

BOARD MEETING IN BARRA

On Tuesday 20th November the Board met in Barra for the first time and despite some travel hiccups we were able to commence a very productive meeting at 5.45pm. One of the items approved by the Board was the consultation documents about the proposed revisions to the Allocations policy. Over the next couple of weeks you will be given the opportunity to feed back your views on the proposed changes.

The visit also allowed the Board Members to see the progress being made on the 6 new homes at Corran Cismaol and present a cheque to Cobhair Bharraigh.

An opportunity was given in the afternoon for tenants to meet

with HHP officers and share the improvements and changes they would like to see in the housing service and their community.

Barra never disappoints as a beautiful and vibrant place to visit. It was good to meet with various people in the community,

hear what they are doing and listen to the difficulties they are facing with housing. Our challenge is to turn what we heard



into positive action for Barra so that before we return for our next visit things will have improved.



**MERRY
CHRISTMAS**
AND HAPPY NEW YEAR
From all Staff at HHP

FESTIVE OPENING HOURS:

Offices Close ~ Friday 21 December 2018 @ 5pm

Offices Re-open ~ Thursday 3 January 2019 @ 9am

Emergency Contact Number: 0300 123 0773

WIN £100!

CLEAR RENT ACCOUNT

The first tenant selected at random
who has a clear rent account
on 1st January 2019
will receive a £100 voucher for a
local shop of their choice.

There will also be 2 runner-up prizes of £50!

We know that Christmas can be a busy and expensive time of year, with the cost of celebrations adding up. To protect the roof over your head and make sure you aren't left out in the cold, **you must keep paying your rent.**



You are at risk of losing your home if you do not keep up with your rent payments. If you are having difficulty paying your rent, don't let your spending at Christmas get out of control, contact your Housing Officer on **0300 123 0773**

BUSINESS PLANNING OCTOBER 2018

On 31 October 2018, HHP held a Business Planning Day in the Cabarfeidh Hotel with several of our Partner organisations.

The day commenced with a welcome from HHP's Chief Executive, Dena MacLeod, and Chair, Norman MacLeod, then the following speakers gave informative talks on their respective organisations and the challenges they faced:

- Iain Watson & Robert Emmott (CNES);
- Rachel MacKenzie (Highlands & Islands Enterprise);
- Emma MacSween (Integration Joint Board);
- Dr Maggie Watts (Western Isles Health Board);
- Rebeca Mahony & Tony Pendle (Western Isles Foyer); and
- Donna Smith (Tighean Innse Gall).

During the presentations, the audience were invited to respond to polls and send questions electronically using the Slido Audience Interaction Tool, and Norman MacLeod, led a question & answer session with the speakers, who responded to the submitted questions, after the presentations concluded.

Participants then split into six work groups to consider the challenges facing the Outer Hebrides, and discuss options on how best to mitigate them.

Following lunch, participants reassembled to carry out a development scenario exercise, and despite the light-hearted nature of proceedings at this stage, it gave a very real example of the pressures all groups are faced with whilst planning for and getting housing developments underway.

Dena MacLeod, then concluded the day, summing up what had been undertaken and thanking all who took part, before outlining the next steps in the Business Planning process.

It was an enjoyable, worthwhile and insightful day which gave Board Members and staff an opportunity to talk and work directly with representatives from our partner organisations, and helped us further understand and plan for the issues that commonly affect us.

Annual General Meeting

Mr Iain MacMillan, standing in for HHP Chair, Mr Norman MacLeod, welcomed HHP's Membership, Tenants, staff and partner organisations to the meeting. Mr MacMillan thanked all for their contribution over the year, and reported on HHP's achievements since the previous AGM.

Mr Donald MacLeod, HHP's Director of Finance and Corporate Services, presented the Annual Report and Financial Statements to 31 March 2018, and invited Ms Eilidh Templeton, representing Wylie & Bisset, External Auditor, to report on HHP's internal controls. Ms Templeton confirmed that the accounts were prepared in accordance with UK accounting standards and the Statement of Recommended Practice for Social Housing providers, and gave a true and fair view of the Partnership's financial affairs.

Two resolutions were approved by the Membership as follows:

- **To appoint Wylie and Bisset as External Auditor until the following AGM; and**
- **To donate £5,000 of the surplus at 27 June 2018 between 5 local charitable organisations.**

HHP's Chief Executive, Ms Dena MacLeod, closed the meeting, thanking those in attendance for their presence, and welcomed the new Board Members – Mr Alex Gardner (Tenant Member), Mr David Blaney (Community Member) and Ms Fiona MacLeod (Board Appointed Member). Ms MacLeod commented that HHP was in a good position to meet the challenges ahead and gave assurance that HHP would give a 100% effort to meet them.

Following the closing remarks, Mr Martin Pollhammer, Chief Executive of East Lothian Housing Association, gave an enjoyable and informative presentation on Leading Innovative Housing Services.

An excellent buffet was provided by the Cearnas Community Association, which was enjoyed by all.

New HHP Board Members

HHP welcomed three new Board Members on to the Board in August:

Alex Gardner, who is a Tenant Board Member, was appointed at the AGM. He has over 50 years' experience in the construction industry as an Estimator and Quantity Surveyor and he hopes to pass on his expertise and experience to assist the Board's decision making processes.



