Don't leave it until it's too late!

Low Rise Improvement Works

The Co-operative is pleased to announce that the following works are being planned for upgrade and renewal within the low rise properties.

Controlled Door Entry Upgrade

Our CCTV and Door Entry contractor, Stanley Security, is currently upgrading the infrastructure within the Concierge Station along with the CCTV cameras throughout the estate.



As part of these upgrade works we have agreed with the contractor that the door entry within the low rise properties will be connected back to the Concierge Station, which will give tenants direct contact with the Concierge. This work will be carried out in 2 phases:

- Phase 1 - will be the installation of network cabling from the Concierge Station to all the low rise properties.
- Phase 2 - will involve renewal of the door entry panels at the front and back doors of the blocks and upgrading the cabling and door entry handset within properties. It is anticipated that these works will commence in properties from 24th May 2016 with completion of all properties by mid June 2016. Tenants will be lettered separately advising access requirements and the procedure for the issuing of new fobs for each household.

Window Renewal



The Co-operative is planning to carry out a full window renewal project within all low rise properties as part of its planned maintenance schedule, as the current windows are now nearing the end of their life cycle. This will be a 2 year project split over financial years 2016/17 and 2017/18.

We are currently collating design information for the tender process, thereafter to appoint the successful contractor and agree a programme of works. We are anticipating a site start July 2016 with the likely sequence of renewal being:

2016/17 Clifton and Hilton Terrace
2017/18 Albany Terrace and Belmont Road

Further information will be provided regarding access and preparation requirements for the window renewal project once the tender process has been completed and a programme of works has been agreed.

In the meantime, if you require any further information please contact staff in the Property Section.

Welcome to Dave Kinloch

WWHC is delighted to welcome Dave Kinloch, our new Property Maintenance Officer. Dave is replacing Gavin Glaister who left WWHC in November 2015.

Interviews were carried out by Committee members Susan Anderson (chair) Anne Anderson (vice chair) and Muriel Alcorn (treasurer) who were unanimous in their decision as Dave was the outstanding candidate in a highly competitive field.

Dave brings a tremendous amount of experience to the WWHC property team from his previous career in Property Management with a range of organisations. We are sure Dave will prove to be a great asset to WWHC and we are sure he will further strengthen the Property team of Grant, Jeanette, Kathleen, Kirstie and Samantha.



Welcome to Les Patrick

WWHC Committee and staff were pleased to welcome Les Patrick on a 12 week placement from South Lanarkshire College. Les is studying a course in Business Management and will gain valuable experience of running a multi-million pound Co-operative not-for-profit business during his time with WWHC.

Les is well known in the housing field in the west of Scotland. Les has been a member of the Management Committee of East Kilbride and District Housing Association for over 17 years and is a former Chair of The Association.

We hope Les thoroughly enjoyed his time at WWHC.



Committee Member– Jim Kerr

All at WWHC were saddened by the news of the passing of Jim Kerr from Ailsa Tower who had been a recent Committee member of WWHC. All Committee and staff at WWHC send their condolences and sympathies to Jim's family.

Lanarkshire Credit Union



A new facelift for one of Lanarkshire's biggest Credit Unions is paving the way for big things. Lanarkshire Credit Union (formerly Blantyre & South Lanarkshire Credit Union) is the new look Credit Union for those living or working within Lanarkshire. This year has seen a full new rebrand of the Credit Union, a new name, new image, and new products. Their main office has been fully renovated with their Rutherglen office currently under renovation as well. They are also currently redeveloping their website which will hopefully go live at the end of January.

Chairman Gordon Muir who spoke with us said:



“Hopefully you’ll have seen some of the more visible changes to the credit union while we try to find ways to better serve our members, however you’ll not be aware of the hidden changes which have been taking part behind the scenes.

The management structure of the organization has been changed dramatically, which I am sure most people will agree has proven beneficial to all the members, the board has also been strengthened by new members who have complimentary skills from those already on the board.

In difficult financial times we are maintaining a healthy rate of growth in both members and savings as well as income, as we develop more products there will be more opportunities for members to use the credit union for more of their needs.”



The Credit Union has launched a new loan product that moves away from the traditional lending model, typically based on members savings. This loan, the Intro Loan, offers new and existing members who haven't borrowed with the Credit Union before, who are in full time employment and have good credit scores the opportunity to apply for a loan of up to £2500, all at an affordable rate.

Gordon went on to say:



“I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our members for being part of our credit union, it's testament to what people can do if they work together for the benefit of all. I hope you'll allow us to serve you for the foreseeable future.”



