



At Home

Newsletter for All Tenants of KEY Housing

Summer 2015



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Welcome



Welcome to the Summer 2015 edition of *At Home*, the KEY Housing newsletter. This edition will focus on the arrival of Personal Independence Payments (PIP) and what it means for you. We will also be going back to Bainsford to see Julian and his completed house extension.

First, we will give you an update on how we are doing with reaching our targets on the Charter and the changes we are making to deliver a better housing service.

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.

In this section we update you with what we have been doing to meet our charter outcomes and how we aim to keep delivering a high quality housing service



Annual Return on the Charter

We have just submitted our Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) for 2014/15. This goes to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR).

The information we put into this helps make our Charter Report, which we will send to you this October. We very much appreciated the feedback we got from you last year and look forward to hearing your views again this year. We have started consulting with The Advisory Group (TAG) about how we should present our statistics in the report as well as what information is important to them.

Complaints

In 2014/15 we received a total of 19 complaints; of these 18 were upheld. We resolved all of these complaints within the given timescales. If you feel that we have delivered poor service as a landlord, you have the right to complain. Get in touch with us in writing, by phone or email to discuss it. If you would like a copy of our complaints procedure sent out to you, please email newsletter@keyhousing.org

Future Consultation

We are starting to organise our future consultation about upcoming policy changes and publications. We are looking for tenants who are interested in being part of a tenant engagement panel, as well as people who are happy to consult by phone and post. If you are interested in giving your views, please call Gillian Conway on 0141 342 1815 or email newsletter@keyhousing.org



AGM 2015

This year's AGM will take place on Tuesday 15 September at our offices in The Square, Glasgow. We had a great turn out last year and hoping there will be lots of people at this year's event too. At the AGM we will tell our members about what we've been doing in the year. Anybody can attend the AGM but only members can vote. It costs just £1.00 to become a member!



Once you have joined you will receive a copy of our annual report, as well as a share certificate. Anybody can become a member; you don't have to be a tenant! If you would like to join you can complete the application form below and return it.

If you have any further queries about becoming a member or would like to see a copy of our membership policy, please contact Gillian Conway on 0141 342 1815 or email at newsletter@keyhousing.org

KEY Housing Association Membership Application

Please return this completed form to: The Secretary, KEY Housing Association Ltd, 70 Renton Street, Glasgow, G4 0HT

I hereby apply for membership of KEY Housing Association Limited and enclose £1.00 in respect of one fully paid up share.

Title: _____

First Name: _____ Surname: _____

Address: _____

_____ Post Code: _____

Telephone No: _____

Please tick all appropriate boxes if you are:

A Tenant

A Former Tenant

Supported by KEY

Interested Party

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Your application will be considered by the next meeting of KEY's Management Committee.

Personal Independence Payment: What You Need to Know

You may have seen Personal Independence Payment, more commonly known as PIP, mentioned in the news recently and wondered if and when it is going to affect you. We have put together what you need to know about PIP and what to do if it affects you.



What is Personal Independence Payment?

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is a new benefit, introduced in 2013, which will eventually replace Disability Living Allowance (DLA) by 2017. In some ways it is very similar to DLA:

- It is based on 2 components (Mobility & Daily Living)
- It is paid every 4 weeks
- It is for people of working age (16-64)
- You can claim it even if you're working

However, there are some major differences:

- It now only has 2 rates of payment (standard or enhanced); rather than 3 (low, middle & high)
- A medical assessment will be carried out by an independent health professional
- Claims are assessed on a different set of conditions than DLA
- Claims will be reviewed regularly

How do I apply?

If you are currently claiming DLA then you will receive a letter detailing that you are eligible to apply. Some versions of this letter may seem like it is an invitation to apply however **it is essential you apply** or your benefits may be suspended.

Initially you are asked to call a phone number to be sent a pack. Somebody else can call on your behalf but you must be there when they are making the phone call. The letter asks for you to provide certain details during this phone call, please make sure you have these details to hand before phoning.

If you are supported and have received one of these letters, it is very important that you discuss this with your supporter as soon as possible. If you are not supported but feel you may be eligible to apply then please contact your Housing Officer.



Universal Credit Update

Universal Credit is still progressing through its initial phases; as reported in our Spring 2015 newsletter. It will only affect single claimants (people who are not married or living with a partner).

The next phase will affect new claims for our tenants in:

- Inverclyde - Gourock and Greenock
- South Lanarkshire - East Kilbride, Hamilton, Lanark, Lesmahagow and Rutherglen



Useful Websites

We have found some websites, about welfare reform, that we think you may find useful:

Child Poverty Action Group - www.cpag.org.uk

Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) are a UK charity who provide a lot of useful information on tackling poverty and benefits. CPAG have a recently updated factsheet about PIP and what to expect.