David Blaney, who is a Community Board Member, was also appointed at the AGM. David previously served two terms as a Councillor for Lochboisdale, then South Uist, Eriskay and Barra, and was one of the first HHP Board Members, serving latterly until May 2017. David has been a Committee Member of Tighean Innse Gall (TIG), Western Isles Citizen's Advice and Cothrom for many years. After a gap of one year, David has returned to serve on the HHP Board.



Fiona MacLeod, who is a Co-opted Board Member, was appointed at the Board Meeting on 29 August. Fiona is a Community Councillor, and the representative of the Lewis Association of Community Councils on the Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership. She is employed part-time by a local voluntary organisation where she supports the work of the Western Isles Third Sector Interface (WI-TSI). She also volunteers with a local Group that supports Users and Carers of Health & Social Care Services which work includes non-voting membership of the Stornoway and Broadbay Health & Social Care Locality Planning Group and the Western Isles Integrated Joint Board (Health & Social Care) where she is the unpaid Carers' representative. She has 25 years public sector experience, having latterly been the Head of Strategy and then Governance, for a mainland Scottish Council. Fiona has a passionate interest in, and experience of, facilitating community planning and community empowerment.



We look forward to working with them all.

YOUR VIEW MATTERS

**What do you want to see
in this newsletter?**

We want to hear your ideas
0300 123 0773

CustomerServices@
hebrideanhousing.co.uk

A Tenant For Over 56 Years ...

Annie MacNeil is 86 years old and has been a social housing tenant for over 56 years and is one of our longest serving tenants!

Annie was born and raised in Grean, Barra and married Neil in 1970 bringing up two children, Christine and Michael, setting up home at Ciosmul Cottages in Castlebay. They eventually outgrew this property and transferred into a bigger house at Maol Domhnaich in 1982 – she remembers moving in as if it was just yesterday!

She enjoys living in her cosy home at Maol Domhanich and she commented on how lovely her neighbours are and the area being nice and quiet.

She's seen a lot of work done to her home over the years, such as the installation of new windows, air source heating and a nice fitted kitchen and didn't find the upheaval too much bother. Any problems she had with her property she found were resolved quickly.

Annie retold a story of when her garden fence was being put up after she moved in and how she particularly enjoyed giving

the tradesmen lunch and plenty of cups of tea – one of the tradesman lived down the road, so he used to go home but she made sure everyone else was looked after and that's Annie in a nutshell!



Mrs Annie MacNeil, of Maol Domhnaich, Castlebay, Isle of Barra

Started tenancy Ciosmul Cottages 1962, then moved to Maol Domhnaich in 1982



Lochboisdale Polycrub

I previously attended a course in horticulture at Cothrom with Laura Donkers over two years, gaining levels 1 and 2. I was asked if I would be interested in being a support worker for the Lochboisdale polycrub. I was very keen to do, as it's something I really enjoy doing.

Since then I have cleared the site, cut back the trees and generally tidied up the site, assisted by Graham Martindale. The 10 participants in Lochboisdale have been helping with preparing for the erection of the polycrub, such as painting the wood.

The polycrub was erected at the beginning of September. We have had loads of topsoil, seaweed and manure delivered which we sourced locally. All the participants have been busy with the wheelbarrow, filling the raised beds. We hope to plant a variety of vegetables in the coming months, but because of the time of year we are limited to what can be grown. We will start off with lettuce and garlic. We look forward to being fully operational by the spring time.

Theresa Maclellan

ALLOCATION POLICY CONSULTATION



HHP's Allocation Policy is being reviewed. Several provisions from the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 were laid before the Scottish Parliament on 15 May 2018 and came in to force on 24 June 2018.

The HHP Housing Management working Group is overseeing the review of the Policy. The consultation started on 28th November 2018 and all feedback should be returned to HHP by 21 December 2018.

When the consultation closes all feedback will be analysed and it is proposed that the revised Allocation Policy will be presented to HHP's Board for approval in March 2019.

The consultation document sets out the legislative changes brought in by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 which affect the allocation of housing. It also gives you the opportunity to feedback any comments or suggestions which you feel may be relevant to the policy. There are also a few questions in this document which we would like you to consider.

HHP let around 220 homes per year and there are around 500 applicants on our waiting list seeking housing. The Allocation Policy is the means by which we determine which applicants will be prioritised for housing.

HHP will be pleased to receive any comments you may wish to make on the proposed changes to the Allocation Policy. The Consultation Document and Revised Policy are available for inspection on HHP's website at www.hebrideanhousing.co.uk

Feedback should be returned to:

Hebridean Housing Partnership
Creed Court
Gleann Seileach Business Park
Stornoway
HS1 2QP

Housing Development

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

TOM NA BA

HHP's existing scheme at Tom Na Ba, Galson was complemented by four new homes, which were officially opened by Alasdair Allan MSP on Monday 12 November 2018.

Alasdair Allan said, "It was great to visit Katie in her new house today, and was an honour to declare all four new houses at Tom na Ba officially open."

