

At home

The newsletter for tenants of Key Housing

Winter 2017

Issue 11



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Welcome

Welcome to the Winter 2017 edition of At Home, the Key Housing newsletter. This edition will look at the fantastic garden project at our properties in East Kilbride and some updates on Universal Credit and our Planned Replacement Programme. First we have an update on what we have been working on recently.

Charter Report

You should all have received a copy of our Charter Report in October. This updates you with how we have performed as a landlord throughout 2016/17.

A special thank you to the My Home Group for helping decide what we featured in the report and how it looks.



Rent Consultation

We also will be sending out our proposed rent levels for 2018/19 in early January 2018. There will be space on the form for you to let us know your views on the charges and the services provided. You will be notified of your new rent levels in February with the new charge starting from 28 March 2018.

Tenant Satisfaction Survey

We will be issuing our Tenant Satisfaction Survey in February 2018. This is your chance to tell us what you think about the housing services Key provides. The feedback we get helps us look at areas we can improve upon and work towards in the future.

Changes to How You Pay

We have had a recent change to one of the ways you can pay your rent. If you pay using a payment book at your local Post Office, you should have received a new payment card. These are replacing the payment books and should be used for any future payments. You can dispose of your payment books as these will stop being accepted at the Post Office by 14 December 2017. If you have any queries about this change you can call Ellen on 0141 342 1859.

Do you have a story that you would like to be featured in a future edition of At Home? Please call Gillian on 0141 342 1815 or email: athome@key.org.uk

Greenfingers in East Kilbride

In May our tenants in East Kilbride were selected by the Green Centre Network to be part of a 3 year horticultural project.

When starting the project the group spoke to everybody who uses the garden and decided they would create a sensory/relaxation area as well as an area that can be used for BBQ's and garden parties. They also decided to expand the small vegetable garden which had been developed by a tenant with a keen interest in gardening.

Once the plans were in place, the group approached Key Housing with their plans before proceeding.



The group was originally 4 interested tenants which meet every alternate week. Now they meet every Thursday and the group has grown to 8 people with a further 2 people considering joining. The group is facilitated by Natalie at the Green Centre Project.

It is now 5 months since the project started and everybody involved has had a great time. Although the weather has turned this has not curbed their enthusiasm! Enjoying the garden in the Autumnal weather; hats, scarves and gloves are quickly discarded and they get down to work. Hopefully next year there will be a healthy vegetable garden they can use to pick fresh veg for their meals.

Mari Clare from The Richmond Fellowship, who provide support in East Kilbride, commented:

“Over the past 6 months I can see how far each person has come; a group of 4 people has developed into a team of 8. They are now supporting and guiding each other; they are having fun!”



Festive Tips

The festive season is a time of fun for most folk, but there are 1 or 2 increased risks at this time of year. Key hopes you have a happy and safe holiday, so here are a few safety tips.

- ❄️ If you are hanging decorations up high please make sure you are standing on something suitable, such as a good condition stepladder. Don't overstretch or you might fall.
- ❄️ Be aware that paper decorations can easily catch fire. Avoid hanging them near any light fittings, heaters or other heat sources, and should never be next to open flames.
- ❄️ Real and artificial Christmas trees can also go on fire. Please keep them clear of electric heaters, naked flames etc.
- ❄️ If you decorate your home with fairy lights, candle bridges or other electrical decorations, check for signs of visible damage, that they are not overheating and use them as per the instructions.
- ❄️ Remove batteries from battery powered decorations before storing them.



- ❄️ If you are using extension leads please leave them fully uncoiled, do not overload them, and make sure the plug fuse is correctly rated.
- ❄️ If you are placing lights outside, please ensure they are weatherproof, used as per the instructions and that the transformer/extension lead is never placed outside.
- ❄️ Be very careful when using candles. They should be:
 - ❄️ placed in suitable holders which prevent toppling or heat reaching table tops etc
 - ❄️ positioned away from drafts or any material that could catch fire
 - ❄️ blown out before going to bed or out of the room for any length of time
 - ❄️ kept out of the way of animals and children.

