

DECEMBER 22



NEWSLETTER



MERRY
CHRISTMAS

FESTIVE HOLIDAYS

OFFICE CLOSED FROM 4PM ON 23RD DECEMBER:
OFFICE REOPEN 9AM WEDNESDAY 4TH JANUARY 2023

A RECOGNISED SCOTTISH CHARITY - NO SC035350
FOR ALTERNATIVE VERSIONS OF THIS NEWSLETTER PLEASE GET IN TOUCH
ADMIN@WILLIAMSBURGHHA.CO.UK

COMMITTEE UPDATE

A fond farewell to Susan James, and Introducing our new Chairperson – John Scott



On behalf of the Management Committee, I would like to thank, Susan James, for her commitment, dedication and hard work as Chairperson and Management Committee member over the last 8 years. We wish Susan all the very best for the future.

"It's an honour to be your Chairperson. I am looking forward to this new role and the opportunity to work with dedicated, experienced committee members, Senior Management and staff. During these difficult and challenging times, it remains our priority to be a leading and innovative provider of quality, affordable homes and housing services."

STAFF UPDATE

Thank You



After 18 years of working for the Association, Lorna Duffy our Allocations Co-ordinator will be leaving us after the Christmas holidays. Lorna has worked in several positions within the Association all of them focussing on our tenants and the services provided to them. We wish Lorna every success in her new promoted post as Community Housing Manager with Linstone Housing Association, and thank her for her years of service, commitment and hard work.



A familiar face to many of you for sure is Owen McMillan former Head of Property Services. After almost 40 years of service, commitment and hard work, Owen decided to take things a bit easier and retired from his post at the start of autumn. Having worked for the Association for such a long time, Owen was key to developing and leading our high performing Repairs and Maintenance service, ensuring that tenants received the highest quality service. Owen will be missed by colleagues and tenants alike, and we wish him a long, healthy and well deserved retirement.

Good Luck!

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIPS



It's very important this winter to adjust our lifestyle to fully benefit from the energy we need to meet the basic needs and to avoid energy wasting habits at home. Thus, it's important to follow some quick tips for straightforward ways to save energy, lower your bills and reduce your carbon footprint. For instance:

- Use low energy light bulbs and switch off when you are not in the room
- Use a shower instead of a bath if possible
- Cook with lids on pans and match ring size to saucepan size
- Only fill the kettle with as much water as you need each time you boil it
- Close curtains at dusk (heavy curtains can help keep heat in)
- Turn electrical appliances off at the plug rather than leaving them on standby
- Adjust your heating. It's advisable to set thermostats at 21°C (70°F) for your living room and 18 °C (64.4°F) for your bedroom. With storage heaters, it is important to close the damper or output dial (sometimes called the boost) before going to bed or if the house is unoccupied during the day.
- Fit a thermostat on your hot water tank if it doesn't have one. This should be set at 60-65°C (140°F). Only switch the hot water on when you need it
- Avoid placing furniture in front of a radiator
- Wait until you have a full load before using a washing machine, and try using a lower temperature (30C) and use the 'economy' programme on your washing machine
- Tumble dryers cost a lot to run – dry clothes outside or on a clothes rail if possible (consider local Revolutionary Laundry)
- Use a draught excluder at the bottom of your doors
- Make sure that the energy account is under your name, so you can benefit from the Energy Bills Support Scheme (£400) that is being delivered in six monthly instalments
- Speak to your energy supplier that may be able to help provide free or discounted energy efficiency products and services to make your home warmer or lower your bills. Contact them for details. The number is shown on your fuel bill or their website.
- Provide the meter readings on regular basis to keep control over your energy bills or register under Priority Service Register if you have special needs, so the meter readings can be taken for you by the provider every quarter. PSR also gives you an opportunity to be told in advance of a planned interruption to your electricity supply, to be kept in touch with regular updates during a power cut and to access services through our range of selected partners who can provide free advice on making the most of your money and staying safe at home.
- Speaking to your supplier when you are having difficulty paying your bill or be in arrears with your electricity and/ or gas. Whatever the reason, it's important that you contact your supplier straight away – if they don't know you're struggling, they can't help you. Contact details will be on your bill.

SUPPORT WITH FUEL POVERTY

DO YOU NEED HELP WITH BUDGETING AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY?
ARE YOU AWARE OF SUPPORT AVAILABLE?

