

At Home

Newsletter for the Tenants of KEY Housing

Winter 2015



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Welcome

Welcome to the Winter 2015 edition of At Home, the KEY Housing newsletter. This edition will focus on the community garden day held at our properties in Nitshill, Glasgow. We will also be looking at our major repairs programme and what we have been able to do so far.

First, we will give you an update on how we are doing with reaching our targets for the Charter and our future consultation plans.



Charter Update

In this section we will update you with how we are performing against the Scottish Social Housing Charter and how we aim to keep delivering a high quality housing service.



Charter Performance Report

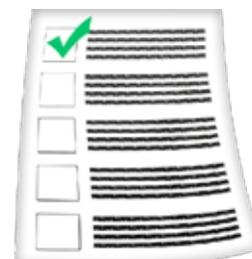
In October we issued our 2nd Charter Performance Report. In making this report we consulted with Highland TAG and our new tenant engagement panel, My Home Group (see page 10 for more details).

We are grateful for all the feedback forms we received from you. The feedback has been generally positive, with any concerns being passed to relevant staff for response. Your views on the report will be used to help further improve our future charter reports and consultations.



Tenant Satisfaction Survey

In February 2016 we will be issuing our Tenant Satisfaction Survey. This is an opportunity to let us know how you feel about the quality of our homes and the quality of service we provide. We will use your feedback on the last Tenant Satisfaction & Maintenance Survey to make sure the 2016 survey is how you want it.



Charter Prize Draw Winners

The 2 winners from our Charter Report prize draw are:

Steven Bonnar from Cumbernauld

Gary Robertson from Dunoon

Congratulations to you all! Shopping vouchers have been posted out!

Spotlight on...Helensburgh

'Spotlight On...' will be a new regular feature in every edition of 'At Home'. Each time we will look at one of our housing areas across the country. First up is Helensburgh, who have just celebrated their 30th anniversary (more below).

Our first tenants moved in October 1985 and some are still there today. Helensburgh is 1 of our smaller housing developments and started off as 2 large shared homes.

In 2007 we were able to remodel the 2 large houses into 6 flats. All the properties are still surrounded by lots of lovely trees and greenery. Perfect for enjoying in the good weather!



Above: Our flats at Helensburgh now
Below: Our flats 15 years ago.



Helensburgh 30th Anniversary

This October, KEY Helensburgh were celebrating their 30th anniversary! To mark the occasion, a party was held that included some stalls, Boccia and a tea dance later on. There to cut the cake was Pam, one of the 1st tenants in Helensburgh 30 years ago, and David who currently lives there (pictured right). Everybody had a great day celebrating.



Major Repairs

In our Spring edition, we detailed our major repair plans for 2015/16. We are now halfway through our major repairs programme for this year and have some updates on our progress so far.

Bellshill

Some of our properties in Bellshill have had their heating systems upgraded this year. We have installed new boiler and radiators with thermostatic heating control. This means that tenants can control the temperature and when their heating turns on.

The new boilers are A Rated for energy efficiency and should be 90% efficient; that's around 20% better than the previous boiler. The energy efficient system should help keep energy bills lower. If you would like more information on what we are doing to keep our properties energy efficient, please call us on 0141 342 1810.



Gourock

Some of our flats in Gourock had their kitchens re-fitted. We took this opportunity to change the layout of some kitchens to better suit the needs of our tenants; including making one our kitchens (pictured right) more open plan.



Above: Janet telling us about her new kitchen

The tenants had their choice of unit, flooring and tile colour to make their kitchens individual to them. Everybody seemed delighted with the finished look, especially Raymond (pictured right).



Right: Raymond delighted with his new look kitchen

Glasgow



Above: William at Riddrie with his new windows

In Riddrie we were upgrading the windows of our flats. We expect to replace these by 25 years, although if in good condition may be longer. We replaced them with thermally efficient, double glazing windows to help reduce the costs of heating and make the properties more energy efficient.

This year saw some of the flats in Linthouse getting an upgrade on their kitchens and heating systems. These were quite compact kitchens and we took the opportunity to try to maximise the space and add storage. The new heating systems will improve the properties energy efficiency by 20%.



Right: Ronnie going through colour schemes with Joseph in Linthouse



In Maryhill we upgraded some of the bathrooms in the flats. This change allowed for us to completely re-fit the bathrooms and install showers and wet walls to give tenants more choice. Like Gourock and Linthouse, tenants were able to choose from a range of decor options to make the bathroom more individual.

Inverness & Golspie

One of our next major repairs project starts in the next few weeks in Inverness. Here we will be upgrading the windows in some of our flats. It will involve the replacement of over 90 windows. We are also replacing the heating systems in some of our Golspie properties.

If you want any further details on our major repairs programme, please call Eddie on 0141 342 1822.

Garden Redevelopment Day

In August this year the tenants at our properties in Nitshill, Glasgow had a garden redevelopment project. They share a large back garden which they decided to brighten up.

After being approached by Optima Legal with a community development grant, they were able to make their ideas a reality! With help from other people in the community and support staff, they organised a garden day.



