



At Home

Newsletter for All Tenants of KEY Housing

Spring 2015



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Welcome



Welcome to the Spring 2015 edition of At Home, the KEY Housing newsletter. This edition will focus on the results of our Annual Repairs Survey. We will also be returning to our remodelled properties in St Ninians, Stirling to see how they turned out.

First, we are going to Rutherglen to see how they are getting on with their new platform lift.

New Lift at Rutherglen

We were recently in Rutherglen to see the test run of our new platform lift.

A lift has been installed at our flats on Hamilton Road to enable easy access between the ground entry and the first level of flats. This enables easier access for our tenants with mobility issues.

Joe, one of our tenants in Rutherglen (pictured right), was the first person to test out the fully-fitted lift. He thought it was easy to use and would be a great help in certain daily tasks.

We were able to arrange this major adaptation through funding from the Scottish Government. This is one of several adaptations we have done to our properties to help people live more independently. These range from small adaptations like grab rails to major adaptations like wet floor showers and ramps.

If you think that you could benefit from an adaptation to your home, please speak to your Housing or Maintenance Officer or call 0141 342 1810.



Above: Joe testing the new lift

Below: The new lift in its final checks.



Major Repairs Programme

Each year a portion of the rent payments is set aside by KEY to pay for our major works to properties. This is called our Major Repairs Programme which you may have seen featured in our last newsletter.

We have planned out the proposed works for 2015 and 2016 and they are detailed below. We use “(part)” when only some of the properties on the street will be affected.

Major Repair	Areas Affected
Bathrooms	Coatbridge (part) Garscube Road, Maryhill (part) St Ninians, Stirling (part) Fort William (part) Claremont Drive, Milngavie
Kitchens	Garnethill Linthouse (part) Shore St, Gourock (part) Sauchie (part)
Windows	Riddrie Erskine (part) Madras Court, Inverness
Heating Systems	Nitshill Golspie Linthouse (part) Bellshill (part)
Roofs	Garnethill (part)



As mentioned in our previous Major Repairs article, we will write to any tenants who will be having work done to their property.

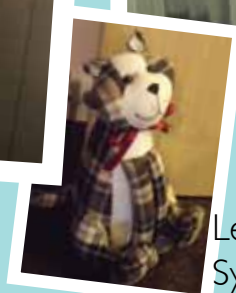
As it is a proposed Major Repairs programme, things may change. If this does happen, we will write to everyone affected. Any postponed works will remain a priority in our Major Repairs programme.

St Ninians

We were invited back up to St Ninians to see all the newly remodelled flats at Clark Street. In previous newsletters we explained that the remodelling was to turn a 4 bedroom house and 2 bedroom flat into 1 and 2 bedroom flats. Here are some of the photos from our guided tour!

Sylvia (right) is very happy with her remodelled flat. Although Sylvia is still in the same flat, the work done means it now better suits her needs. One of the changes made was to fit a wet floor shower as well as a bath to take account of any changing needs.

Sylvia's love of cats could be seen throughout the property as you can see with her cat doorstop (centre right).



Left to Right:
Sylvia delighted with her new look bedroom; her tartan cat doorstop; new wet floor shower



David (left) was in our last newsletter (Winter 2014) while he was living in his temporary accomodation. He is now settling into his own flat after having shared a large house for several years. He had just received his final piece of furniture the day we visited! He is enjoying putting his own stamp on the flat which you can see through his paintings and his VW van wall art (right).

Above: David enjoying his new living room; his newly remodelled kitchen. Far right: David's VW wall art.



You might also recognise Mary (right) from our Summer 2014 newsletter when we visited her in the large 4 bedroom house she had shared for many years.

She now has a flat of her own and was absolutely delighted to give us the tour. She was happy to be involved in the choice of colour for her walls, carpets and kitchen units. KEY gives tenants involved in a remodelling, or certain major repairs, a choice of colours and Mary worked this into a nice colour scheme throughout the house.

She has a sign in her kitchen to show that it is well and truly her flat (below right).



Left to Right: Mary's kitchen sign; the coffee kitchen units she chose; Mary standing proud in her newly decorated bedroom.



Patricia (left) is a new tenant to KEY Housing so this was an entirely new street for her as well as the flat! As you can see from her photo on the front cover, we have managed to keep the original staircase from the large house in her flat.

She has settled into her new street easily and she loves having her new neighbours round for a cuppa (far right).



Left to Right: Patricia is delighted with the flat; Patricia giving her Housing Officer, Flora Murray, the flat tour; ready for her friends to come for a cuppa.

Repairs Satisfaction Survey

The Results Are In...