Please contact Kamila Feddek or Karen Johnstone to book an appointment to discuss your options.

✉ kamila.feddek@williamsburghha.co.uk

☎ 07533 536527

✉ karen@williamsburghha.co.uk

☎ 07576 578627

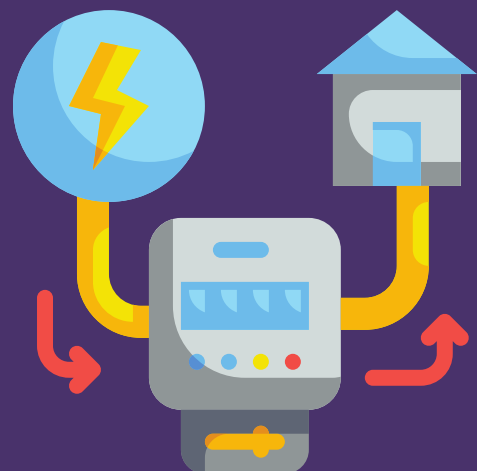


Are you a Scottish Power customer who tops up the energy meter?

We have a facility to access the Scottish Power fuel vouchers for Scottish Power customers who have a pre-payment meter and who struggle with topping up the meter. Applicants can usually have 3 vouchers in a twelve-month period and the value per household is £30 in summer (April-September) and £49 in winter (October to March). Please contact Kamila Feddek- our Benefit Adviser for this support.

Are you struggling with paying your energy bills and/or topping up your meter?

The Home Heating Support Fund that can be accessed by all tenants who struggle with paying for ongoing energy costs (all types of meters) and/or in debt regardless of the energy supplier and method of payment. An application can be made on the website: <https://homeheatingadvice.scot/household-registration/> or you can speak to Kamila (our Benefits Adviser) or AdviceWorks for further assistance.

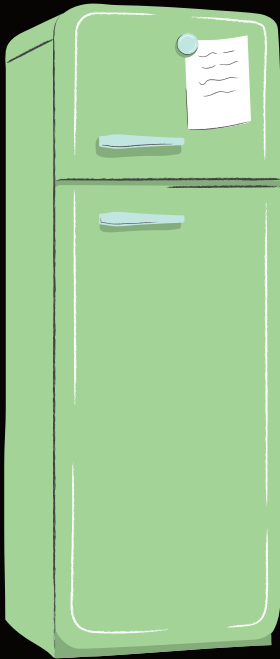


SUPPORT WITH FUEL POVERTY

DO YOU NEED TO REPLACE YOUR OLD
BROKEN FRIDGE, WASHING MACHINE OR
COOKER?

WOULD YOU BENEFIT FROM AN AIR FRYER?

Williamsburgh Housing Association now works closely in partnership with Local Energy Advice Partnership that can provide our tenants (and the homeowners we provide services for) with the following:



- Replacement of old appliances (the purpose is to exchange an item for a more energy efficient one) – fridges, freezers, washing machines, air fryers and cookers (this includes broken items; there is also a percentage of goods they can supply without having the old item that has been already removed, etc) An energy advice home visit must happen first, and the household can get up to two white goods.
- Small energy efficiency items: energy efficient bulbs, draught proofing measures.
- Boiler repairs or replacement: for vulnerable homeowners where no other funding is available (boiler would need to be broken and not repairable, not producing heat and usually over 8 years old)



LEAP Boiler scheme eligibility



Being in receipt of a means tested benefit or tax credit

- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income Support
- Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit / Working Tax Credit
- Universal credit
- Housing Benefit

OR

> Household income less than £31,000

AND

There must be someone in the household who is:

- Aged 65 or over, or
- Aged under 5, or
- Suffering from significant health problems or has a disability that may be exacerbated by living in a cold home, specifically:
 - Cancer / Terminal illness
 - Cardiovascular condition
 - Respiratory condition
 - Disability affecting mobility
 - Mental Health Condition

Please contact Kamila Feddek (Benefits Adviser) or Karen Johnstone (Financial Support Assistant) who will discuss your options and refer you for the support. You can call the Scotland Scheme on 0800 029 4543 advising that you are Williamsburgh HA's tenant.