These are high quality houses of just the kind that there is a huge need for in the islands, not least in rural areas. The Scottish Government have provided major funding to build the houses here, and it was a good example of the Scottish Government, the Comhairle and HHP working together. With very significant Scottish Government funding for housing on the table, I hope we will now see more families throughout the islands get the new homes they need to ensure our communities thrive. Meanwhile, I congratulate the families in Tom na Ba on their new homes."

HHP Chairman, Norman Macleod said "It is a pleasure to attend the official opening of another successful HHP rural development and meet the tenants in their new homes. This demonstrates HHP's commitment to providing good quality affordable housing throughout the Outer Hebrides."



MACKENIE AVENUE



before Christmas and then the handover of the last of the houses is expected in September 2019.

SEALLADH A' CHLISEIM, LEURBOST



FORMER POLICE STATION, TARBERT

The site at the former Police Station in Tarbert will be transformed into two-bedroomed flats with a site start expected early in the new year. The new flats are to be named "James' Place" in honour of James Morrison, a policeman with Harris connections, who was killed while off-duty in London in 1991. www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-38301388

CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

CORRAN CISMAOL, ISLE OF BARRA

Work is progressing well on site. Our Chief Executive and some Board members visited the development on their recent trip to Barra for HHP's November Board meeting.

MACKENZIE AVENUE, SANDWICK

Work is almost complete on the latest phase of Mackenzie Avenue, with handover of the latest homes imminent. It is hoped further tenants will be signed up just

SEALLADH A' CHLISEIM, LEURBOST

A small delay in the handover means that the 10 houses at Sealladh a' Chliseim are expected to be the first homes allocated in the New Year with tenants due to move in early February 2019.

LANGLEY APARTMENTS, STAG ROAD, STORNOWAY

Lewis Builders continue to transform the corner of Stag Road with completion of the 12 flats due at the end of March 2019.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Planning applications have been submitted for 10 houses in Balivanich, 10 houses in Breasclete and 4 in Horgabost.

CORRAN CISMAOL, ISLE OF BARRA



LANGLEY APARTMENTS, STAG ROAD, STORNOWAY



Rent Consultation

Over the next couple of months the Board will be preparing the budget for 2019/20 and this will include deciding on whether they need to increase the weekly rent. Your rent pays for all the services you receive from HHP, including the 24 hour emergency repair Service, repairs appointments, tenancy support and advice and the investment programme.

We will be consulting with you on the proposed budget and rent increase during January 2019. A consultation document will be available on our web page after 8 January 2019 and you will be given the opportunity to let us know your views so the Board can take them into consideration before setting the rent in February 2019.

RENT
Have your say

If you would like to meet to discuss the budget and rent increase you can contact Jane Ballantyne on 07487 891242 and she will make the arrangements.

Condensation

No one wants to live in a damp home. Damp can cause mould on walls and furniture and cause wooden window frames to rot. Most issues with damp in HHP properties are caused by condensation.



How does condensation happen?

- When moist air meets a colder surface e.g. walls, windows, mirrors.
- Where air is still, e.g. corners of rooms, behind furniture or inside wardrobes.

What are the signs of condensation?

- Water droplets on cold surfaces e.g. windows or mirrors
- Water droplets soak into wallpaper, paintwork or plasterwork
- Black Mould on affected areas
- Mainly occurs during colder months whatever the weather

How can I reduce condensation?

1) Produce less moisture

- Keep lids on pans when cooking
- Dry clothes outdoors – not on radiators
- Vent tumble dryer to outside
- Don't use flue-less bottled gas heaters

2) Let moist air out and fresh air in

- Use extractor fans in kitchens or bathrooms to remove moist air and steam. HHP installed fans cost less to run each week.
- Stop moist air getting into the rest of your home. When cooking or bathing,

keep the kitchen or bathroom door shut. Switch on the fan. Open the window slightly to let steam outside.

- Leave a gap between furniture and walls to allow air to circulate
- Air wardrobes and cupboards now and then.

Open windows fully for at least 5 minutes every day.

3) Heat your home a little more

- Very cold rooms are more likely to get damp and mould. Set thermostatic radiator valves to 1 in unused rooms to give a little heat when the heating is on. Remember, unused rooms need a good airing from time to time.



How to Get Rid of Mould

Clean it properly by:

1. Using a mould spray then
2. spray the affected area with an anti-fungal wash and allow drying

Always try cleaning the mould before calling HHP.

For more information about damp and condensation call 0300 123 0773

Investment Work

With the winter chill biting the islands all planned investment works are well under way in tenants homes particularly the installation of over 200 new central heating systems. With such a large number, writes Investment Manager Peter O'Donnell, not everyone will have their heating installed before Christmas. Our contractor is working hard by installing 11 systems each week so please bear with us.



Tenants at Dunmore Crescent are delighted after new external insulation was fitted to their homes. The Swedish Timber houses were constructed in 1949 so these works which added 100mm of insulation to the walls made a huge difference to the comfort of the tenants. The walls are also finished with a smooth coloured render which has lifted the scheme and made the houses more appealing.

