



around the houses

SUMMER 2011 TENANTS NEWSLETTER



agm invitation

All tenants of Waverley Housing are warmly invited to attend our AGM 2011

The Waverley Housing Annual General Meeting will take place this year on

Tuesday, 27th September 2011
6:30pm

The Cross Keys Hotel, Kelso

This year, we will have information available about the range services we offer. Waverley Tenants Organisation will also be there with a host of information about ways to get involved in your area. Come along and have a chat with staff, tenant representatives and board members. Refreshments will be provided.

If you would like to attend, please contact Alison Hill on 01450 364 229 or email Alison@waverley-housing.co.uk, so that we can confirm numbers. If you require help with transport, please let us know – we will be happy to assist!



enclosures

Please find enclosed with this newsletter, a copy of the Waverley Housing **Annual Review for 2010/11** and an updated copy of our **complaint procedure**. We have updated our complaints procedure in light of the new guidance issues by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.



www.waverley-housing.co.uk

 ANNUAL REVIEW & COMPLAINTS LEAFLET ENCLOSED 

the Scottish Housing Regulator wants to hear your views



Scotland has a new, independent housing regulator. From next April its role will be to safeguard and promote the interests of tenants and others who receive housing services from local authorities and housing associations. It will replace the existing regulator.

Before taking on its role, the new Scottish Housing Regulator is consulting on its approach. It wants to hear the views of tenants, landlords and others with an interest in social housing.

Kay Blair is the new Regulator's Chair. Kay said: "The quality of housing and landlord services have a direct and lasting impact on people's lives. We will regulate to protect tenants' interests and to drive improvements in social housing. We will assess each landlord's performance regularly. In doing so, we will take account of the views and experiences of its tenants. We will publish a range of information on landlords' performance, including progress against the Scottish Government's new Social Housing Charter.

This will help tenants to hold their landlord to account. And we will take action where we find a landlord is failing to deliver for tenants.

The new Regulator would like to get wide feedback on its proposed approach. The consultation runs from early September. You can respond until late November.

There will also be events across the country, open to tenants and others, to discuss the proposals. You can get a copy of the proposals and find out more about the events by visiting the new Regulator's website, following the consultation on Twitter or contacting its office. You can find the details below.

website: www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/newregulator
phone: 0141 271 3810
e-mail: consultation@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk
twitter: www.twitter.com/SHRconsultation

estates team update

In our recent Tenant Satisfaction Survey, some of you highlighted issues with dog fouling, litter and fly-tipping on our estates.

Dog fouling - what you can do to help

Most dog owners are responsible and do clean up after their dogs, however, a small minority don't. Dog owners, by law, must clean up after their dogs. This means bagging the dog dirt and disposing of it properly. You can help stop dog fouling on your estate by reporting places where dog fouling is a problem to Environmental Services, Scottish Borders Council, Newtown St Boswells, Freephone 0800 376 1030 or email dogfouling@scotborders.gov.uk.

SBC can engage their Dog Wardens who in turn can issue fixed penalty fines on dog owners failing to clean up after their dogs. You can also report this to your Housing Officer on 01450 364200 and Waverley Housing will take action against any of its tenants who allow their dogs to foul continually. Together we can help eradicate this problem on our estates.

Litter/Fly-tipping

Waverley Housing recently employed Donald and Colin as our Responsive Estates Team. The guys are based primarily in our Beech Avenue estate in Galashiels carrying out service-charged caretaking and cleaning duties. They also however provide a "responsive" service where we are aware of fly-tipping/litter on our estates.

You can help us! Help us keep your estates in good condition - if you see anyone fly-tipping on your estate, please phone us immediately and speak to your Housing Officer on 01450 364200. The sooner we are able to investigate, the sooner we can get rid of any eyesore.



Donald Laurie



Colin Brown

tenant reward scheme

We want to recognise and reward tenants who keep to their tenancy agreement, pay their rent on time and if ever leaving their tenancy, leave their property in good condition matching our re-let standard. This summer we are delighted to launch our brand new **Tenant Reward Scheme!**

What's in it for me?

QUARTERLY PRIZE DRAW

As a qualifying Tenant Reward Scheme member, you will be eligible for entry into the **quarterly prize draw**.