The Money Advice Service - www.moneyadvice.org.uk

This site is an impartial money advice service setup by the government. It has guides and tools which will help explain the upcoming changes to benefits and useful tips to cut costs and budget.

If you have any queries about welfare reform or would like advice on your benefits, please contact your Housing Officer or call the Housing number on **0141 342 1810**

Sticking to the Budget

Sticking to a budget can be difficult; ensuring all the bills are paid, saving for holidays and all the unexpected spends that arise in the month. We have provided some tips below to help form a budget and realistic goals of sticking to it.



- List all your income and expense. This will show what you have and how you spend it.
 - You could use the Money Advice Service (MAS) online budget planner tool create a budget at: www.moneyadvice.org.uk/en/tools/budget-planner
- If you are not covering all your bills, you should look at where you can cut your costs.
- Look into what benefits you are eligible for and how to apply.
- If you are already in receipt of benefits, check that your circumstances have not changed meaning that you could claim more money.
- Try cutting your utility bills by looking at comparison websites. These can quite often cut your bills such as: www.moneysupermarket.com
- Transfer any money for bills into a separate savings account so that you know exactly what money you have.

House Extension in Bainsford

We have returned to our house extension in Bainsford, Falkirk (mentioned in Winter 2014 At Home). We were invited by Julian Michalowski (pictured on the right) to see the end result.

Julian has been a KEY tenant for over 8 years and although he liked where he lived has been unable to get the full use of his home.

We embarked on a project to extend his home and improve his living situation. Thanks to Scottish Government funding, we have been able to remodel his flat and make it more open plan and accessible. Julian can now get full access to his kitchen, which he always wanted.



Below Left: Before the works
Below Right: The completed extension



While remodeling the house we were also able to add an additional entrance with a ramp so that Julian could get in the house with ease.

Now all the work is complete, Julian is delighted with his new look home. He has been able to put his stamp back on his home, where his Stenhousemuir FC tops take pride of place!



Above: Julian chatting with Flora Murray (Housing Officer)

Top to Bottom:
Julian's new open plan kitchen; a view of the extension and his treasured Stenhousemuir FC tops

New Redevelopment



Our next project is the redevelopment of 2 of our larger houses in Golspie, Highland. With Scottish Government funding we are able to add an extension to these houses and create more space; helping our tenants to live more independently. We will have the updates from this in the next edition of At Home.

If you think that you could benefit from adaptation work to your home, please get in touch with your Housing Officer or call us on **0141 342 1810** to find out more. Adaptations can range from a hand rail to help you into the bath to a wet floor shower.

Brightening Up Stenhousemuir



Aisleen Kerr of Stenhousemuir (featured on the front cover) is a keen gardener and has shared the results of her hard work.

She has a large garden which she shares with her neighbours which she has brightened up with raised beds, flower pots and hanging baskets. Even when the insulation works were in progress at Stenhousemuir (see story on the next page), Aisleen was cheering up the scaffolding with some hanging baskets (below right)!

If you would like to use some of a shared garden for tubs and hanging baskets, like Aisleen, then please contact Housing on 0141 342 1815.



Cosy Homes in Stenhousemuir

This Spring we have been able to carry out major projects in Budhill, Glasgow and Stenhousemuir to make the houses more energy efficient and help cut heating costs.



Above: Our properties in Budhill, Glasgow after the insulation and rendering

These buildings had previously been termed “Hard to Treat” which means that they were unable to get cavity wall insulation when we were applying it in other areas. William Blackett (right), our maintenance officer for these 2 areas, found a solution meaning the works could go ahead.

William successfully applied for £114,000 of grant funding from The Energy Savings Trust helping the buildings to get the insulation they had missed out on before. These works have helped with the Energy Efficiency Ratings of the buildings in both areas; most of the properties moving up from a D rating, the Scottish average, to a high C rating. This should help the winter heating bills be a lot cheaper. The insulation has also improved the Carbon Footprint of these properties

As we were doing this work, we took the opportunity to freshen up the exterior of the buildings much to our tenants' delight.



Above: William checking in at Stenhousemuir



Above Left & Right: Stenhousemuir before the work; Georgia delighted with the new look building



Above: Jack, Peter and Brenda at Stenhousemuir

If you want more information about energy efficiency & heating costs, please call Gillian on **0141 342 1815** or email newsletter@keyhousing.org

Keeping Warm this Winter

Although it's summer now, it's the time to look ahead to saving money this winter. There are several government schemes and benefits that could help you save on your winter fuel bills. Below we look at the main ones.