**If you have any concerns
about your property, please
call Maintenance on
0141 342 1820.**

Home Energy Scotland

Join their bid to help save you energy & money



We have teamed up with Home Energy Scotland to help you save energy and money this winter. They are a Scottish Government funded service that provides free, impartial advice to help householders, save energy and reduce their gas and electricity bills.

With colder temperatures fast approaching, we thought we'd highlight some useful information to help you stay in control of your energy bills, and invite you to benefit from Home Energy Scotland's support.

Be an energy shopper

Switching energy supplier is one of the quickest and easiest ways to save money on your bills; with a saving of up to £200 a year. Home Energy Scotland has teamed up with Citrus, a social enterprise that specialises in helping people switch energy supplier and has access to all the market offers.

Home Energy Scotland is here to help

Home Energy Scotland's advice network is open Monday – Friday, 8am-8pm and Saturday, 9am – 5pm. To find out how Home Energy Scotland can help you, call them for free on 0808 808 2282 and quote SC_KeyHA_Autumn17 or email adviceteam@sc.homeenergyscotland.org and one of their friendly advisors will call you back.

Top energy saving tips from Home Energy Scotland

Home Energy Scotland advisors have come up with some top tips to help you stay cosy and save money this winter.

- It is recommended you set your room thermostat between 18-21 degrees.
- Switching to more energy efficient light bulbs is a cost-effective, easy way of saving energy.



- Making the switch to LED bulbs from halogen bulbs can save you up to £35 each year.
- Turn your lights off when you're not using them. If you switch a light off for just a few seconds, you will save more energy than it takes for the light to start up again, regardless of the type of light.

Universal Credit Update



You may have read about Universal Credit in the news recently. It has been referred to as “the biggest change to the benefits system in a generation”. Over the coming months we will be keeping you up-to-date through our newsletter and website. Below is some information about the changes so far.

What is Universal Credit?

Universal Credit (UC) 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 Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (JSA), Income Based Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and Housing Benefit.

It will not affect any Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) claims.

What Areas Does it Affect?

Full service is now active in:

East Ayrshire
East Dunbartonshire
Highlands
Inverclyde
North Ayrshire
South Lanarkshire
Stirling.

Full Service means that any new claims will go straight onto Universal Credit. See opposite page for more information on what to do.

Every other area is on a Live Service until October 2018

What You Need?

To make a Universal Credit application or be transferred over you will need

Identification

You need photographic identification for your online claim. If you are unsure if you have appropriate photo ID then you can speak to your Housing Officer for advice.

Bank Account

You need this to allow your payments to be received.

Email Address & Internet Access

You will be required to create and manage an online account. You will need to login every day to check any correspondence from DWP. If you don't respond to certain messages your benefits could be suspended or cancelled.

Time

Completing an application can take at least an hour. You will also be required to attend an appointment with a work coach to complete your application. Failure to attend will cancel your claim. If you have a joint claim then both claimants must attend.

What to Do?

If you are put onto Universal Credit please call your Housing Officer. This change is most likely due to a significant change in your circumstances (i.e. you are applying for benefits for the first time). If you receive no support please discuss your future rental payments with your Housing Officer as you will no longer be able to receive Housing Benefit and entirely responsible for paying your rent.

If you are supported you will still be able to claim Housing Benefit for rental costs as you are living in Exempt Supported Accommodation.

We can provide you with any rental details required for your application, for instance current housing costs.

Be aware that new applications for Universal Credit will take a minimum of 6 weeks to be processed.

If you have any concerns about Universal Credit or any other changes to the benefits system call your Housing Officer on 0141 342 1810 or find more information on our [Benefits Update](#) section of the website.

Stay Debt Free this Winter

With more and more people feeling the pinch, it is increasingly difficult to stay debt free over the festive period. We would like to remind you that your rent is due on the 28th of each month for the following month and it is important that your rent is paid on time.

If you are struggling with finances, please contact your Housing Officer. They can advise of any alternative arrangements that can be made or discuss what benefits you are entitled to. Any information given will remain confidential.



