

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Rent Consultation 25/26

Tenant Survey 2024

Rent Payment Options

Preventing Damp and Mould

New Employees

WELCOME TO OUR WINTER TENANT MATTERS



As we finalise our work for the year, and make all our festive arrangements, we are already preparing for 2025 and continuing our work in supporting all our tenants and customers.

Demand for housing and our services continues to be high, and our team continually focus on delivering the best support possible to everyone. In this newsletter we reflect back on 2024 and some of the changes that have taken place at Board and Staff level. We also have some useful advice on how to stay safe and warm this winter.

I would also like to take the opportunity to thank all of you that took part in our Tenant Satisfaction Survey earlier this year. Your views are really important to us and play a vital role in how we shape the services that we deliver in future years.

In the meantime, I wish everyone the best for the festive season and hope that 2025 brings all that you and your household need.

Paul Scott
Chief Executive

FESTIVE OPENING HOURS

The office will be closed from Wednesday 25th December 2024 and re-open on Thursday 2nd January 2025.

For emergency repairs during this time period please call: 07721 889 618

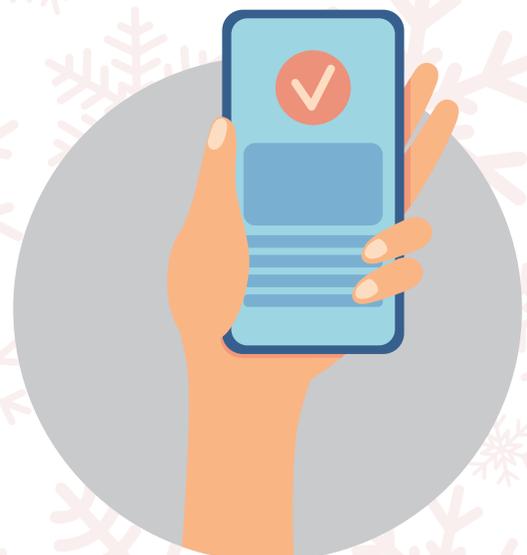
RENT PAYMENT OPTIONS

Waverley Housing offer many ways in which you can pay your rent and service charges. Please see below the various options you have to do this: -

- **Direct Debit** - Pay your rent through your bank, the same day each week (for weekly payments) or on the same date each month (for monthly payments). To put this in place, you can download and print a Direct Debit form from our website [click here](#) and send it to us, pop in to our office for a form or telephone our Customer Services team on 01450 364200 and ask for a Direct Debit form to be sent out to you.
- **Standing Order** - Paid through your bank at regular intervals (weekly, fortnightly or monthly) on whatever day/date is suitable for you. To put this in place, either download and print a Standing Order form [click here](#) and send it to us, or pop in to our office for a form or telephone our Customer Services team on 01450 364200 and ask for a Standing Order form to be sent out to you.
- **Online Payments** - Waverley Housing now offer online payments. This [link](#) Pay Online will take you to our payment portal. You will need your tenancy reference number to make this payment. If you don't know your tenancy reference number, please call 01450 364200 and select option 1 or email info@waverley-housing.co.uk and we will be happy to help.
- **World-pay** – contact the office and you can pay over the telephone (please note that we will guide you towards online payments and only take payment via World-pay if you are having difficulties in paying by any other method).
- **Paypoint** – You can pay at any shop displaying the Paypoint logo – you must have Pay point payment card with your reference number on it. If you do not have this, you can request a card by contacting us on info@waverley-housing.co.uk or telephone the office on 01450 364200 and we will arrange for a card to be sent out to you.
- **Internet/Telephone Banking**
You can set Waverley Housing up as a payee on your bank account and then you can simply transfer your rent payment when it falls due.
Please quote your tenancy reference with any payment.

Our details are:
Account Holder: Waverley Housing
Sort Code: 83-23-01
Account No. 00271371

If you are experiencing any difficulties in meeting your rental commitment, please do not ignore this, and contact your Housing Officer on 01450 364200, or via info@waverley-housing.co.uk immediately.



EMERGENCY REPAIRS AT CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

Waverley Housing will provide an out of hours service 24/7 throughout the festive period office closure. This is a service for emergencies only for example , a leak , full loss of power to sockets / lights. Unsafe window / door ie not locking, smashed glass etc. Please note lost or stolen keys are tenant responsibility. Our operatives will not attend but may offer a locksmith contact number if requested. Payment is between the tenant and the contractor.



If in doubt our out of hours operative will make the decision on whether your issue is an emergency or not. All other repairs should be logged via the website or after the festive break. If Waverley Housing or its contractors attend, and a job is not an emergency you may be re-charged.