You can keep up to date with everything going on at Lanarkshire Credit Union by heading over their website www.lanarkshirecreditunion.co.uk or by finding them on social media, www.facebook.com/LanCreditUnion and Twitter [@LanCreditUnion](https://twitter.com/LanCreditUnion)



Lanarkshire Credit Union is a trading name for Blantyre Credit Union. Registered Office 252 Glasgow Road, Blantyre, Glasgow, G72 0YH.

Lanarkshire Credit Union is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority & regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority & the Prudential Regulation Authority. FCA firm reference number: 213669



www.lanarkshirecreditunion.co.uk



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Performance Review

Property Services

Reactive Repairs Timescales

Item	1st January to 31st March 2016
Reactive Repairs	
Instructed	653
Emergency	84
Urgent	245
Routine	324
Total within Target	
Emergency	93%
Urgent	90%
Routine	92%

Corporate Services

WWHC Revenue Income & Expenditure for the period April to December 2015

Revenue Income			Revenue Expenditure		
	Budget	Actual		Budget	Actual
Net Rents Receivable	2,208,542	2,231,359	Management Costs & Maint Overheads	1,234,066	1,165,280
Other Income	136,515	137,727	Planned Maintenance - Direct Costs	98,790	111,458
Bank Interest Received	1,500	5,866	Reactive\Voids - Direct Costs	433,063	428,137
			Property Depreciation	119,024	119,024
			Other Costs	173,668	164,834
			Bad debt written off	2,543	2,543
			Private Finance Loan - Interest Payments	160,121	160,121
Totals	2,346,557	2,374,952		2,221,275	2,151,397
Outturn Summary			Budgeted Surplus for the period		125,282
			Actual Surplus for the period		223,555
			Variance\Surplus for the period		98,273

Tenancy Services

Turnover and Allocations

At the end of February 2016 there were 152 applicants on the housing list and 106 on the transfer list.

The average void time to re-let properties for the year up until 17 th Jan 2016 for each property was 29 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 Feb
	Re-lets	95	58
	Direct applications	48%	53%
	Transfers	19%	18%
	SLC referrals	29%	25%

Rent Collection and Arrears

Arrears	2014/15	15/16 to date	During the financial year up until 17 th Jan 2016 we collected 98.2% 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			
Actual	1.0%	1.0%	

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 officers are first aid trained. Since April, 31 of the calls required emergency action.		2014/15	15/16 to Feb
	Abandoned tenancies	8	10
	Anti social behaviour	3	5
	Estate management	273	332
	Concierge incident report	181	118
	Housing alarm calls	304	185

The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)

The SHR is the national body who oversees regulates and supervises all Registered Social Landlords (Housing Co-operatives, Housing Associations and Local Authorities) such as WWHC, in Scotland.

Each year the SHR assesses and analyses the performance of all Registered Social Landlords in Scotland and assesses how much engagement the Regulator needs to have with Landlords.

Once again the SHR has decided it needs minimal engagement with WWHC as clearly it is comfortable with the tremendous performance and achievements of WWHC.

This is the way it should be and is strong proof that tenant Controlled Housing Co-operatives such as WWHC are the great success story of contemporary Social Housing.

The Right to Repair

What is the right to repair?

Under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, all WWHC tenants have the right to have small urgent repairs carried out by their landlord within a given timescale. This is called the Right to Repair scheme.

The Right to Repair scheme applies to all tenants of local authorities, housing associations and housing co-operatives.

Given the very quick response times of the WWHC repairs service, it's unlikely that tenants will have to exercise these rights very often,

What repairs come under the Right to Repair Scheme?

The scheme covers certain repairs up to the value of £350. These repairs are known as 'qualifying' repairs. They include:

Repair	Number of days to complete repair
Blocked or leaking foul drains, soil stacks or toilet pans where there is no other toilet in the house.	1 day
Blocked sink, bath or drain.	1 day
Loss of electric power	1 day
Partial loss of electric power	3 days
Insecure external window, door or lock.	1 day
Unsafe access path or step.	1 day
Significant leaks or flooding from water or heating pipes, tanks, cisterns.	1 day
Loss or partial loss of space or water heating where no alternative heating is available.	1 day
Toilet not flushing where there is no other toilet in the house.	1 day
Unsafe power or lighting socket, or electrical fitting.	1 day
Loss of water supply.	1 day
Partial loss of water supply.	3 days
Loose or detached banister or hand rail.	3 days
Unsafe timber flooring or stair treads.	3 days
Mechanical extractor fan in internal kitchen or bathroom not working.	7 days

What happens when a repair is reported?

When you report a repair, WWHC staff will let you know whether it is the Co-op's responsibility to carry out the repair and whether it is a qualifying repair under the Right to Repair scheme. Examples of repairs that are not the responsibility of WWHC include repairs to decoration within the property. WWHC may need to inspect your home to find out whether the repair is a qualifying repair or not.