Cosy Homes for Winter

Our Planned Replacement Programme has been in full force since April 2017 with a lot of the works focused on keeping your homes energy efficient and warm for the winter. Below are some of our bigger projects so far.

Windows

In Coatbridge, we have undertaken a large project to replace all of the 25 year old windows with thermally efficient modern windows. The new windows will keep more heat within the flats and houses, helping to reducing energy use for heating.

This work is in line with our strategy to make our properties more energy efficient.



When we visited to see the finished product, everybody was so happy with the upgrades that they wanted to show them off (pictured above and below)!



Heating Systems

In Paisley we were completing our planned upgrade of the heating systems. We fitted new gas heating, using the highest standard of A Rated energy efficient boilers. Gwen (pictured right) is definitely happy with the improvements!

Kitchens



We also updated the kitchens in Paisley for the first time since the flats were built. Everybody got the chance to choose the colour of units, tiles and flooring for their finished kitchens. Caroline & Maureen (pictured left and below) are delighted with their renewed kitchen spaces!



If you would like more information about our Planned Replacement Programme please visit our website at:

www.key.org.uk/key-housing

My Home Group

The 'My Home Group' is our tenant engagement panel that looks at different aspects of the service we deliver to tenants.

Since our last edition of 'At Home' we have held 2 meetings of the 'My Home Group'. The group have been discussing our Planned Replacement Programme and its replacement cycle.



They also helped finalise the content, layout and look of our Charter Report which you should have received a copy of in October. They will be looking at the information we have recently provided about Fire Safety in December. They previously looked at the information we provide when we are planning to replace major items in your property, for example your heating system.

If you are interested in joining the 'My Home Group' then please call Gillian on 0141 342 1815 or email athome@key.org.uk for more information.



AGM 2017

Key's 39th AGM was held on Tuesday 19th September 2017 at our main office, The Square in Glasgow. It was well attended with attendees getting an update on the year's progress, what's next for Key and a chance to see The Advisory Group's (TAG) video review of the year. There was presentations from our Chairperson, Joanna Pearson and our Chief Executive Andrea Wood.

To become a member and have an opportunity to vote in the next AGM, please call Gillian on [0141 342 1815](tel:01413421815) to get more information.

Highland Hooley 2017

In October, Key's most northerly branch of Key celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Highland Hooley!

The Hooley was started as a chance for people from Thurso down to Fort William to meet up, eat and dance together. It is always held in Invergordon.

This year was no exception with many people dressing up to the nines and even a few in their full Scottish regalia (pictured right).





Picture This!

Every two years we host an event to bring together managers from across the organisation. This is to help them network and discuss a range of issues related to our work. The event happened recently here at The Square and was a great success, with all of our local services represented. Undoubtedly one of the highlights was the live portrait offered by two artists from Project Ability. Cameron is supported by our Stenhousemuir service and John is a Key tenant in Glasgow and they worked tirelessly over lunchtime to produce original artwork portraits of a number of our staff. Great work guys!



We would like to wish all our tenants
a very Merry Christmas and a Happy
New Year.

Contact

Repairs 0141 342 1820

Housing 0141 342 1810

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.

To speak to someone direct:

Pamela Macintyre 0141 342 1814
Senior Housing Officer

Flora Murray 0141 342 1812
Housing Officer

Sandra Jackson 0141 342 1813
Housing Officer

Ellen Turner 0141 342 1859
Council Tax and Furnishings

Gillian Conway 0141 342 1815
Newsletter and My Home Group

Gillian Kelly 0141 342 1837
Rechargeable Repairs

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

Public Holidays

The office will be closed:

Monday 25th December 2017

Tuesday 26th December 2017

Monday 1st January 2018

Tuesday 2nd January 2018

The office is open every other day
9am - 5pm.

Complaints

If you feel that Key Housing have not dealt with something as well we could have, get in contact with us to discuss.

You can submit a complaint by writing to the address below, calling 0141 342 1810 or through the **Complaints** section of our website.

Key Housing
70 Renton Street
Glasgow G4 0HT

Telephone: 0141 342 1890

Email: hello@key.org.uk

www.key.org.uk/key-housing



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