I would also like to remind tenants with new electric heating systems to contact their electricity supplier to make sure that you are on the most suitable tariff for the new system. If you no longer have storage heating then you should not have a THTC meter so please contact your supplier to have this meter changed.

twitter.com/hebhousing

Tenant Survey 2018

Your views are very important in shaping the services provided by Hebridean Housing Partnership. As part of our commitment to listening to your views, we carried out a survey during the summer to find out how satisfied our tenants are with our performance as a landlord.

The survey is a huge task to perform which is why we don't do it more often. To complete the survey we had to get a representative sample of 40% of our tenants which was approximately 830. 4 local students were hired and over 3 months they completed 824 surveys; covered over 4300 miles; collated 60,000 data points;

prepared, delivered 3 presentations; and produced an 8000 word report, all during their "summer holiday". We would like to take this opportunity to thank Katie, Sabrina, Rebekah and Sharon for all their hard work.

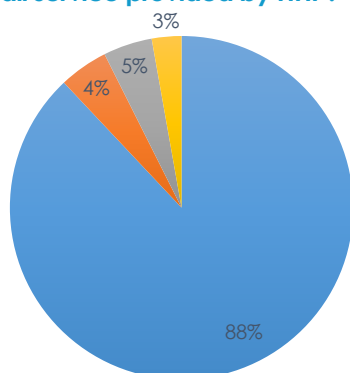
A brief review of some of the results were included in the August edition of Homeward and the Annual Tenant Report but that was just a fraction of the results we gathered. The overall results will be used to help us identify where we can make improvements in 4 main areas: communications; customer services; home and neighbourhood; and the repairs service.



Students - Rebekah Campbell, Sharon Macleod and Katie Carmichael

So the big question is ... How did we do?

Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall service provided by HHP?



■ Satisfied

■ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

■ Fairly dissatisfied

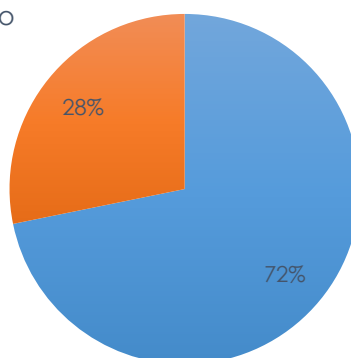
■ Very dissatisfied

88% of tenants in the Western Isles reported that they were satisfied with the overall service. **An increase of 5% since 2015.**

Do you have access to the internet?

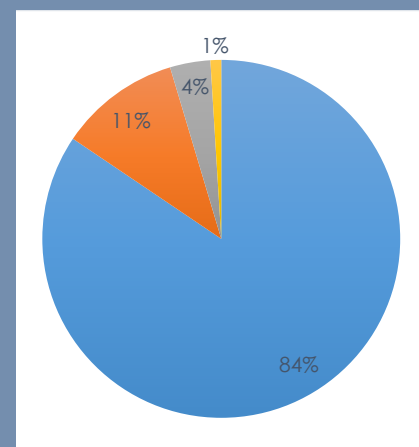
■ Yes

■ No



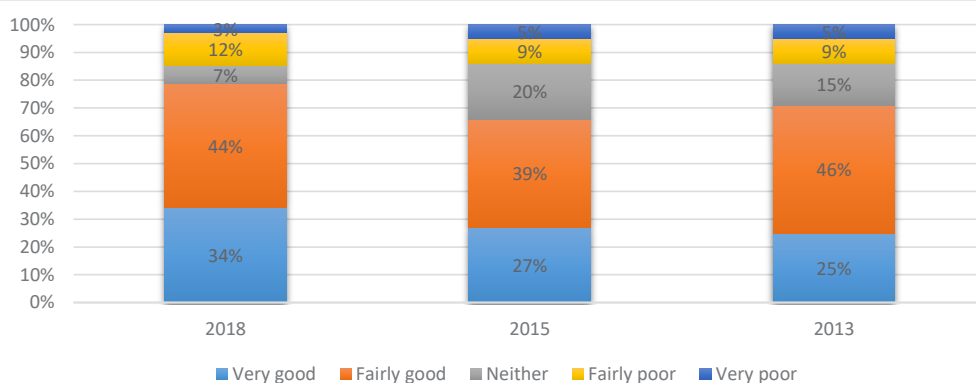
The survey also showed that only **72%** of tenants have internet access compared to 90% for the UK (ONS 2018). If you are experiencing difficulties with accessing any online services please get in touch with HHP and we will help in any way we can.

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with opportunities given to you to take part in HHP's decision making process?



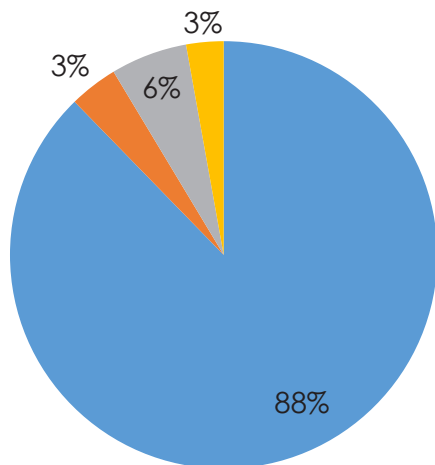
Across the Western Isles, 84% of tenants reported that they were satisfied with the opportunities given to them to participate in HHP's decision making process. **An increase of 14% since 2015.**

Taking into account the accommodation and the services HHP provides, do you think that the rent for this property represents good or poor value for money?



