



# home ward



Customer Services: 0300 123 0773

When we were formed in 2006, we set out to deliver 245 new homes by 2016, so we are thrilled to now be marking the completion of our 500th new home.

Three homes at Winfield Close and Torlum, Isle of Benbecula have recently been completed. With these three new homes, we have completed 421 homes for social rent and 81 homes for the First Time Buyers and New Supply Shared Equity Schemes, since 2006.

Each of these new build properties provide individuals and families with quality affordable homes so they can lay down roots and enjoy family life in communities across the Outer Hebrides. This is right at the heart of why we do what we do, and it is very rewarding to see these homes being lived in and appreciated.

HHP's Chairperson, Iain Macmillan said: "The completion of 500 homes since 2006 is an impressive accomplishment and we would like to thank everyone who has been involved in our Development Programme, for their contribution in achieving this goal. We strive to keep the Tenant at the centre of everything we do, and the hard work that goes into developing, constructing, maintaining and enjoying these new homes is testament to that."

Scottish Government Housing Minister, Kevin Stewart MSP said: "I would like to congratulate Hebridean Housing Partnership for this impressive achievement"



Katlyn MacLellan & Donald MacLachlan with Roddy MacKay, Board member

Wishing you all a very Merry  
Christmas and a Happy New Year  
From all Staff at HHP

### Festive Opening Hours:

Customer Service closes ~ **Wednesday 23 December 2020 @ 5pm**

Customer Services re-open ~ **Tuesday 5 January 2021 @ 9am**

Emergency Contact Number: **0300 123 0773**

## OUR SERVICES AT A GLANCE

**NORMAL**

(with COVID checks and measures in place where necessary, along with social distancing measures where required)

**Customer  
Services (phone  
& email)**

### Allocations / Mutual Exchanges

## Estate Management and Inspection

**Garden  
Assistance &  
Grounds  
Maintenance**

## Termination of Tenancy Inspections

## Information Request Responses

### Planned Maintenance

## Applications

## Repairs

## Rent Advice

## Complaints

## Invoice Payment Processing

Development Programme

Investment  
Works **DISRUPTED**

**Rent Payments**  
(online / paypoint /  
phone still available)

## Tenant Participation

 **CLOSED**

**Offices  
(Stornoway &  
Balivanich)**

# TENANT PARTICIPATION

## Merry Christmas from TPAS Western Isles

Have you wondered how decisions are made for your housing services? We want to hear from you about your experiences of services provided by HHP. Tell us about what works well, what needs fine-tuning and ideas to make it better. We are listening, we welcome all your views and comments. Your contribution will help us to be the best we can be.

***"You can have your say and make a difference"***

### Tenant Scrutiny Panel

Do you have enthusiasm and desire to improve services for other Tenants and their communities? Would you like to make positive changes to the way things

are done? Then our Tenant Scrutiny Panel might be for you. We are looking for new members and all Tenants are welcome to join. Tenant Scrutiny is about Tenants being actively involved in reviewing how housing service are being delivered. Tenants inspect a housing service to review how it is working and make recommendations.

**Why join the Scrutiny Panel?** Firstly, you will make a difference, meet new people and there will be plenty of coffee and cake! (Once restrictions are eased)

**What's involved?** Tenants meet once a month via Zoom or Teams. We look at policies, documents, procedures of service and examine all the issues relating to housing services.

**What are the benefits?** An opportunity to build relationships between staff and Tenants towards a common goal. Provides an opportunity for Tenants to express opinions and be instrumental in HHP housing policies.

This year we want to hear your opinions and experiences with:

Rent and how much you pay

New builds that you have moved into

Infrared Heating

Housing policies, conditions, services

If you are interested in specific areas please get in touch with Dolina Morrison to be part of a smaller focus group.



## Best-Dressed Window Christmas Competition

Stornoway is looking very festive with Christmas lights. We would like to see a little Christmas cheer across the islands too. This year we asking you to get your festive creativity up and running by dressing up at least one window of your home then sharing this with us.