Cold Weather Payments (CWP)

These are paid out if the weather has been an average of 0° or less for 7 days in a row. Payments are sent up to 14 days after this weather. You are eligible for this if you claim: Jobseekers Allowance, ESA or Pension Credit.

Winter Fuel Payments (WFP)

Winter Fuel Payments should be paid to you from November - December automatically if you are receiving your State Pension

If you think you should be receiving either Cold Weather or Winter Fuel Payments and you haven't previously, get in touch with your local Job Centre Plus.

Warm Home Discount Scheme

The Warm Home Discount Scheme can get people a discount of up to £140 from their electricity bills. If you qualify, the money will not be paid directly to you; it will appear as

a one-off discount on your electricity bill, (usually between October and March). It does not affect your Cold Weather Payment or Winter Fuel Allowance.

You qualify for the discount if on 12 July 2015 all of the following apply:

- Your supplier is part of the scheme
- Your (or your partner's) name is on the bill
- You are getting the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit.

If you qualify you should receive a letter automatically. However, if you feel you may qualify but don't receive a letter get in touch with:

Warm Home Discount Team
Pink Zone, 1st Floor, Peel Park,
Brunel Way, BLACKPOOL, FY4 5ES

If you don't qualify for the discount, some suppliers offer the discount to people on low incomes. Get in touch with your supplier directly to find out about any potential schemes you could be eligible for.

The Advisory Group

As you will have seen from previous newsletters, The Advisory Group (TAG) have been kind enough to help us with some of our recent consultations. At the start of the year there were a few changes in TAG. Firstly, they said goodbye to Michael McKernon from Kirkintilloch who has been the Chairperson of TAG for 18 months. Agnes Kelly from Milngavie was elected as the new chairperson. We look forward to working with TAG again in some of our future consultations.



Left to Right: Michael McKernon and Agnes Kelly

Dementia Friends

Dementia Friends Scotland is part of a social action movement to increase awareness of dementia and to address the stigma experienced by many living with the illness.



Anybody can become a Scottish Dementia Friend. It's just about understanding a bit more about dementia and the small things you can do to help people with the condition. There are 2 ways to become a Dementia Friend, you can watch a few short videos and sign up online or you can attend a Dementia Friends session.

As part of becoming a Dementia Friend you will be asked to think about what you can do differently in your day-to-day life that may help people living with dementia. It doesn't take a huge commitment – a small change in what you do can make a big difference to a person with dementia.

To find out more information, sign up online or find a session near you then please visit www.dementiafriendsscotland.org or call Anne McWhinnie on 0141 410 1169.



Dementia Awareness Week 2015

As part of Dementia Awareness Week 2015, KEY held a Dementia Café at The Square. It was a great day involving people supported by KEY, support workers and main office staff. There was some great workshops hosted by KEY Changes and Playlist for Life. Also, some members of staff from the KEY Main Office became Dementia Friends too, at an interesting and fun session hosted by Kevin from Alzheimer Scotland.



Above: Coffee, cake and chatter at the Dementia Café.

Right: KEY staff becoming Dementia Friends!



Keeping You Informed

We are committed to keeping you up-to-date with our latest news in the way that suits you best.

At Home

You are able to receive At Home the way you want it. We have an email version of At Home available to tenants and any other people who are interested in what is happening at KEY. The email version will have interactive links to take you straight to any online material we mention in the newsletter.

Accessibility Options

We offer a variety of different options for our major publications to make it more convenient for you to enjoy. If you feel you would benefit more from receiving the Charter report, tenants' handbook or other materials in an audio or large print format then please get in touch with us and we will add this to our records.

If you want more information about our publications or accessibility options, please call Gillian on **0141 342 1815** or email newsletter@keyhousing.org



Above: Our new At Home email version

Val Jeffrey's Retirement

It is with mixed emotions that we are announcing the retirement of Val Jeffrey.

She has worked with KEY for over 32 years and decided to take a well deserved rest in June this year.

You may recognise Val from many KEY events, in particular her involvement with National and Regional TAG groups.

Everybody at KEY would like to take this opportunity to wish Val all the best on with her retirement.



Above: Val Jeffrey
Left: Staff at KEY



Contact Us

Repairs 0141 342 1820
Tenancy Enquiries 0141 342 1810

If you would like to contact someone directly, their 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 an 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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