78% of tenants feel that the accommodation and the services HHP provides is good/very good value for money. **An increase of 12% since 2015.**

Thinking about the last time you had repairs carried out, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the repairs service provided by HHP?

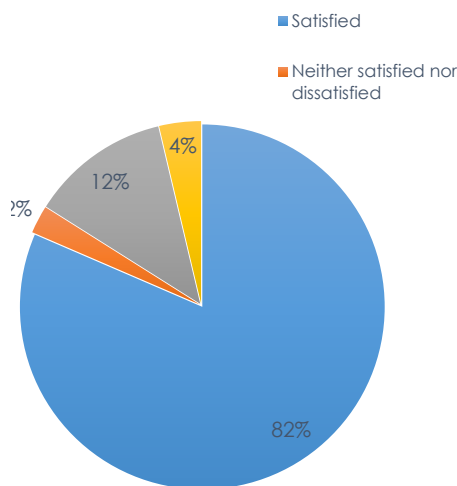


- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

88% of tenants who had repairs carried out in the last 12 months were satisfied with the repairs service. **An increase of 5% since 2015.**

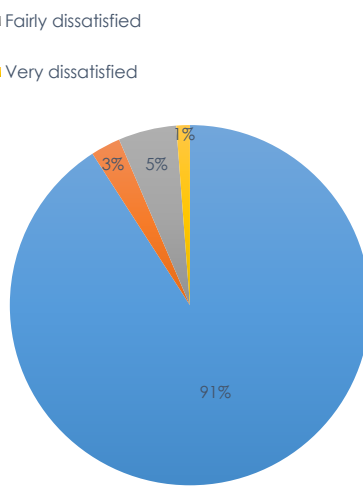
Throughout the year our customer services team carry out random satisfaction surveys with tenants who have had repairs carried out, currently the results from those surveys show **98%** of tenants are satisfied with the repairs service.

Thinking about when you moved in, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the standard of your home?



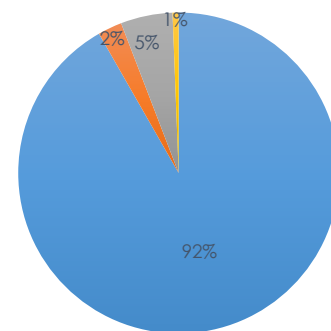
Of the tenants who had moved into their home within the last 12 months, **82%** were satisfied with the standard of their home. **An increase of 20% since 2015.**

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of your home?



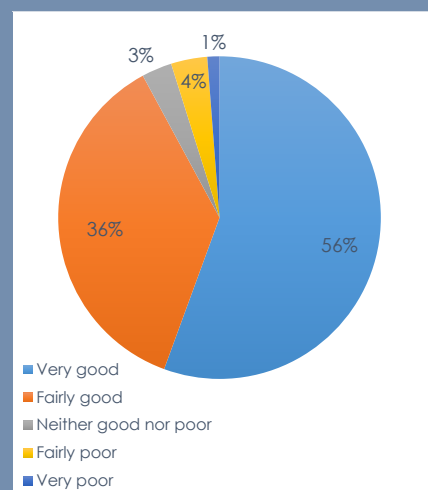
91% of tenants across the Western Isles are satisfied with the quality of their home. **An increase of 4% since 2015.**

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with HHP's management of the neighbourhood you live in?



88% of tenants who had repairs carried out in the last 12 months were satisfied with the repairs service. **An increase of 5% since 2015.**

How good or poor do you feel HHP is at keeping you informed about their services and decisions?



Overall, **92%** of tenants throughout the Western Isles felt that HHP are good at keeping them informed about services and decisions. **An increase of 12% since 2015.**

Customer Services

	Firmly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Firmly Disagree
HHP staff are very helpful	58%	36%	5%	1%
The person I speak to can deal with my query promptly	54%	42%	3%	1%
I can usually speak to the person I need to easily	53%	40%	5%	2%
Information is available from HHP	53%	43%	3%	1%
HHP keep me informed of decisions regarding my tenancy/property	68%	30%	2%	0%



All of these results are being reviewed and an action plan is being put in place to improve all the services they are linked to. Hopefully each and every one of our tenants will see these improvements over the next few years.



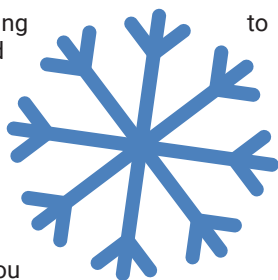
twitter.com/hebhousing
www.instagram.com/hebrideanhousing

Watch Out for Winter

Although our houses have central heating, there is still the risk of frozen or burst pipes during periods of heavy frost. Following the few simple steps below should help you to avoid any damage to your home:

Keep cosy in your home

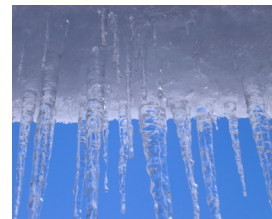
- If possible set your heating to 21°C (70°F) whilst you are up and about and 15-18°C (64°F) at night when you go to bed.
- Eat at least one hot meal a day and take plenty hot drinks.
- Wear warm layers of clothing especially when you go out.
- keep active and wrap up warm if you go outside
- If it's really cold, set your heating to come on earlier and turn off later rather than turning up the thermostat. This saves you money and is better for the environment.
- Remember to keep your home well ventilated when possible. Opening your windows as wide as possible for just 5 minutes will allow enough fresh air into your home for the rest of the day.
- If you are going to be away from home then, if possible, leave your heating to come on at least once a day for a couple of hours. If you have air source heating press the suitcase button on your controller or turn down the temperature if you have another controller. Those with infra red heating should turn down the temperature on their controller.
- Draw your curtains in the evening and keep doors closed to block out draughts
- Find out where your main stopcock or tap is. If you have a Surestop switch fitted then make sure you know where it is.
- Report any dripping taps or running overflows to HHP so that they can be fixed
- Always try to keep your home heated to at least 15°C and allow the heat to circulate all rooms



- If you are going away from home for any length of time during winter ask HHP to drain down your water supply. We will do this at no charge.

If your Pipes Freeze

- Turn off the water at the stop cock or tap or Surestop switch if you have one
- Switch off your immersion heater or boiler
- Turn on taps at sink, bath, etc.
- If you have a gas combi boiler, storage heating or air source heating then keep your heating on if possible
- Call HHP on 0300 123 0773 to report the problem



If you have a Burst Pipe

- Turn off the water at the stop cock or tap
- Switch off your immersion heater or boiler
- Turn on all taps to empty your tanks
- If water could come into contact with electrical fittings then switch off the electricity at the mains
- Call HHP on 0300 123 0773 to report the problem

Remember burst pipes can cause a lot of damage. HHP will repair your house but we are not responsible for damage to decoration or to your furniture, carpets or other belongings.

Heating broken down

- Telephone HHP and report the problem as soon as possible.

Gas Safety

- It is our legal responsibility to carry out a gas safety check in your house every year.

If we contact you to arrange a gas service make sure you let us in as this will allow us to ensure your heating is working safely and effectively.

Stay healthy

- If you are over 65, or have a long term health condition, you can get a free flu jab from your GP to protect against seasonal flu strains



The Salvation Army in Stornoway Sunday Advent Meetings:

The Salvation Army, 59 Bayhead, Stornoway

Sunday Advent Meetings - 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd December at 11am

Carol Singing at WI Hospital - Christmas Eve 7pm – meet at Reception before 7pm

Christmas Meal - Thursday 20th December from 12pm - £2.50

Christmas Day - Meeting at 11am - Meal from 1.30pm - **FREE**

Anyone is welcome to join us for the meals.

Please phone 01851 703875 to book your place.

Christmas Present Appeal

We are providing gifts for people who may not otherwise receive one this Christmas. Donations can be made directly, or through the Giving Tree at Tesco, Argos and Stornoway Airport, before Monday 17th December.

HHP Charitable Donations 2018



Lewis based recipients are pictured above with Board Chair, Norman MacLeod, receiving their cheques.

At the AGM on 30 August 2018, the Board approved a resolution to donate £1,000 from the surplus, to each of the following charities:

- **Autism Eilean Siar;**
- **Eilean Siar Foodbank;**
- **Western Isles Kidney Patients Association;**
- **Cobhair Bharraigh; and**
- **Caraidean Uibhist.**

Three of the recipients came to the HHP office in Stornoway on 2 November 2018 to receive their cheques and to give staff a bit of background on their organisation and tell how the monies would be used.

The Lewis based recipients are pictured above with Board Chair, Norman MacLeod, receiving their cheques.

Alina Morrison, Angus MacLeod & Tina MacDonald on behalf of Western Isles Kidney Patients Association.

Ann Meah, Ally Lockett & Catriona Stewart on behalf of Eilean Siar Foodbank.

Claire Morrison, on behalf of Autism Eilean Siar.

The remaining two recipients were presented with their monies when HHP staff and Board Members travelled to Barra to hold a Board Meeting on 20 November.

Jessie MacNeil and Katie MacNeil from Cobhair Bharraigh were presented with their cheque by Board Member, Mairi Bremner, and HHP Chief Executive, Dena MacLeod.

The following day, Julie Lewis and Matt Campbell from Caraidean Uibhist received their monies from Board Member, John G Mitchell, at our Balivanich office.

It was satisfying to hear how these monies would help people in our communities, and humbling to hear about the work being done by local charities throughout the islands.



Jessie MacNeil and Katie MacNeil from Cobhair Bharraigh were presented with their cheque by Board Member, Mairi Bremner, and HHP Chief Executive, Dena MacLeod.

HHP remains committed to assisting locally-based charitable organisations and we would like to thank all recipients for the work they do.



Julie Lewis and Matt Campbell from Caraidean Uibhist receiving their monies from Board Member, John G Mitchell.

Help to Save

What is Help to Save?

Help to Save is a digital savings account designed to encourage working individuals and households on low incomes to save regularly. The accounts are secure, simple to use and flexible.

Savers will receive a tax-free Government bonus of 50p for every £1 of eligible savings instead of interest.