### Prizes

The Tenants of the four best-dressed windows will receive a gift voucher of their choice.

2 x £50

2 x £25

The competition is open to Tenants of all ages.

You can enter the competition in 2 ways:

1. Dress your window, take a photograph and send it to [dolina.morrison@tpasscotland.org.uk](mailto:dolina.morrison@tpasscotland.org.uk) with the subject 'Window Competition'

2. Draw your Christmas Window design on an A4 sheet and send it to Window Competition, HHP, Creed Court, Gleann Seileach Business Park, Willow Glenn Road, Stornoway, HS1 2QP

All entries must be received by 4th January.

For more information about Tenant Participation and getting involved in how housing services are delivered contact Dolly, Tenant Participation Officer



Contact details email [dolina.morrison@tpasscotland.org.uk](mailto:dolina.morrison@tpasscotland.org.uk)  
Mobile 07593550537  
Facebook Page TPAS Western Isles

## Tenant Led Inspection

Housing Officers carry out annual estate inspections throughout the islands to ensure properties and neighbourhoods are kept tidy. We all want to live in a nice, well-kept area.

We look at communal areas and the external condition of our properties e.g. roofs, roughcast, guttering, gardens and fences. On a recent inspection in Dun Mor, Fiona Macdonald, Housing Officer noticed the cattle grid was found to be broken and reported the fault and a job was raised.

We also look at trees and overgrown shrubs then report to Grounds Maintenance. On some occasions, such as Leonard Place, we involve other agencies e.g. Storax Uibhist who are providing a skip so residents can tidy the area (once restrictions are eased).

When carrying out inspections, the Housing Officers find it helpful to talk with

residents as this can highlight issues that perhaps we weren't aware of. Sometimes, we invite local residents to join an estate inspection.

Fiona received a number of replies this year, which she said was; 'really helpful as people living in the scheme know the area well and it's a good opportunity to talk about planned maintenance or investment works and, general things that maybe bothering them.'

Mr Neil Johnstone, 3 Buaile Dubh took Fiona up on her invitation recently and commented; 'I am glad I took up your invite to do the estate survey. It gave me an insight into how HHP work. I would definitely encourage other Tenants to do the same.'

**If you would like to get involved in Tenant led inspections please contact your Housing Officer on 0300 123 0773.**



# Mutual Exchange

Are you wishing to downsize or move to a larger house? Exchanges may take place between Tenants of HHP's properties and those of other Local Authorities and Housing Associations.

In some circumstances, a three-way Mutual Exchange may be permitted to enable Tenants to exchange to more suitably sized or located properties.

You can apply to go on the Mutual Exchange list. Please contact Customer Services on 0300 123 0773 with your name, address, contact number, area and the type of property you are interested in moving to.

## Thank You ...

Thank you to you all for your continued patience with our new ways of working. Thank you to those who have kept your rent account up to date.

If you are having difficulty paying your rent and need to make alternative arrangements or need help with your benefits, please contact your Housing Officer for advice on 0300 123 0773.

# New Homes for Christmas

Alice Gilgallon moved into her new home in Winfield Close, Benbecula with her two boys, in time for Christmas. The boys go to the local school and can now walk to school.

"HHP and the wonderful team in Benbecula have been nothing but supportive throughout the whole process of our move and settling in."



Alice's boys returning home from school

They have provided us with not just a house but a wonderful home. We couldn't be more happy with it. Having a child with additional needs, makes finding suitable housing hard work. However, HHP have gone out of their way to make it so much more accessible for us. Thank you all for your help and support"

Kirstie Young has also moved into her new home in Cnoc Na Monadh, Torlum. "I feel very lucky to have been allocated one of the new houses in Torlum, the houses are extremely spacious and cosy and have been built to a very high standard. I can't wait to spend my first Christmas in Torlum."



Kirstie Young - ready for Christmas in her new home.