OTHER FINANCIAL HELP

A Warm Home Discount (£150) – please note that you need to apply for this support if you are not a Pensioner in receipt of Pension Credit (guarantee credit). This is separate and additional support on the top of the Energy Bills Support Scheme (£66/per month). To qualify, your energy provider must be participating in this scheme and your name, or your partner's name, must be on the electricity bill. Energy suppliers may also give a Warm Home Discount rebate to other customers in receipt of certain benefits and/or on low income. Check with your supplier to find out whether you might be eligible.

Winter Heating Payment that replaces Cold Weather Payment. The first £50 payment will be made in February 2023 automatically if you're currently eligible for the Cold Weather Payment and your circumstances have not changed.

Homeowners can contact our Benefit Adviser for a referral to Home Energy Scotland to find out if they are entitled to free or subsidised insulation or upgraded boiler/heating system to make their home more energy efficient. You can call them free on 0808 808 2282.

REMEMBER!

Energy Emergencies! If you've run out of gas or electricity, your energy supplier might give you temporary credit if you can't top up, for example because you can't afford it or you're having problems topping up. Please contact your supplier and explain your situation.

Winter Fuel Payment: almost everyone born on or before September 26, 1956 should get a yearly Winter Fuel Payment from the UK Government. It is paid automatically and for winter 2022/23 it's worth between £100 and £300 per household depending on circumstances. Contact the Winter Fuel Payment helpline free on 0800 731 0160. This year pensioners get £300 extra as a part of the Cost of Living Support Payment.

Child Winter Heating Assistance of £214.10 should be paid automatically to each child in Scotland receiving the highest rate care component of disability living allowance (DLA) and young people aged 16 to 18 in receipt of the enhanced daily living component of PIP (Personal Independence Payment). Call free on 0800 182 2222 if you think you might be eligible.

Look after your health and address your special needs (speak to health services)

Be energy efficient to reduce your energy cost

Reduce condensation at your home where possible

Check if you can get extra help or money (speak to our Benefits Adviser and get a benefit check done)

Check what help you can get from your local council

Check what help you can get with your bills

Check if you can apply for grants and schemes

KEEP SAFE AND WARM

If your **radiators** are cold in some areas and warm in others – they may have trapped air inside them reducing their heat output. Use a radiator key to release any trapped air to make the radiator run more efficiently. Tenants can call Williamsburgh for help with this on Tel: 0141 887 8613 or report a repair on-line.

Move any sofas, wardrobes or larger items of furniture away from radiators if they are blocking the heat getting out. Drying clothes on radiators not only creates condensation, but blocks this heat getting into your rooms. Avoid using radiators to dry your clothes and keep any clothes driers within a ventilated room.

Block out any **draughts** under room doors using draught excluders where you can. During the day keep open your curtains to let natural light in. When it gets dark, close them to act as another layer of insulation to keep heat in your rooms.

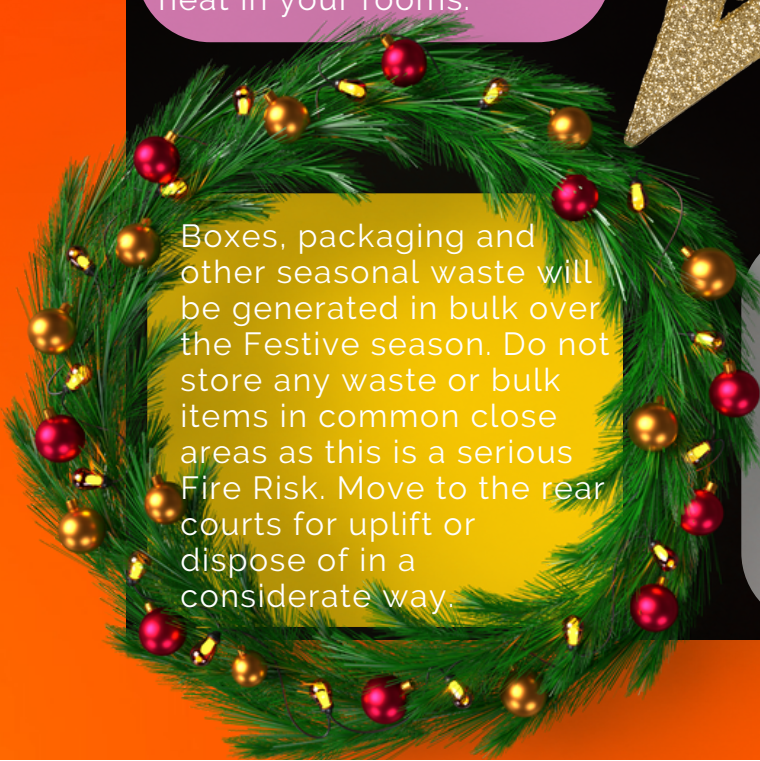
Boxes, packaging and other seasonal waste will be generated in bulk over the Festive season. Do not store any waste or bulk items in common close areas as this is a serious Fire Risk. Move to the rear courts for uplift or dispose of in a considerate way.



