

# TENANTS NEWSLETTER

## OFFICE OPENING TIMES

Monday - Thursday 9.00am to 5.00pm

Friday 9.00am to 4.00pm

Contact us on 01620 829300

Or by email [info@homesforlife.co.uk](mailto:info@homesforlife.co.uk)

Homes for Life Housing Partnership  
57 Market Street  
HADDINGTON  
East Lothian  
EH41 3JG  
Tel 01620 829300  
Fax 01620 829993



Here's your latest newsletter to let you know how your Company is doing

## Tenant Panel Meeting

**The next Tenant Panel Meeting will be held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> March At 6pm**

We will be holding a meeting with our tenants who have agreed to be part of a Tenant Panel to look at:

- Reprourement of the Repairs and Maintenance Contract
- Reviewing a number of Housing Management policies including Allocations Policy with a view to dropping the use of First Affordable Home Pass, Anti-social Behaviour Policy and the Void Policy (no material changes anticipated in the latter 2 policies)

**We are looking for tenants to be involved in the contractor selection process.** We will be contacting tenants who previously agreed to be part of the Tenant Panel and tenants who have indicated in the past that they would be interested in being more involved. **If you don't think this includes you and you would like to be part of the Panel please let us know.**

We will be pleased to offer help with transport and childcare costs – please let us know your needs on the enclosed reply slip – remember to include your name and a contact telephone number!

### **Policies**

**Please check the Company's website [www.homesforlife.co.uk](http://www.homesforlife.co.uk) for full copies of recently reviewed policies including Tenant Participation Strategy, Tenancy Management, Acceptable Behaviour, Equality and Diversity and Rent Policies.**

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### **QUICK REMINDERS:**

- Tenant Meeting – **Wed 24<sup>th</sup> March 6pm**
- Did you increase your Standing Order for April's rent change?
- HomeSwapper and Energy Advice Inserts
- check the website [www.homesforlife.co.uk](http://www.homesforlife.co.uk)

## **Rent Consultation**

Thank you very much to all the tenants who have been involved in helping us through the long rent restructure process, whether by attending tenant meetings or responding to our surveys. We are pleased so many of you (91%!) agree with the new Rent Policy. Full feedback was included with your new rent notification letter.

You may feel its not worth the bother to fill in the service questionnaires we send out – whether its to do with general satisfaction with the services you receive or specific to Gas servicing or Repairs but the result from the Rent Consultation process is a very good demonstration of how important your feedback is and it shows that we do listen!

# TENANTS NEWSLETTER

## New East Lothian Service Gives Easy Access to Home Adaptations



A new service has been launched by **East Lothian Council** to give people quick and easy access to simple equipment and adaptations that will help people who, through age, illness or disability, are finding it more difficult to manage simple household or personal care tasks.

Residents will be able to select and order from a catalogue of simple items, all specially designed for the task. All of the items are available free of charge and without the need for a professional assessment. Relatives and carers can also request items on another person's behalf.



*A key turner*

The equipment ranges from walking sticks and key turners to specially adapted cups and cutlery. There are also minor adaptations to provide balance and support inside or outside the home such as grab and handrails. All of the items have clear photographs and descriptions, including weights and measurements, and an order form is included within the catalogue.

Receiving equipment and minor adaptations couldn't be easier. Simply telephone East Lothian Council on **0845 603 1576** for a free copy of the self selection catalogue or download it from their website at

<http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/otselfselection>

## Trickle Transfer - upgrade

We are pleased to confirm that following a competitive tender exercise, James Swinton & Co Ltd have now been appointed our principal contractor for improvement of the 27 existing homes we previously acquired from East Lothian Council.

Works are finally expected to start on site in early April 2010. This is later than tenants in these homes had hoped, due to pre contract preparations, but Swinton will work to a shorter programme, and works to all 27 homes should be completed by the end of August 2010. Works are valued at over £400,000, but once fees, other outlays and VAT are taken into account, outturn costs will exceed £500,000.

Works will vary from home to home, depending on current condition and needs, but the overall package includes - upgrading or replacement of central heating; rewiring, replacement kitchen fittings; replacement bathroom fittings; as well as necessary internal and external repairs. Ten homes which are outwith the mains gas network will get central heating systems fired by innovative air source heat pumps. **After completion of this contract all of our properties will meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.**

We will be consulting individually with all tenants whose homes are included in this contract, to give detailed advice on what's proposed, to check individual needs and to confirm tenant choices. Anyone wanting more information meantime should contact George Russell, Business Manager.