**1st prize - £100**

**2 x runner-up prizes - £50**

**The first three Tenants selected at random who have a clear rent account on 21 January 2021 will receive a gift voucher for a local shop of their choice.**

## Breaking Down Digital Barriers

Connecting Scotland is a Scottish Government programme set up in response to COVID-19. It provides iPads, Chromebooks and support to develop digital skills for people who are digitally excluded and on low incomes.

Phase 1 focused on those who were at risk of isolation as they were in the 'shielding' or 'higher risk' groups.

### How it works

To reach these people, Connecting Scotland collaborates with local councils, public and third sector organisations who are already working with them. The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) supports by providing:

- Kit - internet enabled devices
- Connectivity - through mobile data
- Training and support - for staff and volunteers to become 'digital champions' to support people to use the internet confidently and safely

### Our Involvement

So far, we have received 15 devices with



mobile data connectivity to distribute amongst our most vulnerable Tenants. This will help them communicate with family, access online shopping and break down digital barriers. It will also give them access to additional support and most of all have fun connecting with people, learning new hobbies or taking part in activities that were not an option before.

We have supported a number of individuals and families to get on online, recently. One Tenant shared the feedback below:

"I am over the moon and I appreciate everything that you have done for me"

We hope to support dozens more over the coming months.

# WESTERN ISLES FOOD BANKS

## LEWIS & HARRIS

### Salvation Army Food & Baby Bank - Stornoway

Currently based at the Golf Club, Stornoway. Open to the public Wednesday and Saturday mornings. It provides a range of food from fresh, chilled and frozen products. There is also a selection of items available at the Baby Bank.

Iain Macdonald, Stornoway Golf Club – **01851 702240**

Faith & Christopher Thompson, Salvation Army – **01851 703875**

### Eilean Siar Food Bank - Stornoway

Food parcels can be collected or delivered.  
Call for all enquiries.

Mark Maciver - **01851 706650** [eileansiarfoodbank@gmail.com](mailto:eileansiarfoodbank@gmail.com)

### Fareshare

Organised through Citizens Advice Bureaux throughout the Western Isles.

Steve Hankinson - **01851 705727**

[bureau@lewiscab.casonline.org.uk](mailto:bureau@lewiscab.casonline.org.uk)

[Steve.Hankinson@lewiscab.casonline.org.uk](mailto:Steve.Hankinson@lewiscab.casonline.org.uk)

### Barvas Food Bank

Dalbeg - Port of Ness. Open to volunteers Tuesday 3pm – 4.15pm and Friday 2pm - 4.15pm. All food parcels are delivered. Call for all enquiries.

Sarah Campbell - **07927236450**

### North Lochs Food Bank

Delivery available or can collect in person if preferred. Call for all enquiries. **07548962704**

### High Church - Stornoway

Call for all enquiries.

Jann Skelly - **07985710410**

### Kinloch Food & Baby Bank - Lochs

Provide food parcels, vouchers for fresh food, utilities and baby essentials available. Call for all enquiries.

Anne Etta Macleod – **07919363827**

Duncan McIntyre – **07900756097**

Cathy Morrison - **07568381343**

### Martins Memorial Church Food Bank - Stornoway

Food parcels can be delivered.

Call for all enquiries. **01851 700820**

[enquiries@martinsmemorial.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@martinsmemorial.org.uk)

### Harris Food Bank

Food parcels are being distributed. Call for all enquiries. Harris Fire Service also accept food donations.

North Harris - Mairi Maciver – **07717816471** -

[mairi\\_maciver@cne-siar.gov.uk](mailto:mairi_maciver@cne-siar.gov.uk)

South Harris - Kathryn Campbell - **07776490719**

Scalpay - Kenny Macleod - **07776490719**

Harris CAB - **01859 502431**

## UIST & BARRA

### Uist & Barra Food Bank

**UIST** – Volunteers there Monday 9am - 12.30pm and Friday 2pm - 4pm. Volunteers can deliver where necessary. Call for all enquiries.