You could win:

Quarter 1 (Spring)	£250 shopping voucher
Quarter 2 (Summer)	Home improvement (up to value of £3,500)
Quarter 3 (Autumn)	£250 shopping voucher
Quarter 4 (Winter)	£250 shopping voucher
Golden Handshake	£100 at tenancy end (if property is left to our re-let standard)

Three times a year there will be a prize draw for a £250 shopping voucher, and once a year there will be a prize draw to have a home improvement carried out, from a defined list, to the value of £3,500. i.e. a new kitchen, bathroom, windows or central heating installed.*

*If the prize winners' home is already at the Scottish Housing Quality Standard and all the home improvements on the list have already been carried out, the winner may choose to have their home redecorated or a garden makeover up to the value of £3,500!

GOLDEN HANDSHAKE

if you ever leave end your tenancy with us

As a qualifying Tenant Reward Scheme member, you will be eligible for a **'golden handshake' of £100** if you ever end your tenancy with Waverley Housing, and your house meets our re-let standard.

Criteria for membership

As a tenant you can be a member of the Waverley Tenant Reward Scheme if:

- You have had a clear rent account for at least 12 weeks.
- You have made an arrangement to pay off your arrears and have maintained those payments for 12 weeks.
- You must be a qualifying member of the Tenant Reward Scheme to be eligible for the quarterly prize draw, and there is full criteria to be met to be eligible for the 'Golden Handshake' if you ever end your tenancy with us. Please return the application form below as soon as possible.
- As soon as we receive your completed application form, we will send you out the full criteria for membership and eligibility for the prizes. We will also detail the full information of the Tenant Reward Scheme.

How can I join?

If you think that you meet the criteria and want to become a Tenant Reward Scheme member, **please complete the form below and post it to:**

Margaret Hogg, Housing Services Manager
FREEPOST SCO 792
HAWICK
TD9 9BR

tenant reward scheme

(Please use CAPITAL LETTERS)



Title	Forename(s)	Surname
Address		
Town		Postcode
Landline Number		Mobile
Email		
Signed		
Date		

SHQS - new doors at Beech Avenue, Galashiels

One main area highlighted in the surveys we had carried out for our Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) programme was about physical security to blocks of flats. We have quite a lot of blocks of flats, so it isn't possible for us to provide security upgrades to them all at once, but we are starting the process now as a part of our SHQS programme, and targeting properties which will fail SHQS because of insecure stair doors.

The SHQS survey, and also our Tenant Satisfaction Survey, identified the properties at numbers 2 – 290 Beech Avenue, in Upper Langlee, Galashiels as being an area where there were particular problems with stair doors being insecure and door entry systems not working. So we have sat down with our suppliers, Martec Engineering (www.martecengineering.co.uk), and working with us they have come up with a specific design for doors and screens for these blocks. They are very secure steel and glazed doors, meet the latest Police specification, and have Secured by Design accreditation.

We will also be repairing the door entry systems which will be fob operated, and as funds allow, painting common stairs in this area, which will also be treated with a specialist anti graffiti covering. That should mean that if there is graffiti found, that in most cases it can relatively quickly and easily be removed.

There is unfortunately a lead in time for the doors to be manufactured. At the time of writing (late July), we are targeting the start of October for the installation process to begin, and we hope to be able to complete the programme at Beech Avenue before the end of 2011. This is a significant programme of investment at Beech Avenue – over £100,000 – and we hope that when it is completed it will make a real difference. We would also like to acknowledge the role of Waverley Tenants Organisation in supporting us in this project and for their comments on the proposals and design.

Going forward, we will be working up a programme of replacing other common stair doors to this same standard, throughout our stock. This will also include repairing door entry systems, and common stair painting across all of the blocks of flats that we fully own. We'll update on this through future newsletter articles and we will also be in touch with tenants closer to the time that we propose to carry out works to blocks where their homes are situated.

If you have any questions about the programme or would like to discuss this further, please contact Keith Middlemass, Property Services Manager on **01450 364202 / 364211**, or via email at keith@waverley-housing.co.uk.



email newsletter

Every season we post out a printed copy of our newsletter to every tenant.

