



TENANT MATTERS

BECAUSE OUR TENANT'S MATTER TO US



WINTER IS COMING

From 1 October 2023 the energy price cap is set at £1,923 a year for a typical household who use gas and electricity and pay by Direct Debit. The amount you pay will depend on actual household usage and where you live as well as meter and payment type. Last winter the UK Government provided support with energy bills, this seems unlikely this year, and although prices have gone down, they still remain high. Waverley Housing has several ways in which we can help you through these upcoming colder months.



FUEL BANK VOUCHERS

We are delighted to be able to offer this support again for winter 2023/24. For tenants on pre-payment meters (pay as you go), we can provide you with vouchers from the Fuel Bank Foundation Fund, and for those of you who are on dry meters (monthly direct debits and bills) we can offer some financial support from the Fuel Poverty Fund. Please contact us on 0800 104 105 for more information.

ASSISTANCE WITH SUPPLIER ISSUES

We now have an Energy Adviser in place, through the Warm and Well Fund at Scottish Borders Council, Terry Brown. Terry can offer help with any problems you may have with your meters, bills, supplier etc.

If you would like to speak to Terry, please contact us on 0800 104 105 and we will arrange an appointment for you. This can be over the phone or in your home.

For more information in general regarding the Fuel Poverty Fund, you can click on the YouTube link below.

www.youtube.com/ScottishBordersHousingAssociation

UPPER LANGLEE

We recently reached a very exciting milestone in the Upper Langlee regeneration programme and will soon be announcing our appointed contractor for the 1st phase of the new build. This will see us building 25 units on the former Larch Grove site. It is anticipated that the contractor will be on site by the end of 2023. The residents within Upper Langlee will receive more details in the coming weeks. Please check out our website for updates www.waverley-housing.co.uk.



PROPERTIES

In financial year 2022-23 Waverley Housing spent over £300,000 bringing 104 properties back to our re-lettable standard after a tenancy was vacated. Our property services team deal with varying conditions when tenants vacate their tenancy. Some properties are left in a spot-less condition and just require safety checks and a lock change to enable a new tenant to move in, this would cost on average less than £200 to get the property ready for a new tenant. Other properties are left in a very poor condition, including being left fully furnished with rubbish strewn throughout the house, loft and garden. Properties can be left very dirty and require specialist cleaning. Also full re-decoration may be required. On some occasions it has cost in excess of £15,000 to bring a property to our re-lettable standard. To put this into perspective this equates to more than 3 years rent!



In 2022-23 our Tenancy Support Worker also worked with 37 households where the condition of the tenancy was not to an acceptable standard.

Waverley Housing recognise due to busy lives and varying pressures sometimes basic tasks like housekeeping can be pushed down the list of priorities but it is a very important part of maintaining a successful tenancy. If you feel things are getting on top of you, please contact us as we are here to help and give advice.

TIPS TO KEEP A TIDY HOUSE:

- Make sure you have the right cleaning products and cleaning tools.
- Begin where you live most often.
- Start high and end low.
- Tackle stains and smells.
- Get organised.
- Keep on top of it, don't wait until it becomes a huge task. Do a little every day.
- Get all of the household involved, including children who can learn from a young age how to tidy away toys and it can become fun rather than a chore.
- Clear the walking spaces.
- Disinfect hard surfaces.
- Clean appliances.

AUTUMN COLOURING



COMPLAINTS

During the first quarter of our current financial year we received a total of 7 complaints. All of these complaints were treated as Stage 1 complaints, with 1 escalating to Stage 2. No complaints were received direct at Stage 2.

The following table shows a breakdown of complaints:

Number of Complaints	1st Stage Complaints		2nd Stage Complaints	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Total number of complaints	7		1	
Responded to in full	7	100%	1	100%
Upheld	2	29%		
Partially Upheld	1	14%		
Not Upheld	4	57%	1	100%
Resolved				
Complaint Open/Response Outstanding				
Responded to within SPSO time-scales				
Average timescale to respond (in days)	2 Days		2 Days	

AGM - Tuesday 26th September 2023

This year's AGM will take place on Tuesday 26th September 2023 at 5.30pm at Waverley Housing, 51 North Bridge Street, Hawick TD9 9PX.