Janet – **01870603130**

[info@uistbarra.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:info@uistbarra.foodbank.org.uk)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Uistandbarrafoodbank/>

**BARRA** – Organised through CAB. Volunteers can deliver food parcels where necessary. Call for all enquiries.

Kenneth Maclean **07432575945/ 01871 810608**

[Kenneth.maclean@barracab.casonline.org.uk](mailto:Kenneth.maclean@barracab.casonline.org.uk)

# Befriending Lewis & Harris

Over the last year, Befriending Lewis & Harris has continued to support those in our community experiencing the devastating effects of loneliness and social isolation through the work of our amazing team of volunteer befrienders.

When the COVID-19 restrictions began in March, we had to stop all our much-valued

group sessions and face to face meetings and developed new ways of enabling our befrienders and befriendeds to connect with each other. Wherever possible, we have established telephone befriending for those in matched relationships and have also offered kindness calls as additional telephone contact. Some befrienders and befriendeds are interacting via Zoom and we are establishing shared interest groups which will be meeting regularly as well as providing support to those who are not currently able or confident to use Zoom.

For those who enjoy jigsaws, we have developed a jigsaw library and puzzles are delivered to participants on a monthly basis. Our new magazine, The Breeze, is mailed out regularly to all those involved in the service and we value contributions of articles and photographs from befrienders and befriendeds. Our Befriending Arts



project has developed a UK wide Postcard Exchange Project which connected people here with others on the mainland.

If you would like to find out more about volunteering for us or are feeling lonely or isolated, please get in touch: email us at [info@befriendinglewis.org.uk](mailto:info@befriendinglewis.org.uk) or phone 07496 081902.



## Befriending Lewis & Harris

# 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

Set your temperature: Daytime - 21°C and 15-18°C at night

Eat at least one hot meal a day and have plenty of hot drinks

Wear warm layers of clothing especially outside

Keep active and wrap up warm if you go outside

If it's really cold, set your heating to come on earlier (or increase in temperature) and turn off later (or decrease in temperature)

Keep your home heated to at least 15°C and allow the heat to circulate all rooms

Remember to keep your home well ventilated. Open your windows wide for just 5 minutes a day. This will allow enough fresh air into your home for the day.

Draw your curtains in the evening and keep doors closed to block out draughts

Find out where your main stopcock, tap or Surestop Switch (if fitted) is.

Report dripping taps or running overflows to us so we can repair them

If you are going to be away from home then, 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 infrared heating should turn down the temperature on their controller.

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

## Freezing Pipes

Turn off the water at the stopcock or tap or Surestop switch if you have one

Switch off your immersion heater or boiler

Turn on taps at sink, bath, etc.

Keep your heating on if possible

Call us on 0300 123 0773 to report the problem

## Burst Pipes

Turn off the water at the stopcock 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 if safe to do so

Call us on 0300 123 0773 to report the problem

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

## Heating Broken Down

Call 0300 123 0773 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, please, let us in as this will allow us to check your heating is working properly and safely.

## 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

## Investment News

We are very pleased to report that all our investment contracts are up and running. Thanks to everyone involved for making this happen and working with us to get things moving.

If you have had a recent air source heating system installed, please follow this advice to ensure you have no issues over Christmas:

- Leave it on 24/7 as this is the most economical
- Change your tariff to a single rate tariff
- If you had storage heating previously, you need to change your meter

- As soon as you can, switch to a new supplier for the best deal to suit you
- Consider direct debit for electricity as this will spread your costs over the year
- Prepayment will be more expensive in winter and you will have higher bills
- Call us if you have any problems with your heating system or need advice on changing your meter

We are nearing completion of the installation of interconnected smoke and heat alarms in all our properties. If you haven't had yours installed yet please get

in touch to arrange an appointment if you have not done so already.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 restrictions have caused a delay in the supply of materials to complete some works. Kitchen replacements are postponed until after the New Year, whilst issues with the supply of air source heat pumps has caused a delay to these works also. We are working with other suppliers and we hope to re-start in January.