Would you like to receive your copy by email?

If you would prefer to receive a copy online, please email tenantparticipation@waverley-housing.co.uk with your name and address and we will keep you informed via email!



EMAIL NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE

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A reminder that the preferred method for you to pay your rent to us is by direct debit. We offer the option for you to pay weekly or monthly by direct debit.

If you choose to pay weekly, direct debits are taken on a Friday and if you opt for monthly payments, direct debits are taken on the 1st of every month.

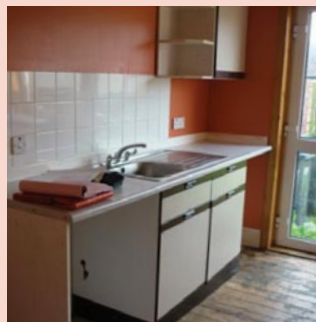
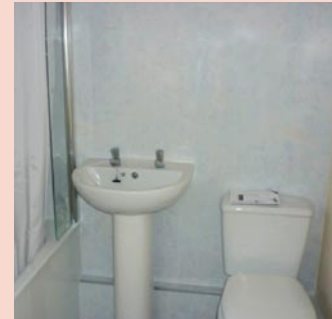
A direct debit does not cost you anything, providing you have enough funds in your account to cover your rent on the date that payment is due. We are always available to offer advice and assistance to you for paying your rent. If you have not already set up a Direct Debit, please contact us on **01450 364200**. We will be happy to help you!

voids / SHQS

As we continue with our programme to bring our properties up to the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) by 2015, we thought you might like to see some examples of pictures taken before and after a new kitchen and bathroom was fitted to one of our properties recently.

Specifications will vary from property to property, and not every one of our properties will need to have a new bathroom and kitchen installed as part of the SHQS programme. But we hope this will help to show the quality of specification and workmanship that you can expect where we carry out this type of work.

If you have any questions about the programme or would like to discuss this further, please contact Keith Middlemass, Property Services Manager, on **01450 364202 / 364211**, or via email at keith@waverley-housing.co.uk.



Bathroom (top) and kitchen (below) before and after photographs.

how we let our properties

Allocations Report for the period 1 April to 30 June 2011

Waverley Housing is a member of Borders Choice Homes (BCH) along with Eildon, Berwickshire and Cairn Housing Associations. Our available properties are advertised weekly in the Southern Reporter and anyone who is registered with BCH for housing can bid for them by contacting one of the landlords' offices or bidding on line.

For the period 1 April to 30 June this year, Waverley Housing has allocated 47 properties – 12 in Galashiels, 19 in Hawick, 8 in Jedburgh, 4 in Kelso, 3 in Newtown St Boswells, and 1 in Earlston. Of these 47 lets, 70% of successful applicants made Best Use (ie full occupation of amenities or all bedrooms within the properties). 60% of properties were let to applicants with a priority need with the remaining 40% of lets made to applicants with no priority need.

An average of 21 bids was received from applicants for these properties. Successful applicants with a priority need waited on average 13 months, whilst those applicants without any priority need waited an average 19 months from registering with BCH until being housed.



single equality scheme

The Government introduced the Equality Act 2010 to consolidate previous discrimination legislation. The Act removes many of the anomalies that have arisen as a result of the piecemeal nature of the legislation previously in place.

Following the introduction of the Equalities Act 2010, Waverley Housing has adopted a Single Equality Scheme. This Scheme sets out the framework within which we will deliver our commitment to promote diversity and equality of opportunity in everything that we do.

If you would like a copy of our Single Equality Scheme, please contact our office in Hawick or you can download a copy from the 'publications' section of our website www.waverley-housing.co.uk.

If you have any comments or queries regarding our Single Equality Scheme please do not hesitate to contact us on **01450 364 200**.



waverley tenants organisation

Langlee Jubilee Play Park

Waverley Tenants Organisation would like to thank everyone who helped with the ITV peoples millions lottery appeal.

Sadly, WTO were not successful this time, but are now looking at other funding options and will continue with their ambitious plan to build a much needed playpark in Langlee, Galashiels.

WTO Community Gardens

Work continues in Langlee to maintain the two community gardens.