*Kirk Road, Aberlady*

# TENANTS NEWSLETTER

## Gas Safety

The national gas safety body has changed from 1 April to **Gas Safe Register**, replacing CORGI. From this date, only **Gas Safe** registered engineers should carry out work on gas appliances or installations in your home.

You need to check the ID of any gas engineer who comes to do work at your house. The identification must show that he or she is a **Gas Safe** registered engineer. You shouldn't let anyone in who has out of date or no ID.

You can help us to keep you safe by co-operating with Homes for Life whenever a gas safety check or maintenance needs to be carried out. Please let Kingdom's registered engineer in to do the work.



## Legionella

As part of our ongoing Health & Safety responsibility, we have commissioned specialist consultants ACS to survey water storage and distribution systems in a representative sample of our stock. They will report back to us on any potential legionella risk, with recommendations for action where necessary.

Legionella bacteria exist in low concentrations in many water sources. They are not generally a risk to health unless conditions allow the bacteria to multiply, and contaminated water droplets are inhaled.

Please co-operate fully with any access requests for these surveys. Surveys will take place in late April, and ACS reports will be available for consideration by our Board meeting at the end of May.

If your home is amongst the 16 properties selected for survey, we will contact you during March, to introduce ACS and to arrange access. As ACS are not a local contractor, surveys will need to be completed over two consecutive days, with significant additional costs for any visits which need to be completed out with that.

## Estate Walkabouts – your community improvements

**ISS Waterers Landscapers** have been working round the developments through out the winter period addressing the neglected shrub beds.

We've now received and accepted quotes for over £10,000 of the works identified during the end of year Estate Walkabouts' including:

- ⇒ numbering & marking parking bays at Hares Close, Cockenzie;
- ⇒ supplying bench seating in Barga Court, Cockenzie and Limeylands Court, Ormiston;
- ⇒ replanting 150 shrubs in Gifford,
- ⇒ replacing 3 damaged trees in Elphinstone
- ⇒ replacing existing gravel with larger 20mm gravel at Goldenstones, Dunbar
- ⇒ a security gate at Forth Street, North Berwick
- ⇒ replanting 180 new shrubs at Barga Court, Cockenzie
- ⇒ supplying and fitting a new sturdy fence around an area badly damaged by skateboarding at Walden Terrace, Gifford



# TENANTS NEWSLETTER



Allpay have

changed their phone numbers to the **0844** prefix, which will make paying rent by phone cheaper.

The new number for telephone payments is :

**0844 557 8321**

The new number is in place with immediate effect, and will run alongside the existing lines for six months, until the end of October 2009. After this date any calls made to the old 0870 numbers will be diverted automatically to the new number with a message explaining the change. So, there will be no disruption to service.

Remember you can also make payments online at <https://www.allpayments.net/allpayments/>

In order to use either of these services you need your allpay card number. If you don't have an allpay card and would like to pay by either of these methods – please contact the office and we can order one for you.



## REMINDER

Repairs  
Telephone Numbers



### 1. DURING OFFICE HOURS

Phone East Lothian Council's call centre on:

**01875 824311**

### 2. EMERGENCY REPAIRS

**Outside office hours** for an **EMERGENCY** repair that cannot wait until the morning - Contact East Lothian Council's Property Service on their Emergency Number

**01875 612 818**

- for **all EMERGENCY** repairs **except Gas Central Heating**.

**PLEASE NOTE** - if you call out an emergency repair which is either your responsibility or which is not a genuine emergency, the cost of the call out and the repair will be charged back to you.

### 3. GAS CENTRAL HEATING

Your gas central heating is covered by a contract with **Kingdom Gas** and if you experience any problems with your system you should call **FREE** on **0800 389 9463**.

## THINK YOU SMELL GAS?

If you think you can smell a gas leak, **NEVER** attempt to find a gas leak yourself. Instead contact **National Grid Gas plc** **immediately** on the following number –

**0800 111 999**

Telephone 01620 829300

Fax 01620 829993

email: [info@homesforlife.co.uk](mailto:info@homesforlife.co.uk)

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Registered Charity No.028542

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