If you would like to attend please contact Waverley Housing on 01450 364200 or info@waverley-housing.co.uk

YOU CAN COOK

During the summer of 2023, Waverley Housing teamed up with Scottish Borders Housing Association (SBHA) to deliver a You Can Cook course in Hawick Town Hall. A total of 5 sessions took place, and each session catered for up to 15 tenants. All ingredients were provided free of charge, and tenants enjoyed learning new skills and sampling their efforts once cooking was complete.



Why not try this tasty nutritious soup recipe for yourself and let us know what you think of it, or if you have your own special recipe tucked away, share it with us. If it is printed in our next edition of Tenant Matters, you will win yourself a £50 Love to Shop Voucher.

SWEET POTATO, CHILLI AND SWEETCORN SOUP

INGREDIENTS	METHOD
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 onion• 2 cloves of garlic• 1 red chilli chopped• Tbs oil• 2 Tsp ground cumin• Medium sweet potato, diced with skin on• 750 mls veg stock• Half a red pepper• 300 grams of frozen sweetcorn• Salt and pepper	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wash all veg• Chop onion garlic & chilli• Chop sweet potato and pepper• Sizzle onion, garlic and chilli for a few mins to soften• Add sweet potato and cumin, stir to coat all veg• Add stock and simmer for 10 mins• Add pepper and sweetcorn and simmer for ten mins or until cooked• Season to taste• Blend if preferred• Serve with garlic bread

To help you further in reducing fuel costs, we are offering you the chance to win an energy-saving Air Fryer or Slow Cooker. These are much cheaper options to cook your food in, instead of having to heat an oven which can be expensive.

To enter, please just email info@waverley-housing.co.uk and include your name and contact no, and whether you would prefer an Air Fryer or Slow Cooker. If you are the lucky winner we will contact you.

SPOTLIGHT ON PROPERTY SERVICES

Property services is responsible for a number of key areas :

- Day to Day repairs in our homes.
- Inspections.
- Cyclical maintenance, such as external painting, gutter cleaning.
- Planned maintenance upgrades such as kitchens, bathrooms, heating, windows and doors.
- Compliance and Health and Safety.
- Ensuring homes that become empty are turned around and relet within our target time.
- Feu Area inspections and maintenance.

MEET THE OFFICE TEAM



Greg Easton
Property Services
Officer



Derek Gibson
Property Services
Officer

Property Officers who carry out inspections and manage our in-house trade teams and contractors as well as carrying out stock condition surveys.



Nikki Mitchell
Property
Compliance
Assistant



Megan Baxter
Property Services
Assistant

Property Services Assistants and the Property Compliance Assistant will take your calls about repairs and plan in work for our trades to carry out repairs and planned work. They will also ensure that all our regulatory duties are being completed on time, for example gas services and electrical safety checks.

You can help us by responding to letters requesting access to carry out essential work and by ensuring you are in when we arrange a time to carry out repairs.

In addition to the office team we have 19 skilled operatives covering multi-trades and a new apprentice.

To contact us regarding repairs or planned work please telephone our dedicated repairs line 0800 104 105 (free from landlines).



DAMP, MOULD AND CONDENSATION



During the Autumn and Winter months damp, mould and condensation can become an issue. The Property team are well equipped to assess properties and where necessary get specialists to advise route cause.

Moisture in the air will form condensation (droplets of liquid water) when it comes into contact with a cold surface such as a window. We all get condensation on our windows from time to time, but this isn't necessarily a problem if it clears up quickly.



Problems begin if the water builds up to the point where it starts to cause damage. If it's building up somewhere other than on the window, you may not notice until the wallpaper starts to peel, or black mould starts to grow. This is most likely to happen in places that are colder than the rest of the house, such as exposed corners, or where the air can't circulate freely, such as behind furniture or in cupboards.

If you do have mould growing, it's good to clean it off straight away to minimise any health risk, but you should contact us immediately so that we can check that there are no underlying damp problems that require to be addressed. If there are no signs of damp then our Property Officers will assess what works could be carried out to reduce condensation.

If you don't have any leaks or damp issues, then the problem is most likely to be condensation.

There are several things you can do to help reduce condensation:

- Reduce the amount of moisture produced by keeping lids on pans when cooking, drying clothes outside when possible, and if you use a tumble dryer, making sure it's vented to the outside.
- Ventilate so the moist air leaves the house – always use the extractor fan when you're cooking, showering or bathing, leave any window vents open, and don't block off any other vents.
- Make sure air can circulate by leaving gaps between furniture and the wall where possible.