Waverley Housing emergency repairs– 07721889618
Dalex heating and hot water issues – 08000385599
MP group air source heat pump issues - 01412371970

RENT CONSULTATION 2025/26

In late 2023, early 2024 we consulted you on a below inflation rent increase of 7% that was introduced in April 2024. This resulted in an average saving of £94 per year for each tenant. We were able to do this and continue with our plans to invest in your properties with things such as new kitchens, bathrooms, and heating systems.

A year later and everyone is still feeling the impacts of inflation and other events that put pressure on the everyday necessities that we buy. This also affects the costs of goods and services that we buy and, therefore ultimately the services we provide you.

Therefore, this year we have decided to consult with you on two options for 2025/26. Our preferred option is for a 4.1% increase that means sticking with our Business Plan recommendations. With this you would not notice any reduction in planned works such as bathroom replacements or external painting programme. The alternate option would see a 3.6% increase, which would lead to us postponing some bathroom replacements or postponing our external painting programme for 2 years. Given the potential changes to such works, we want to be clear with you what each of the options we are presenting means.

PROPOSED RENT INCREASE	AVG WEEKLY RENT AFTER INCREASE	WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU
3.6%	£109.37	<p>This will result in £200,000 being removed from our planned budget over the next 5 years.</p> <p>This equates to removing 50 bathroom replacements from our programme or postponing our external painting programme for 2 years.</p> <p>This may also result in us delaying our development programme in 2025/26.</p>
4.1% (Board's Current Preferred option)	£109.90	<p>This will allow us to continue our commitment to fully invest in our stock with no planned maintenance works being postponed and we will continue with our proposed development programme.</p>

At the same time, we know that many people are still struggling with higher food, energy, and general living costs. Tenants on low incomes are still facing big challenges to afford even the essentials now and, in the months, ahead. In our Customer Satisfaction Survey in Summer 2024 tenants indicated that rent affordability was one of their top priorities.

It is therefore especially critical that our consultation with you tries to find the right balance between rent affordability and the need to maintain our services and continue investing in our homes.

Please follow the links below to take part in the survey to not only give us your views but, also for the opportunity to be entered into a prize draw to win one of five £50 shopping vouchers.

The closing date for the survey is Friday 10 January 2025.

Rent Increase Consultation 2025/26

Rent Consultation 2025/26 Questionnaire

If you would like to discuss the rent consultation further, please contact us at info@waverley-housing.co.uk or call 01450 364200.

NEW EMPLOYEE INFO

Francesco Duranti and Dug Jones

Francesco and Dug both joined us in August this year as Handyperson. Both are experienced in a range of trades skills and work closely with our Voids and Estates Teams. Francesco who hails from Italy loves living in Scotland and can often be found fishing on local rivers when he is not supporting his favourite football team Lazio.



Dug is a martial arts aficionado having participated in both karate and aikido.

Ryan McGee

Ryan joined Waverley in December as a Senior Property Officer. Ryan, who is a joiner to trade and has knowledge and experience in the social housing sector from his previous role as a Neighbourhood Property Officer with SBHA. When not at work Ryan's hobbies include Munro bagging currently 88 of 282 Munros completed, following the Border Common Ridings and capturing the Scottish landscapes by drone.



Brian Pearson

Brian has recently joined Waverley Housing as Head of Housing and brings with him a wealth of strategic and operational experience from his previous roles within the housing sector and also from time spent within local Government. Experience in Service Development, Quality Assurance, Service/Homelessness Management, Housing and Welfare rights within the Voluntary Housing Sector, Scottish Borders and West Lothian Council. Brian has held several volunteer posts as office bearer within Nether Lochaber, former board member of Homeless Action Scotland, Open Door and former board member of the Chartered Institute of Housing. Brian is a Corporate Member of the Chartered Institute of Housing and a qualified manager. In his spare time Brian enjoys traveling, a good book, theatre and music to relax.



David Leishman

David will be joining Waverley Housing in January as Head of Finance. David has a varied financial background, working across different industries and at various levels, and is a qualified accountant with the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA). He also volunteers as a Board Member for a local charity. When not at work David likes to play golf, model making, video games and the occasional bit of knitting.



BOARD NEWS

Our August, September and October board meetings saw lots of key discussions and decisions take place. Key agenda items included:

Tenant Survey Results

Board members received an in-depth report on our Tenant Survey. This survey helps us shape and determine your priorities from us a landlord and how we deliver them.

Rent Charge Consultation

A key focus of our October meeting was on our Rent Charge Consultation options for 2025/26. Board members discussed how we continue investing in services whilst keeping rents at affordable levels.

Policies

Several key policies were renewed at these meetings such as, Code of Conduct and Entitlement, Payment & Benefit.

BOARD RECRUITMENT

Over the past few months, we have successfully recruited three new board members.

We welcome (left to right) Dr. Laura Ryan, Johnny Pietranek and Wendy Davidson onto to the board.