Finally, our contractors have asked to pass on their thanks to all our Tenants for the courtesy they have shown whilst working in their homes during this difficult period.



Follow HHP on Twitter @HebHousing  
& Instagram @hebrideanhousing



# Development News

Work continues on our new build sites with contractors following Scottish Government Covid-19 Guidance.

Several developments have completed in recent months and we have reached our 500th New Build (featured on front page).

## Lewis

Mackenzie Avenue is now complete; the final two properties were handed over from Calmax Construction in October. The 50 affordable homes in Mackenzie Avenue are a mix of social rented and New Supply Shared Equity.



The refurbishment of the building on Scotland Street is due to be completed in December. This is a developer led site with Lewis Builders.

O'MAC are progressing well with work on 74 properties, at Goathill, for social rent and New Supply Shared Equity. Work is ongoing on the 52-bed care home and 50 housing with extra care flats.

## Uist



Two homes at Cnoc Na Monadh, Torlum and a home in Winfield Close were completed in November. Five homes in Trosaraigh are due for completion in December 2020.

## Harris

Early October, Alex Murray Construction commenced work on site at the former Police Station, Tarbert. The flats are scheduled for completion in summer 2021.

## Rural Lewis

Work is ongoing at the former Comhairle Garrabost Care Unit which is being refurbished to create 2 new homes for social rent, due for completion early in the New Year.

Four new homes at Cnoc a Runaire, Tolsta were completed by Alex Murray Construction in October.



Sgeir Ghlas, Breasclete was completed in October; this is a mix of social rent and New Supply Shared Equity properties. For more information regarding the remaining Shared Equity units at Breasclete please contact [christina@tighean.co.uk](mailto:christina@tighean.co.uk).

Alex Murray Construction are also on site at South Dell, Isle of Lewis constructing 6 new homes for social rent. A community consultation led to HHP's Board approving the name Sealladh Beinn Dail. The Beinn on the Dell moor can clearly be seen from the site and is a well-known landmark in the area.



Work continues in Shawbost on 4 new homes due for completion in February 2021.

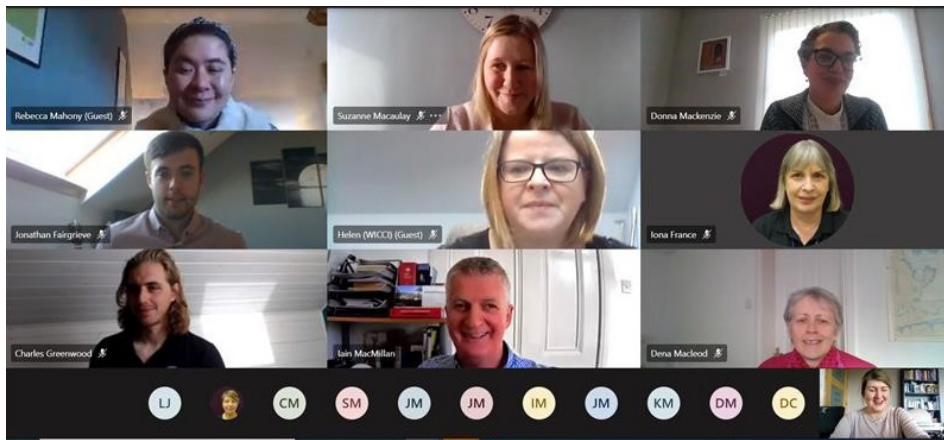


## Planning

Planning permission was granted for the development at the Low Flyer, Balivanich in November 2020 with work due to start on site imminently. Following a local consultation, HHP's Board approved the name of the new houses to be 'Johnstone Court' after a taxi driver much missed by the local community.

A planning application has been submitted for a site at Howmore, Isle of South Uist with a proposed site start early in 2021.