We would like to thank everyone who completed and returned their Repairs Service Survey sent out by post in February. Overall we had 314 responses meaning 42% of our tenants returned their survey.



Overall satisfaction with our repairs service stays high at 93.5%

This is a little better than last year and the Scottish average of 87%.

We asked for your views on the last repair you reported.

How happy were you with KEY's speed of response to your repair request?

93.8% very or fairly happy

How happy were you with the overall quality of the repair?

96.7% very or fairly happy.

How happy were you with the attitudes of contractors (for example plumbers) who came to your home?

96.3% very or fairly happy

For tenants who share an entrance hallway or close we asked some additional questions.

72 % of you said that you were happy or fairly happy with the decoration of the close/ hallway.



72% Very/Fairly Happy

16% Neither Happy Nor Unhappy

12% Very/Fairly Unhappy

77.9% said you were happy or fairly happy with how clean and tidy the close was being kept.



77.9% Very/Fairly Happy

10.9% Neither Happy Nor Unhappy

11.2% Very/Fairly Unhappy

We will be investigating areas where you said you were unhappy with the close or hallway both in standard of decoration and levels of cleanliness. For those who said they were very or fairly unhappy we will be carrying out additional inspections of your close and will take action to ensure that its standard improves.

Everyone was asked how they felt about the decoration of the windows, doors and railings outside their home.

78.7% Very/Fairly Happy

KEY normally plans to paint the external windows, doors and railings of their properties every 7 years. Our Maintenance Officers regularly carry out inspections of the external decoration of our properties. We will use the repairs survey to check any locations where you have expressed unhappiness.

13.7% Neither Happy Nor Unhappy

7.6% Very/Fairly Unhappy



Garden maintenance is one of the areas where we are working especially hard to try and improve. Our contract has been retendered and there is a clearer understanding of what the service covers and where. As a result we have seen almost 10% increase in the numbers of people who are happy with the service; rising from 67% in 2014 to 76.5% this year.

76.5% Very/Fairly Happy

We will continue to work with our contractors to improve this. If you have any concerns about your garden, please call us on 0141 342 1820.

14.8% Neither Happy Nor Unhappy

8.7% Very/Fairly Unhappy

We had a variety of comments on our services and where a specific question or complaint was raised we will get in touch and agree any actions required with you.

This year we consulted with The Advisory Group, TAG, over the content and layout of the survey form and we used more photos and colour to make the form easier to understand. We also included a star rating which we hoped helped people complete the form.

We would like to thank National TAG for their help and also to everyone who filled in and returned a survey form.



The winners from the Repairs Survey prize draw are:

Sandra Fawcett from Dumfries

Andrew Fraser from Dunoon

Thomas Roberts from Glasgow

Congratulations to you all! Shopping vouchers will be posted out to you!

Universal Credit: What You Need to Know

Over the past year you may have heard about Universal Credit. Universal Credit will change how people will get some of their benefits. At the moment Universal Credit will just affect people claiming benefits for the first time. From what we know, it won't affect people already on benefits until 2017.

What is Universal Credit?

Universal Credit aims to simplify the system of making benefits claims. Rather than applying for 2 or 3 different benefits, everything will be assessed through the 1 Universal Credit application.

It combines a range of benefits including Jobseekers Allowance (JSA), Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and Housing Benefit.

It will not affect any Disability Living Allowance (DLA) claims.



What are the Differences?

One of the biggest changes with Universal Credit is that applications are made online and there are no paper forms. Another change is that claimants need to have their own bank account as the benefit will be paid directly into their account.

When will it affect me?

As we already said, this should not affect you until 2017 at the earliest. It is currently being rolled out across the country between now and Autumn 2016. This roll out will only affect single claimants (people who are not married or living with a partner).

The roll out will affect new claims Housing Benefit from single people:

- Dumfries and Galloway
- North Lanarkshire
- West Dunbartonshire
- North Ayrshire
- Highland

We will keep you posted with any further updates to Universal Credit. If you have any concerns, please get in touch with on **0141 342 1810**

Declaring Your Savings

Over the last few months, some tenants have asked us about how their savings change their Housing Benefit. Sometimes savings are called Capital and they can affect your claim both when you apply and when you are already getting Housing Benefit. Below we explain how savings can change your claim.

These savings can affect how much you receive from Housing Benefit and any Council Tax reduction you may receive. The current Savings thresholds for Housing Benefit are as follows:

- **£6,000 and under** - will not affect your benefits
- **£6,000 - £16,000** - your benefits will be reduced accordingly
 - **For every £250 you are over** - £6,000, your benefit is reduced by £1 a week
 - For example, if you have savings of £8,500 your benefit will be reduced by £10 a week.
- **£16,000 and over** - will stop your benefits completely
 - If you have over 60s pension credit guarantee, then you have no limit.
- If you are of working age and have savings of £10,000 then you are not eligible for council tax reduction.