If you, or anyone you know, is interested in volunteering or getting to know more about the work of our Board then please get in touch. We welcome applications from all and for further information contact June Wilson, Executive Support Officer (June.wilson@waverley-housing.co.uk)

ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT

All Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) must submit an Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR). This provides assurance that we are complying with the relevant requirements of the SHR's Regulatory Framework. This includes regulatory requirements that apply to all social landlords and the Standards of Governance and Financial Management that apply to RSLs.

Our statement was submitted on 30 October 2024. You can read the assurance statement on both **ours** and the **SHR's website**.

If you would like more information about our Annual Assurance Statement or the process involved or would like to give us your views, please get in touch.

AGM

Our AGM was held in September at our offices in North Bridge Street, Hawick and was well attended by members. The Chair opened the meeting with a warm welcome to everyone and went on to highlight our key achievements in the year. These are summarised in our Annual Performance report which is available on our [website](#).

We also said goodbye to long standing board members Garyth Thomas and Billy Robson and we thank them for their many years of service.

TENANT SURVEY 2024 RESULTS

To access a summary of the findings please telephone 01450 364200

Results based on feedback from 423 tenants

73%
were satisfied with the quality of their home

81%

Overall, 81% of our tenants said that they were satisfied with overall service provided. 40% said they were "very" satisfied and 41% were fairly satisfied

83%

rated the Association positively in terms of being kept informed

64%

of tenants were satisfied with the Association's contribution to the management of their neighbourhood

81%

of tenants were satisfied with the repairs service

73%

73% rated the rent they pay as good or very good value

76%

76% rated the rent they pay as good or very good value

Earlier this year we contacted all of our tenants to give them the opportunity to complete a full survey to give their opinion on our service. A total of 423 tenants returned the survey. An overview of the results of the survey are included below.

Within the survey, we asked you what services were important to you by indicating your top 5 from a list of 13. Noted below is the top 5 by % of the 423 returns.

Priorities	%
Keeping rents affordable for tenants	79%
Repairs being done quickly	77%
Repairs being done to a good quality standard	76%
It being easy to contact Waverley Housing when you need to	71%
Having a safe neighbourhood to live in	70%

DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Our new build development in Galashiels is starting to take shape. We anticipate that by Summer 2025 we will have 25 brand new properties available at our Upper Langlee development.

Keep an eye out in 2025 for future newsletters, or website and Facebook page as we hope to bring you news about future new build phases at Upper Langlee.



COMPLAINTS REPORT

APRIL 2024 - SEPTEMBER 2024



WE RECEIVED
33
STAGE 1 COMPLAINTS



3
COMPLAINT
RECEIVED DIRECTLY
AT STAGE 2



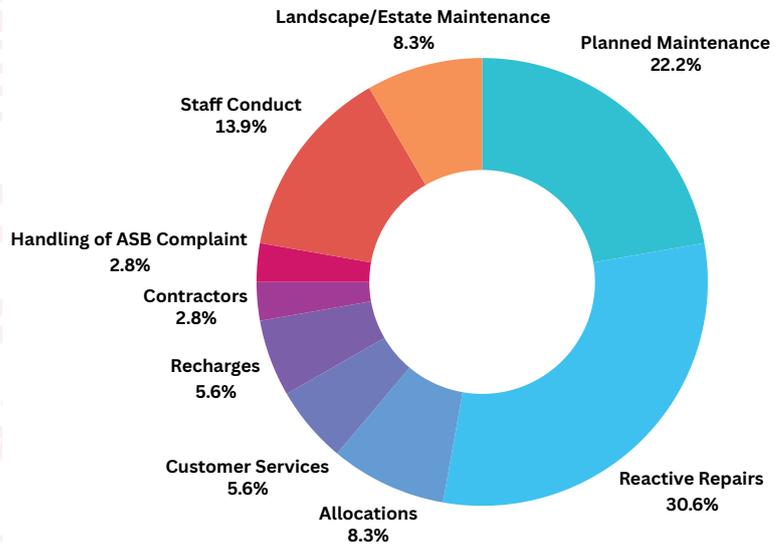
0
COMPLAINTS WERE
ESCALATED TO STAGE 2



10
STAGE 1 COMPLAINTS
WERE UPHELD



32
COMPLAINTS
RESPONDED TO
WITHIN TIME-SCALES



PREPARING FOR WINTER

It's that time of year again where we all need to be draining down our external taps, and ensuring that all water to the tap is drained to prevent any frozen or burst pipes.

If you are leaving your property for any reason during the cold weather, ensure you leave some heating on to prevent pipes freezing.



If you have a Gas boiler the condensate pipe can sometimes freeze, impacting your boiler. The diagram below shows how you can resolve this quickly with using hot but not boiling water.