This year, for the first time ever, the community gardens in Langlee have been entered into **Gala in Bloom** competition.

WTO are always looking for new members to the WTO committee, and are also seeking volunteers to help with the gardens.

Are you interested in helping out?

Please contact our Tenant Participation Officer on **01450 364 200!**



Langlee Carnival

The Langlee Carnival will take place on Saturday 10th September 2011.

Fancy dress judging at Langlee Primary school from 10:00am with the main carnival starting at 11:00am Langlee Community Centre.

Waverley Tenants Organisation is an independent, registered tenants' organisation.

Would you like to get involved in any of these projects, in Galashiels?

Do you have ideas for your own area in the Borders?

Our Tenant Participation Officer would be delighted to work together with you, and WTO have lots of experience of running a tenants group that they could share with you.

Please contact Tenant Participation Officer on **01405 364 200** or email **tenantparticipation@waverley-housing.co.uk**.

 tenant satisfaction survey 2011

As you know, over the past few months, we have been looking at the results of the Tenant Satisfaction Survey.

There are many encouraging results that tell us the things that you value and there are also some issues that we need to work on and improve.

76% of you told us you are satisfied, or very satisfied with **the services** we provide, overall.

84% of you told us you are very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the last responsive, **day to day repair** you reported.

88% of you reported you are satisfied with with the response you receive when **phoning the office**, and **83%** of you are satisfied with the experience of **visiting the office**.

83% of responses reported that Waverley Housing is either very or fairly good at **keeping you informed**.

Areas to improve...

One of the issues you highlighted in the survey was how we tackle issues on your estates such as litter, fly-tipping and dog fouling. Please turn to page 2 to find out about our new estates team, and what you can do to help us keep our estates in better condition!

We are also working to improve the security on our estates, as part of our SHQS commitment. This was an area of concern raised in the survey, particularly in the Galashiels area. Please turn to page 4 to find out about the new security doors that are scheduled, in the first instance, for Beech Avenue, Galashiels.

We are continuing to work through the results of the survey and are putting together plans of how we can continue to improve and build on the services we deliver. As ever, we will continue to give updates of developments through this newsletter, and if you have any questions in the meantime, please contact Mark Rodgers, Director of Housing and Property Services, on **01450 364 200**.

 internal decoration policy

When we are carrying out major works to your home, sometimes these works can cause damage to the decoration. Where the damage has been caused by works being carried out at your home, and the damage is significant Waverley Housing may restore or replace or redecorate where necessary.

It is your responsibility to lift and relay flooring, where necessary, to allow works to take place. This includes carpet, carpet tiles, lino, laminate etc. We can help you lift and relay floors, but this will be done as a chargeable repair. Where the flooring has been glued or otherwise permanently fixed in place it may not be

possible to remove it without causing damage to the flooring. Where this is the case, it will not be seen as a reason to not carry out the repair. In such cases, it is unfortunately a tenant responsibility to resolve themselves.

If you would like a copy of our full policy on internal decoration, please contact us on **01450 364200** or go to **www.waverley-housing.co.uk**.

 CUT OUT AND KEEP INFORMATION 



aroundthehouses



 CUT OUT AND KEEP CONTACT INFORMATION 

OFFICE OPEN TO PUBLIC	
Mon	8.45am - 5pm
Tues	8.45am - 5pm
Wed	Closed
Thurs	8.45am - 5pm
Fri	8.45am - 3.30pm

REPAIRS FREEPHONE

0800 104 105

Freephone within office open hours.

EMERGENCY REPAIRS

07721 889 618

Out of Office hours
EMERGENCY REPAIRS ONLY
 Non emergency call outs may be rechargeable.

RENT PAYMENTS

We are no longer accepting cash payments at our office.

Rent payments should be made, wherever possible, by direct debit.

Please contact us if you have any questions about this or any difficulties in paying your rent and/or any arrears arrangement that you may have with us.

27 North Bridge Street Hawick TD9 9BD T: 01450 364200 F: 01450 375905
E: info@waverley-housing.co.uk

www.waverley-housing.co.uk

SCOTTISH CHARITY NO. SC026231 COMPANIES HOUSE REGISTRATION NO. 115066