If you have any questions or concerns about your capital levels, please call us on:

0141 342 1810

Rent Consultation

We would like to thank everybody who gave their feedback on our proposed rent increase in January this year.

As proposed, our base rents have increased by 1.9%, also our service charges are now adjusted to reflect actual costs. This means that some service charges will increase while others decrease.



You should have received your rent review letter which take effect from March 2015. If you have not, please call 0141 342 1810 and we can re-issue your letter. If you pay your rent by standing order, please ensure you have updated your payment amount at the bank.

Make Sure Your Vote Counts

The biggest change to the way people register to vote in over 100 years is taking place this year. There is a change to Individual Electoral Registration which means that everyone will register to vote individually, rather than 1 person in the household registering everyone in the house who is able to vote.



The letters have been posted by your local authority to confirm who they have registered to vote at your household. If you notice that your name is not on this letter, don't panic as it is easy to register. You can follow the instructions on the back of your letter or alternatively you can register online. All you need to complete the online form is your National Insurance number and address details. You can apply online now at:

www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

You must do this by **20th April 2015** to be able to vote in the General Election this year which is on **7th May 2015**.

Non-Dependant Deductions



A non-dependant is usually an adult son, daughter or relative who live in, or returns to live, in the household of a person claiming Housing Benefit. This could cause a reduction in the Housing Benefit you receive and could put you into rent arrears.

Any overpayments will be reclaimed and could put you into rent arrears. It is not up to the non-dependant to ensure payment; it is the tenant's responsibility. For example, if you have an adult son or daughter who returns to your house and works part-time, your Housing Benefit claim will be affected. It will also impact on your Council Tax claim.

There are a few exemptions which could result in no reduction being applied to the Housing Benefit claim.

Please speak to your Housing Officer about any queries you have about this and inform your local housing benefit department about any changes to your household.

Charter Update

The Scottish Government introduced the Scottish Social Housing Charter to set out the standards and outcomes we should achieve when we deliver housing services to our tenants.



Last year we sent out our 1st Charter Performance report. We are now gathering the information for our 2nd report which will include our Repairs Satisfaction survey results, also in this newsletter.

Your responses to our surveys help us to see where we could improve our service to you and we will be investigating where there is unhappiness expressed about our service.

Complaints

If we have made a mistake or you are unhappy with our service, we want to make it as easy as possible for you to tell us. We will always try to deal with your complaint promptly and try to resolve it at the time, but sometimes we will need a little longer to investigate. You can make your complaint by phone, in writing or by email. You can get a full copy of our complaints policy and procedure on our website:

www.keyhousing.org

We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve our services. Over the last year we have had 18 complaints so far; 9 of these were to do with repairs.

These complaints have highlighted that we have to ensure you have the right information when you need it. Over the next year we will continue to review how we communicate with you to make sure that we are keeping you up-to-date at all times. For example, any updates/ changes to Major Repairs or if a repair is taking longer to fix.

If you are unhappy with our service, at anytime, please call on:

0141 342 1810

Window Catches



With the Spring and Summer months approaching with (hopefully) some warmer weather, it's likely that you will be opening your windows more often. Below are a few tips to check your windows are safe. All outward opening windows should be fitted with a safety device that prevents the window being opened fully without releasing a catch. Catches are usually released by pressing a button or moving a hook, like the picture to the left. This is a good time to check that these are working properly. If you can open any window fully without having to release a catch, please report

this repair to: **0141 342 1820**

Contact Us

Repairs 0141 342 1820
Tenancy Enquiries 0141 342 1810

If you would like to contact someone directly, the direct dials are:

Pamela	0141 342 1814	Senior Housing Officer
Sandra	0141 342 1813	Housing Officer
Flora	0141 342 1812	Housing Officer
Gillian	0141 342 1815	Newsletter & Rechargeable Repairs
Ellen	0141 342 1859	Council Tax, Concessionary TV Licence & Furnishings

If you do not get answer from these numbers, please call reception on:
0141 342 1890

Opening Hours

The office is normally open between 8.30am and 5.00pm
Monday - Friday.

Emergency Repairs

If you have an emergency repair outside of office hours, please refer to your Emergency Contractors List. This is renewed and posted to you every year. If you cannot find yours, please call 0141 342 1820 during office hours to get a replacement.

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