HOW TO HELP PREVENT DAMP AND MOULD ALL YEAR ROUND

1. Open trickle vents on windows or leave windows open slightly where possible and safe to do so - Damp air gathers and turns to mould when it can't circulate and escape.
2. Use vents and extractor fans - Ensure vents are uncovered and use extractor fans to remove moist air especially when cooking, bathing, or showering.
3. Have the heating on low for long periods of time instead of having a high temperature heat for a short period of time. This allows an ambient heat and doesn't allow the property to cool right down. Turning your heating on and off means more energy consumption and higher costs.
4. Avoid drying clothes inside/ using unvented tumble driers. If you need to dry clothes in the property do this in the bathroom or kitchen with the fan on and the door closed.
5. Use a dehumidifier if needed.
6. Wipe down condensation on windows / walls if this appears before it turns to black mould.
7. Close bathroom and kitchen doors when showering , bathing, or cooking to prevent moist air flowing through the property causing condensation/ mould. If extractor fans are being used this will remove a high percentage of the moisture but always close the doors when in use and at least 30 mins after use.
8. Keep sofas , beds wardrobes or any items off walls slightly to allow an airflow in turn helping prevent condensation / mould.



HELPING US TO KEEP YOU SAFE

As your landlord we have a number of duties to ensure you are safe in your home.

If you have a gas appliance you will be aware that we require to get access to your home annually to carry out a service and safety check. We must do this before the 1 year anniversary of the last service. Our contractor Dalex will contact you directly to arrange this, you can at this point contact them to arrange a time that suits you better if required. Where

we struggle to get access you will be contacted by a member of the Waverley Housing repairs team. If you fail to make an appointment we may have to carry out a controlled entry into your home, we only do these as a last resort and you will be recharged for this. If you are concerned about what to do please call one the repairs team who will be happy to help you.



In addition to Gas we also have to check the electrics in your property, although this is every 5 years. If you receive a letter about this, please contact the office to arrange a time and date for this important safety check.

Repairs number is 0800104105 (Free of charge from landlines)

FIRE SAFETY

As we head toward the festive season, here are a few tips and safety suggestions to prevent unnecessary fire risks:

The most common causes of fires in the home are; cooking, candles, smoking, heating and use of electrical gadgets.

Fires can start suddenly and spread quickly, damaging your home and belongings and putting lives in danger. Here are a few simple steps you can take to prevent a fire from starting:

- Don't leave chip/food pans unattended. Around 48% of domestic fires start in the kitchen, and are most commonly caused when cooking is left unattended.
- Be careful not to overload electrical sockets.
- Turn off sockets at the plug at night, some devices will continue to use energy in standby mode.
- Use chargers for devices supplied by the manufacturer of the device (e.g. mobile phones, laptops etc). Cheap replacements have an increased risk of catching fire
- Always unplug chargers when not in use.
- Close living room and kitchen doors at night. In the event of a fire this will help to hold back smoke and flames giving you vital time to escape or call for help.
- Keep matches out of reach of children.

- Keep portable heaters away from curtains and furniture.
- Never dry washing in front of a fire.
- Ensure your furniture is fire retardant, and keep combustibles away from any heat source.
- Keep an eye on lit candles - they should be on a stable surface, away from flammable items e.g. curtains, and kept out of reach of

Remember to test your smoke alarms regularly using the test button to ensure that they are working

HOUSING OFFICERS HERE TO HELP YOU

Many of you will have met your housing officer and know who they are. For those of you who haven't yet met your housing officer, please see the list below detailing the Housing Officers photograph, name and the areas they cover. If you have any tenancy management concerns, including rent arrears, antisocial behaviour, estate management issues, please contact the housing officer for your area at info@waverley-housing.co.uk and she will get back to you.



Debbie Kilgour

Hawick	Property total
Burnfoot -	273
Mayfield -	35



Kendra Douglas

Ancrum	3
Bowden	1
Earlston	23
Hawick – West End	67
Jedburgh	181
Lauder	2
Nt St Boswells	42
St Boswells	7



Gail Morrison

Galashiels	
- Balmoral	29
- Croft Street	7
- Gala Park	14
- Torwoodlee	20



Kirsty Reilly

Beech Avenue	95	Other Areas	
Croft Street	2	Heriot	1
Halliburton/Glendingning	52	Melrose	7
Lower Langlee	102	Stow	1
Upper Langlee	19	Tweedbank	37



Rebecca Armstrong

Bonchester Bridge	1
Newcastleton	3
Central Hawick	23
Silverbuthall	38
Stirtches	43
Stonefield	33



51 North Bridge Street • Hawick • TD9 9PX

T: 01450 364200

E: info@waverley-housing.co.uk

www.waverley-housing.co.uk

follow us on. . . .

  [@WaverleyHousing](https://www.facebook.com/WaverleyHousing)

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