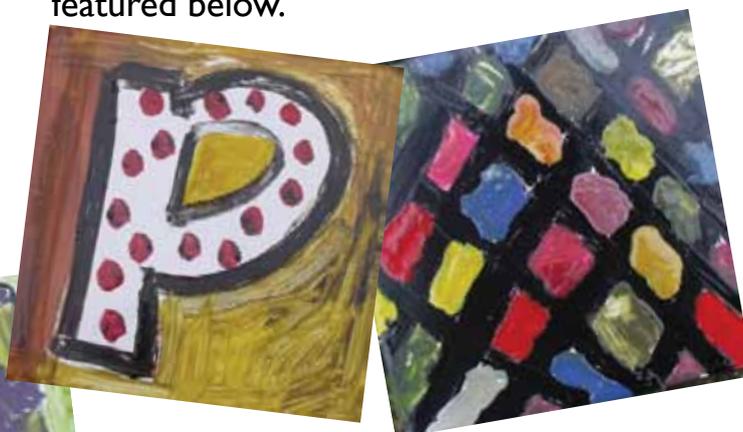
Above: Iain & Christopher celebrating their work.



There was great turnout of volunteers on the day, with Optima Legal providing a few willing helpers too (pictured left).

Beeches Cottage Nursery provided beautiful plants for the garden and even donated a few extra plants for us too!

As well as a lot of potting plants, painting fences and trimming shrubs but there was some art to brighten up the hallway. A local art group came along and helped tenants and volunteers to paint some tiles for a mural in the communal hallway. Some of the tiles are featured below.



Above Left: Optima Legal volunteers and the art group working hard.

Below: A selection of the finished tiles for the mural



Once all the hard work was done, there was a BBQ and live music for everybody to enjoy. Brian, one of our tenants from Nitshill, was playing the box drum for everyone's entertainment.



Above: a little live music for the party.
Below: Staff and tenants enjoying the party



If you are interested in starting a garden project, or simply just having some potted plants, please speak to your Housing Officer for guidance.



Ardrossan in Bloom

Before the end of summer, we got the chance to visit Mark in Ardrossan. He was displaying his huge gardening efforts.

Mark has been growing plants in his greenhouse for the last couple of years and he has started planting in the raised beds and hanging baskets for all the tenants in Ardrossan to enjoy. He has brightened up the whole garden and sells some of his greenhouse plants.

If you, like Mark, are interested in planting some flowers and shrubs then get in touch with your Housing Officer.



Above: Mark and his flowering greenhouse

Left: Some of the bright flowers and shrubs Mark has arranged in tubs and hanging baskets.

Rent Consultation



In January 2016 we will start our annual rent review. We will start consulting with you from then about any proposed changes to the rent and service charges that would apply from the end of March 2016.

You will then be informed of any changes to the rent in February 2016.

Benefits Update

Below is the latest updates in welfare reform and any information we think is useful for benefit claimants.

Savings Limits

We have had some tenants contacting us about the amount of savings they can have while being a claimant of Housing Benefit. Below is the up-to-date savings limits for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction.



- **£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 60 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.

Personal Independence Payments

The rollout of Personal Independence Payments (PIP) has further progressed since our last edition of 'At Home'. More areas have sent out PIP eligibility letters. **If you are unsure about any aspect of PIP, your savings or any other benefits, please phone your Housing Officer for advice.**

Stay Debt Free this Christmas

With more and more people feeling the pinch, it can be 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. It is important that your rent is paid on time.

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

We offer a range of payment options; contact your Housing Officer to discuss these.



AGM 2015

The AGM for KEY was held on Tuesday 15th September 2015 at our main Glasgow office at The Square. It was well attended with the audience getting a chance to hear about the years progress and plans for the future.

The Advisory Group (TAG) hosted a bake sale fund-raiser before the AGM and managed to raise £154.00.

To become a member and have an opportunity to vote in the next AGM, please call Gillian on 0141 342 1815 to get more information.



Above: KEY's Director Malcolm Matheson talking at the AGM

Below Right: The TAG volunteers at the bake sale



My Home Group

This September saw the very 1st meeting of our tenant engagement group, 'My Home Group'. At our 1st meeting, we looked over a draft of our Charter Performance Report and how accessible the information was. As a result of this meeting, we amended some of our graphs and images to make the report clearer.

It was decided that the group would like to look at our policy on pets at the next meeting. We will update you on the outcome of this in the Spring edition of 'At Home'.

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



Repair Response Times

We are aware that people are keen to know the repair response times of repairs, especially emergency repairs. The short guide below gives our target response times for a range of repairs.

Repair Category	Emergency	Urgent	Non-Urgent
Target Response Time	8 Hours	24 Hours	10 Days
Examples of Repair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gas Leak - Fire/ Flood/ Storm Damage - Sewage Backup - Broken Window (hazard) - Electric Failure - Loss of heating - Loss of toilet/ bathing facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partial electric failure - Broken Window (non-hazard) - Minor roof leak - Minor flood damage - Partial failure of heating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leaking gutters - Fence/gate repairs - Faulty taps - Pest infestation - Minor kitchen unit repairs - Loss of TV signal

Right to Repair

Tenants have the right to have small urgent repairs carried out by us within a given timescale. This is called the Right to Repair scheme.

It covers certain repairs with differing timescales. It means that you can organise a repair if we have failed to do so in the stated timescales. We would pay for this work, not you. We will inform you if it is an eligible repair and the repair time when your report it.

If you want further details about this scheme, please visit: www.gov.scot/publications and search for Right to Repair.



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

Contact Us

Repairs 0141 342 1820
Housing 0141 342 1810

If you would like to contact someone directly, the numbers 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 the reception on:
0141 342 1890

Public Holidays

The main office in Glasgow will be shut on the following days:

Friday 25th December 2015

Monday 28th December 2015

Friday 1st January 2016

Monday 4th January 2016

The office will be open 8.30am-5.00pm every other day.

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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