



Tenant Newsletter

December 2020

waverley
housing

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Festive Opening Hours

The office will be closed from December 24th at 2pm until 4th January 2021. The contact number for emergency repairs is 07721 889 618 (please note this number is for genuine emergency repairs only. You will be charged for all call-outs which are subsequently found not to be an emergency).

Get Involved

We are always looking for tenants to get more involved. Our Customer Review Panel are a dedicated group of tenants who volunteer their time to review and scrutinise the services we deliver. They look at our performance and make recommendations on how we can improve our services. In the past we have seen tenants use the Customer Review Panel as a stepping stone toward joining the Waverley Housing Board. If this is of interest to you please get in touch. Call us on 01450 364200 or email info@waverley-housing.co.uk

Quarterly Reports

To view our Quarterly Allocations and Complaints Reports please visit www.waverley-housing.co.uk/downloads

Report Repairs Online



To save you a call did you know you can report a repair through our website? You can provide details of the job and access arrangements and we will call or email to confirm the appointment.

www.waverley-housing.co.uk/report-repair/report-repair/

HAVE YOU HAD TO SELF ISOLATE DUE TO COVID-19?

If so you may be eligible to receive some financial help. The Government has made available The Self-Isolation Support Grant which is a new grant of £500. It will be offered through the existing Scottish Welfare Fund, administered by Local Authorities in Scotland.

To be eligible for the Grant, you must:

- have been told by the Test and Protect Service to self-isolate as a result of COVID-19, either because you have tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive
- be employed or self-employed
- be unable to work from home, and lose income as a result of self-isolation
- be in receipt of, or have been awarded but not yet received a payment of:
 - Universal Credit
 - Working Tax Credit
 - Income-based Employment and Support Allowance
 - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
 - Income Support
 - Housing Benefit and/or
 - Pension Credit

These payments are designed to help ensure people who have tested positive for COVID-19 and their close contacts self-isolate for the required period to stop the onward spread of the virus.

The Self-Isolation Support Grant does not cover people who are self-isolating after returning to the UK from abroad, unless they have tested positive for coronavirus or have been told to stay at home and self-isolate by the Test and Protect Service.



You can apply to Scottish Borders Council and you can receive the Grant more than once if you are asked to self-isolate on more than one occasion, as long as these do not overlap.

Applications can be made at any point during the period when you are told to self-isolate.

If you are not eligible for the Grant, you may still be able to receive a Crisis Grant from your local authority through the existing Scottish Welfare Fund.

To apply, you will need to provide Scottish Borders Council with:-

- a notification from Test and Protect asking you to self-isolate
- proof of receipt or award of one of the qualifying benefits
- a bank statement and
- proof of employment or, if you are self-employed, evidence of self-assessment returns, trading income and proof that their business delivers services which cannot be undertaken without social contact.

Once all the information has been verified, you will receive a letter telling you the outcome of your application. Payment should be made within three working days of the application being verified.

ARE YOU ENTITLED TO A BEST START GRANT OR BEST START FOODS?

This is a package of three payments providing extra money to parents and carers during the early years of a child's life.

Pregnancy and Baby Payment

£600 for a first child and £300 for other children. There will be an extra £300 if you have a multiple birth. It will help with expenses in pregnancy or having a new child, for example maternity clothes, a pram or additional heating.

Early Learning Payment (ELP)

£250 payment for eligible families on certain benefits or tax credits who have a child between the ages of two and three years and six months. This is to help with the costs of early learning around the time your child might start nursery.

School Age Payment (SAP)

£250 payment made around the time a child normally starts Primary 1 to help with the costs of a child starting school.

Applications for both the ELP and SAP are open now for payments to commence in February 2021

Best Start Foods

This replaces UK Government's Healthy Start Vouchers in Scotland. Replaces the paper vouchers with a new payment card, giving you more flexibility in how you use it. You get £17 every four weeks during pregnancy and for any children between one and three years old, this payment increases to £34 for any child under one.

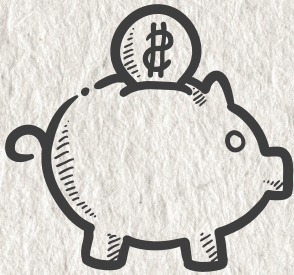
You may be entitled to a Best Start Grant or Best Start Foods if: -

- you live in Scotland and are in receipt of certain benefits or tax credits, unless you are under 18
- if you are pregnant
- if you are the parent or carer of a child

You can apply directly to Social Security Scotland by calling their freephone helpline 0800 182 2222. For assistance to apply, call our advice service on 03451 400 100. Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods are administered and delivered by Social Security Scotland. Social Security Scotland is an executive agency of the Scottish Government. Its purpose is to administer the Scottish social security system effectively.



DON'T LET YOUR SPENDING GET OUT OF CONTROL AT CHRISTMAS



Everyone likes to enjoy themselves at Christmas and push the boat out a bit, especially this year given the unexpected and stressful year we have all had. However, please remember your bills still must be paid, it's pointless over-spending and getting yourself into debt only to be left to pick up the pieces in January!

It is really important that you continue to pay your bills. As well as your rent, you might have other commitments too; don't let Christmas cause you unnecessary concern and stress in the New Year.

If you are struggling with debt and/or are unsure if you are entitled to any benefits, please contact us on 01450 364200 and ask for Derek our Welfare Benefit Advisor or Kendra our Tenant Support Officer who will help you.

All information is confidential, so please do not struggle on alone, pick up the phone, or text or email us and we will contact you immediately.

THE TENANT HARDSHIP LOAN

The Scottish Government wishes to offer a loan to assist private and social sector tenants, where they are experiencing difficulties paying their rent because of COVID-19 restrictions. The aim of the loan is to protect tenants from eviction due to rent arrears, providing short term support that allows tenants to pay rent arrears that have arisen since 01 January 2020 and/or pay up to 3 months of future rent payments. The loan is intended to provide support where other forms of financial support are unavailable to the tenant. Where a tenant is eligible for other forms of support - for example Discretionary Housing Payment – then they would be expected to take these up rather than apply for this loan.

www.tenanthardshiploan.est.org.uk/

COLD WEATHER PRECAUTIONS

You can avoid frost damage and burst pipes by following a few simple steps:



- leave doors in each room open to allow warm air to circulate and open the loft hatch
- set your room thermostats to a minimum of 10 degrees
- if you are going to leave your home for a long period of time contact Waverley Housing for advice.

If you have burst or frozen pipes please carry out the following:

- turn off the water at the main stopcock and turn on all cold taps
- switch off the electricity at the mains if water comes into contact with electrical fittings
- switch off any water heaters
- switch off your central heating
- contact Waverley Housing ASAP.

Reporting Routine (non-emergency) Repairs

Online ([click here](#))

By telephone to our dedicated repairs line 0800 104 105 (free from landlines)

By e-mail to info@waverley-housing.co.uk

By post to our offices

Reporting Emergency Repairs

During office hours, by telephone to our dedicated repairs line **0800 104 105** (free from landlines)

Outside of office hours, during evenings, weekends and public holidays, a call-out service will operate for emergency repairs to be dealt with by the person on stand-by. The contact number for emergency repairs is **07721 889 618** (Please note that this number is for genuine emergency repairs only. You will be charged for all call-outs which are found not to be an emergency).



Follow us on Social Media



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*Wishing you a Merry Christmas &
a Happy New Year from all at
Waverley Housing*