As part of our planned maintenance programme Waverley Housing now fits extractor fans each time a new kitchen or bathroom is installed. This is one of the most effective ways of ventilating in these areas with high condensation levels.



COST OF LIVING HELP IS ON HAND

WAVERLEY HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Winter is fast approaching, and Waverley Housing will do all we can to assist you to make your home warm and cosy. We have a limited supply of the following items, free of charge, to distribute to our tenants in most need:

- Air Fryers to help keep your cooking costs down.
- Electric throws to keep you warm when your heating is off.
- Low energy light bulbs.
- Heat reflecting radiator panels.
- Thermal curtains.



Or if you require further information on any of the above, please contact us at info@waverley-housing.co.uk or speak to your Housing Officer.

SOCIAL SECURITY SCOTLAND BENEFITS FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

FIVE FAMILY PAYMENTS AVAILABLE TO YOU

If you are in receipt of Universal Credit, tax credits or other qualifying benefits, Social Security Scotland has five family payments to help balance family costs.

- **Best Start Grant:** These are three payments at key stages of your child's early years.
- **Best Start Foods:** This is a pre-paid card topped up with money to spend on healthy food while you are pregnant or have a young child.
- **Scottish Child Payment:** £100 every four weeks until your child turns 16.

Find out more at <https://bit.ly/SocialSecurityScotlandFiveFamilyPayments>

TENANT SAFETY MATTERS COMING SOON

The property services team have been working hard on creating our new "Tenant Safety Matters" Handbook. This document provides important information on how we keep our tenants safe, along with some useful tips on how you can keep your home and family safe.

We will be launching the document in September and a copy will be delivered to all of our tenants. When you receive your copy please keep in a place easy to access should you need it. Online versions will be available. Look out for updates on our social media pages.



BORDERS HOUSING NETWORK HOST SCOTTISH HOUSING MINISTER TO SHARE THEIR WORK ON DOMESTIC ABUSE



On 15 August 2023, at Berwickshire Housing Association's (BHA) offices in Duns, the Housing Minister Paul McLennan met Borders Housing Network (BHN) representatives to find out more about the work we are doing in relation to domestic abuse, including the challenges we face supporting victims and survivors living in rural communities.

The Chief Executive for BHA, Michelle Meldrum, presented the Network's key approaches to addressing domestic abuse which include:

- 1.** A unified staff policy and specialist training for all staff across the four Registered Social Landlords.
- 2.** A new Staff support network with "Domestic Abuse Workplace Support" (DAWS) volunteers placed across BHN.

3. An increased focus on prevention and early intervention.
4. Improved access online and offline, to national and local support services and information.

Housing Minister Paul McLennan said: "Domestic abuse is the leading cause of homelessness for women in Scotland. I was pleased to learn about the work of the Borders Housing Network in tackling domestic abuse throughout the communities they serve. [The Make A Stand pledge](#) is playing a crucial role in supporting women and children experiencing domestic abuse. From specialist training for staff to improved access to services and information, their work is helping more people to feel safe in their homes."

If you're experiencing domestic abuse, it's really important to talk to someone about it. We're here to help you so you don't have to face it alone. If you feel unsafe in your home, we will listen to you and do everything we can to better your situation and keep you safe, and with your permission make referrals to specialist support agencies such as:

- Domestic Abuse Advocacy Support Service (DAAS) 01835 825024
- Borders Women's Aid Refuge 01835 863514
- Scottish Borders Rape Crisis 0800 054 2445 01896 661070
- Shakti Women's Aid 0131 475 2399
- Children's 1st – Domestic Abuse Service 01750 22892

Please note:

- a) you can contact the agencies above yourself if you prefer.
- b) if you are in immediate danger, please call 999.

Waverley Housing are committed to the prevention of domestic abuse. Domestic abuse impacts on individuals, children, families, and communities and is a significant cause of homelessness. Through effective multi agency working, shared awareness training, and a joined-up response by agencies the overall aim of prevention of domestic abuse is a key objective of Waverley Housing.



51 North Bridge Street • Hawick • TD9 9PX

T: 01450 364200

E: info@waverley-housing.co.uk

www.waverley-housing.co.uk

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See our latest Annual Assurance Statement and Engagement Plan submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator on our website www.waverley-housing.co.uk/home/library/shr-reports/

To request a larger print version of this document please call 01450 364200