Once an account has been set up, it will run for four years (individuals can only open one account). Over the four years, customers saving the maximum of £50 per calendar month can save £2,400 and will receive a tax-free bonus of up to £1,200. There is no minimum account balance or monthly transfer needed. Customers can also choose to skip payments, although the less money saved the smaller the final bonus.

Individuals can withdraw money at any time. However withdrawing money will make it harder to increase the highest balance in the account, and therefore get the biggest bonus.

Eligible customers have up to five years to open an account (from September 2018).

Get 50p for every £1 you save

Apply now for **Help to Save** if you work and receive Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit.



HM Government

gov.uk/helpertosave

How to open an account?

- Customers can open an account online at gov.uk/helpertosave or use the HMRC app, available for iOS and Android.
- Tax credits customers can use their personal tax account
- Alternatively you can apply by phoning the Help to Save helpline: 0300 322 7093.

Communal Areas

Tenants of properties within blocks of flats which share communal areas are reminded of the terms and conditions of their Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement which relates to these common areas.

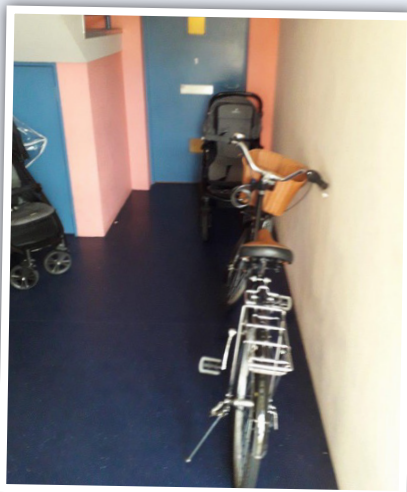
Storage of bikes, prams and household items within these common areas is not allowed as it is a health and safety issue and may cause access problems for tenants and residents and particularly emergency services.

It is the responsibility of tenants and residents who share the communal area to regularly clean, wash and keep tidy

their communal area.

Disposal of household items is a tenant responsibility and items must not be dumped in communal areas or in bin stores. Any tenant who is identified as being responsible for dumping items will have action taken against their tenancy and they will be recharged for the cost of disposal of these items.

Tenants who have difficulty disposing of household items should be aware that CnES offer a special collection service with a charge of £22.50 for up to 5 items or £45.00 for a full pickup load. CnES should be contacted to arrange this on 01851600 502.



Bringing Light to Daliburgh Homes

Housing Officers carry out annual estate inspections and look at everything to do with the outside of HHP properties and their surrounding areas such as communal gardens.

On one such inspection, it was noted that the front tree space in Casimir Place, Daliburgh was becoming very overgrown which was blocking out the daylight to the row of properties especially when the trees were in full foliage during the Summer months.

Jane Ballantyne, Tenant Participation Officer, Fiona MacDonald, Housing Officer and some helpful tenants set about small scale regeneration of the area to remove some trees and brambles and improve the light issue. Fiona contacted the local Waste Transfer Station and they kindly offered a free community skip to take care of the cuttings and HHP provided a budget for a gardening contractor to cut down an area from the fenced gardens. The tenants were a great help in getting the job done.

Further works are planned for the area possibly through Community Benefit a scheme whereby our contractors help to 'put something back'. We aim to tidy up the front of the garden area to the roadside in Calabhaigh, Lochoisdale. Anyone wishing to help with this, please contact your Housing Officer on 0300 123 0773.

HHP, Tenants & Service Providers - working together to improve the areas in which we live.

www.instagram.com/hebrideanhousing

Housing (Scotland) Act 2014

Changes to your Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST)

We recently wrote to all tenants providing information on the changes to their Scottish Secure Tenancy rights following the enactment of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014.

The changes will take place in two stages, some will be effective from the 1 May 2019 and the remainder from 1 November 2019. There is no requirement for existing tenants to sign a new tenancy agreement.

The following changes will commence from 1 May 2019:

- *Ending of a Scottish Secure Tenancy on Anti-social or criminal behaviour grounds*
- *Recovery of Adapted Properties*
- *Conversion of a Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST) to a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy (SSST) on grounds of Anti-social behaviour*

The following changes will commence from 1 November 2019:

- *Subletting your property*
- *Applying to add a joint tenant to your tenancy agreement*
- *Transferring your tenancy to someone else (Assignment)*
- *Taking over a tenancy after the tenant's death (Succession)*



Housing (Scotland) Act 2014

To protect your tenancy rights, it is important that you let us know in writing, of any changes in your household.

If you have any questions or would like further information please contact us on 0300 123 0773, or email info@hebrideanhousing.co.uk

TENANT PARTICIPATION

The Forum

I have been supporting The Western Isles Housing Association Communities Forum with their work programme this year. They have been involved in meeting many tenants across the Islands, holding meetings with tenants, gathering ideas, comments and feedback and working with HHP on their new investment programme (kitchens, bathrooms, windows) better known as 'the green book'. The Forum have now produced a newsletter – a tenant's newsletter for you to use and communicate with each other

When I started in this job over three years ago, I was really keen to get out and about to meet people, tenants and communities. Thank you for taking the time to meet me and talk about the things that are important to you.