If the repair does qualify under the scheme, we will:

- tell you the maximum time allowed to carry out the repair;
- tell you the last day of that period;
- explain your rights under the Right to Repair scheme;
- make arrangements with you to get into your home to carry out the repair.

When raising a repair, we will be able to tell you if a repair you need is included in the scheme. We will also let you know:

- the maximum time the repair must be done in (as per the list above); and
- how we deal with repairs that are not covered by the scheme.

Sometimes there may be circumstances which we or the contractor has no control over which make it impossible to do the repair within the maximum time (for example, severe weather). In these circumstances WWHC may need to make temporary arrangements and to extend the maximum time. If we need to do this, we will let you know.



What happens if the work is not done in time?

If our usual contractor does not start the qualifying repair within the time limit set, you can tell another contractor from our list to carry out the repair. **You cannot use a contractor who is not on WWHC's list.** The other contractor will then advise WWHC that you have asked them to carry out the repair. WWHC will then pay you £15 compensation for the inconvenience. If WWHC's main contractor has started but not completed the repair within the maximum time, you will also be entitled to £15 compensation.

How long does the other contractor have to complete the repair?

The other contractor has the same length of time to carry out the repair as WWHC's main contractor. If they do not carry out the repair within the time limit set, you will be entitled to another £3 compensation for each working day until the repair has been completed. This amount can add up to a maximum compensation payment of £100 for any one repair.

What if there is no other contractor available?

In this case, WWHC's main contractor will carry out the repair but you will still be entitled to the £15 compensation payment.

What happens if I am out when the contractor calls to carry out the inspection or repair?

If the contractor cannot get into your home at the time you have agreed with us, your right to repair will be cancelled. You will then have to re-apply and start the process again. Also, if you choose to make an appointment outwith the timescale this will not be treated as a Right to Repair.



Utd Sports Whitlawburn Classes

All football classes are held at The Centre Circle
behind the housing office

Monday Football 4:45-5:45pm

Soccer Tots - ages 2-5

Utd Sports Football Academy – ages 5-8

£4 weekly and a free trial session for new faces!

Wednesday Football

Utd Sports Football Academy – for ages 5-8

£4 weekly and a free trial session for new faces!

Utd Sports Football Academy 2010's Training 6-7pm

Thursday Youth Project Gymnastics

Gymnastics class 6:30-7:30

Held in Whitlawburn Resource Centre

Friday Night Youth Project Football

5:30-8:30pm

Sunday Night Football

Coming soon!!



Whit Recycle Clothes Sale

Whit Recycle project are holding a clothes and toy sale in Whitlawburn Committee Resource Centre every Friday from 10am– 2pm. Most items are only £1.00!



Art class for over 50s. First session free!

Every Wednesday 10am-12noon in Whitlawburn Community Resource Centre (Bonus Ball)
If you've ever fancied learning to draw or paint, why not give this group a go? No previous experience is needed. You'll be amazed at how quickly your artistic skills improve, even if you've not done art since school. We're a small, friendly group looking for new members. It's only £2 per week, with the first session free. To join, please contact Catriona at LEAP on 641 5169 or email catriona@leap-project.co.uk.



Whitlawburn Community Café

Whitlawburn Café, which is based within Whitlawburn Community Resource Centre, has recently undergone a makeover, why not pop in and try out their "Big Daddy" breakfast. There is also a Friday afternoon Bingo held in the café starting at 2pm.

Deliveries are also available contact Michelle on 07708616144 for more information.



Tenant Information

Rubbish bins

Please be aware that the concrete bins on the estate are for general litter and should not be used for household bags of rubbish. If you have large bags of rubbish, (i.e. bags that will not fit down the chute) then please place these inside the cage area (in the towers) and the concierge will take care of them. If you are using the chute room, please remember to lock it behind you, if you have lost your key, then please contact the office or concierge station. Thank you!



Reporting items lost or stolen



If you believe an item of yours has been stolen you must first report this to the police. If you have lost an item then please report this to the main office or concierge station. If you can pinpoint a timeframe as to when the item was last seen we can do our best to check back on CCTV footage to see if anything has been caught on camera. Please be aware that this process can be time consuming but if you have accurate dates and times it can certainly speed up the process.

Riddle me this...

1. What loses its head in the morning but gets it back at night?
2. What can you catch but not throw?
3. What kind of room has no doors or windows?
4. What goes up and doesn't come down?
5. What can one not keep, two hold and three destroy?
6. What has a foot but no leg?

See the bottom of page 10 for the answers

Did you know?

Hot water is heavier than cold water.

On average a hedgehog's heart beats 300 times a minute

There is a city called Rome on every continent.

A group of 12 or more cows is called a flink

Chewing gum while you cut an onion will help keep your eyes from watering

A hardboiled egg will spin but a soft boiled egg will not