Check your fitted **smoke alarms** weekly by pressing the test button to make sure it is sounding loudly. Tenants can call Williamsburgh Technical Services on Tel: 0141 887 8613 if your smoke alarms are not sounding for immediate attendance.

Tis the season to be jolly – however ensure you turn off your **Christmas Lights** when not at home or in bed, and extinguish any candles or oil burners if not in the room.

The stopcock turns on and off the cold water system in your home. Turning off the valve reduces any damage if a pipe is broken/frozen. The stop cock is usually found in the hall cupboard or under the kitchen sink. If the bathroom has been replaced there will also be one in the bathroom. Turn it clockwise to turn off to minimise any damage.



KEEP YOUR HOME HEALTHY

Mould in homes is created by moisture which can build up on walls, ceilings and window frames. Moisture and mould can be caused either by dampness coming into the home from outside and building repairs being needed, or a build up of condensation in the property and lack of heating and adequate ventilation.

What you can do to help

Condensation mainly occurs during colder weather in places where there is lack of air movement or high levels of moisture such as bathrooms and kitchens. Also look for it in corners, near windows and behind furniture which is against the wall.

Condensation can be reduced by following these steps:

Dry clothes outdoors or use a vented tumble dryer. Avoid drying clothes on radiators as this will create a build-up of moisture in the air. If needed, always ensure you dry clothes in a well-ventilated room near an open window to allow moisture to escape.

Cover pans when cooking and use extractor fans and vents where fitted.

Open windows throughout the day when you can to ventilate the rooms and keep any vents fitted clear to allow moisture to escape and air to circulate.

Close internal doors when you cook or shower and always open windows in the rooms to allow the moisture to escape outside.

Leave a gap between furniture and external walls to allow heat and air to circulate.

Wipe down windows and cills in the morning if condensation has formed. This can be caused by moisture in the room settling on the glass or hot air meeting the cold glass of the windows. Using small vents fitted in windows to circulate air when your blinds and curtains are closed will also help reduce condensation.

Fungicidal wash and paint products can be used to treat mould caused by condensation.

If you have any concerns relating to dampness or mould in your home, contact us on Tel: 0141 887 8613 or E-mail admin@williamsburghha.co.uk You can also report a repair on-line for damp/mould concerns and upload pictures to provide more information. We will arrange an Inspection to identify any repairs and provide advice where needed.

The Scottish Housing Quality Standard requires Tenanted homes to be kept free from serious disrepair and meet standards regarding their condition. Penetrating damp can be caused by water coming through external walls or the roof. It can also be caused when there is an internal leak or plumbing problem or rising damp from under the ground floor. Where penetrating damp is found in a Tenanted property we will carry out an inspection and ensure repairs are carried out to resolve any issues.

RENT CONSULTATION

WE ARE CURRENTLY CONSULTING WITH OUR TENANTS ON THE PROPOSED RENT INCREASE FOR 2023/2024

The following options have been put forward:

- **Option 1 - 5.5%**, means weekly rents increase between £3.30 to £5.73. By selecting this option, it will allow us to continue with our current investment plan of kitchen, bathroom and boiler replacements.
- **Option 2 - 3.0%**, means weekly rents increase between £1.80 and £3.13. By selecting this option, we wouldn't be able to do all the things we had planned - for example, 26 boilers in homes wouldn't be replaced.
- **Option 3 - 6.5%**, means weekly rents increases between £3.90 and £6.77. By selecting this option, we would be able to continue with our current investment plan and replace an additional 26 boilers.



We were able to send the majority of these out digitally and have received a fantastic response so far. If, however, you have not received anything from us, contact admin@williamburghha.co.uk with your name, address and preference or telephone 0141 887 8613.