Over these years, the Forum and I have made a lot of contacts with tenants, residents and communities. I have developed many good relationships. Thank you again for taking the time to give me your feedback and share your comments, complaints and

concerns. We have looked at all of them and passed these on to HHP and worked with them to bring about improvements with your service.

We are working together for better communication, improvements to the newsletters, information leaflets, and a more responsive tenant centred service.

Please let me know has this approach made a difference to you, your home and neighbourhood.

Thank you for all your help and support in 2018 – looking forward to working with you in 2019



Jane Ballantyne

Moving Into Your New Home

A group of tenants are taking a closer look at the standard of properties when they are let to new tenants. They are looking at all the documentation and processes and also visiting empty properties with staff to go through the standards. The group is currently putting their ideas and recommendations together and will talk these through with staff at HHP. For example some of the issues they are looking at are: properties having new toilet seats, decoration allowance, access to good quality furniture and white goods.

If you have experience and ideas that you would like to share give me a call on 07487 891 242

For more information about Tenant Participation contact Jane Ballantyne

Email jane.ballantyne@tpasscotland.org.uk

Telephone 01851 700811, Mobile 07487 891 242 Facebook - Jane Ballantyne

Jane generally works Monday –

Thursday 8am -12.30pm. She is also available to meet with people in the evening or on a Saturday.

Life Through A Window

My contact with HHP started in connection with my windows writes Tracey Walker of Doig Crescent. The main issue was draughty, ill-fitting windows. After a number of calls and visits, HHP concluded that new windows were needed. Unfortunately, no timescale was given for this. HHP's temporary solution was to seal the window from outside. My house was constantly cold and draughty and my heating bill was ridiculously high.

Then I met Jane Ballantyne who offered help and advice which I appreciated.

Myself and a neighbour, who also had issues with her windows, asked as many people in our scheme as we could one question:

"Do you have any issues with your house?"

This highlighted the main issues relating to: windows, heating, letterboxes (banging constantly). This list was sent to HHP. I held a number of meetings in my home for tenants and HHP staff to come along and have a chat about what was going on.



Top: Old windows

Bottom: New windows

Through the list and the meetings in my house we were informed that we would be getting new windows for the whole scheme.

Six years after moving into my home, I like all the residents in the scheme, are sitting in warmer and draught free homes. I feel this became possible because we came together as one voice that was heard by HHP. They realised it wasn't just 1 person being affected by draughty windows but many.

Through meeting Jane, I became involved with the Tenants Forum group. We as a group are working together with HHP to improve the partnership between tenants and HHP. We are working on improving different areas from the beginning of being offered a house, to getting repairs completed to the end when people move out. We are there to help and support tenants with issues or queries. We meet regularly to discuss issues that have come to our attention and also to help improve *existing policies*.



hebridean housing
partnership newsletter

home ward



Winter 2018

Customer Services 0300 123 0773



YOUR LOCAL ENERGY PROVIDER

HHP has engaged with Hebrides Energy to manage the electricity supply to our empty homes. Whenever a tenant leaves an HHP property the meter will be switched to Hebrides Energy, which is in partnership with Our Power. The tariff will revert to a standard tariff unless there is a specific meter in the property such as THTC.

Hebrides Energy has tariffs that are among the best on the market and are the same for tenants whether they use a prepayment key or a standard meter. The voids scheme will ensure tenants are on a very competitive tariff when they take up an HHP tenancy.

Tenants are free to switch at any time after taking up their tenancy.

YOUR VIEW MATTERS

What do you want to see in this newsletter?

We want to hear your ideas

0300 123 0773

CustomerServices@hebrideanhousing.co.uk



EARLY LEARNING & CHILDCARE FREE NURSERY PLACES FOR 2 YEAR OLDS



Are you eligible?

You may be eligible for a free nursery place for your 2 year old child if you are in receipt of any of the following:

Income Support (IS)

Job Seeker's Allowance (income based)

Any income related element of Employment and Support Allowance

Incapacity or Severe Disablement Allowance

State Pension Credit

Child Tax Credit (CTC), but not Working Tax Credit and your income is less than £16,105

Both maximum CTC and maximum Working Tax Credit and your income is under £6,600

Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

Universal Credit (you can claim this if your income is less than £610 a month)

Free early learning and childcare is also available if your child is 2 or over and is or, since they turned 2, has been:

- Looked after by a local council
- The subject of a kinship care order
- The subject of a guardianship order



Free places can begin at the start of the term following your child's second birthday, or at the start of the term following the date when you become eligible for any of the above benefits/credits.

**For more information and an application form
please contact the Early Years Office on
01851 822655.**

Ways to pay your rent



Did you know that you can now pay your rent online?



To access this method of rent payment go to:

tinyurl.com/hhppayments

This takes you to the Comhairle's 24 hour secure internet payments service. Select HHP Housing Rents and you can make your rent payment using this secure site with most major credit or debit cards.

You can also pay by the following options:

- // By rent payment card at any Post Office or Paypoint/Payzone
- // At your local HHP office
- // By Direct Debit mandate on a weekly or monthly basis
- // By Bank Standing Order
- // By telephone using your debit or credit card –
phone 01851 600502
- // At your local Comhairle office