# HHP Charitable Donations 2020



This year, at our AGM, we agreed to give £500 to each of the following charities:

**Western Isles Hospital League of Friends**

**Hebrides Mountain Rescue Team**

**Volunteer Centre Western Isles**

**Western Isles Association for Mental Health (WIAMH)**

**Western Isles Cancer Care Initiative (WICCI)**

Donna Mackenzie (League of Friends), Charlie Greenwood (Mountain Rescue Team), Suzanne Macaulay (Volunteer Centre), Rebecca Mahony (WIAMH) and Helen Sandison (WICCI) joined our staff and Board Members via Microsoft

Teams video conferencing to give some background on their organisation and explain how the monies would be used.

Our staff also recognised Wear it Pink Day organised by Cancer Research UK, by holding a virtual coffee morning on Friday 23 October. We enjoyed coffee and cake recognising the importance of staying in touch.

We are committed to continuing to assist other locally-based charitable organisations and thank each recipient and their charities for the work they do throughout our communities. Our staff run a series of fundraisers throughout the year with a wide variety of beneficiaries.

## Becoming An HHP Board Member

Do you want to help shape the future of housing in the Outer Hebrides?

Are you interested in representing our tenants and other service users?

We are looking for Tenant Board Members with the relevant skills and experience to join our Governing Body.

One of our Tenant Board Members, Mr Alasdair Mackenzie, shared what being a Tenant Board Member means to him.

*"I enjoy being a Tenant Member on the*

*Board of HHP, because it means that tenants are at the centre of decisions throughout the organisation, which gives tenants a say in the investment and development of the houses that they live in, and also an input into the overall running of HHP"*

For further details or an informal discussion, please contact Iona France, Governance Officer on 0300 123 0773 or by emailing [governance@hebrideanhousing.co.uk](mailto:governance@hebrideanhousing.co.uk)

## Rent Consultation

We are currently consulting with Tenants on the annual rent increase for 2021/22. Your rent pays for all the services you receive from HHP, including the 24 hour emergency repair service, repairs appointments, investment in your home and tenancy support & advice.

You can access the consultation on our website:

[www.hebrideanhousing.co.uk/rent-consultation-2021-22/](http://www.hebrideanhousing.co.uk/rent-consultation-2021-22/)

Completed responses will be entered into a prize draw. There will be four prizes of £50 to be won which will be randomly drawn and allocated to the winner's rent account.

## Staff Training

During lockdown, staff were able to take advantage of a wider range of online training courses than normal. All without the need to travel and therefore reduced costs.

When planning training for staff, we consider the needs of our tenants. Occasionally tenants complain about dampness in their homes. With this in mind, staff received a Damp and Condensation training course online to improve their awareness and knowledge. *"I hadn't had training this way before but it was very useful. Now I can tell the difference between rising damp and condensation,"* said Dez Cross, Housing Assistant.

Other training courses staff have received include: Mental Health First Aid, Universal Credit, Vulnerable Citizens and The EU Settlement Scheme, Factoring, Introduction to Domestic Violence and Child Protection Awareness.

For more information or advice, please call 0300 123 0773 or email [info@hebrideanhousing.co.uk](mailto:info@hebrideanhousing.co.uk)

## Goathill and Springfield Residents Association

"We are very pleased to announce that we have received a grant of £5000, from the Community Wellbeing Fund. This grant will help vulnerable individuals and families in our area with £25 Food Vouchers and £25 Electricity Vouchers for December to January," said Councillor Charlie Nicolson.

Individuals and families, from the Parkend, Holm & the Mackenzie Estate areas, who wish to request Food Vouchers or Electricity Vouchers should contact Donnie 'Uig' Smith: 07867861098, Ian Bloc: 07831771444, Cllr Charlie Nicolson: 07717816476, using text or telephone. Requests will be dealt with in confidence.





hebridean housing  
partnership newsletter

# home ward



Winter 2020

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## Cycle for Cancer



Above: Katia Petteloot

Left: Dena Macleod

As a result of COVID-19, many organisations are now in an extremely precarious position, often having to deliver additional services with fewer volunteers and staff members, while having to cancel fundraising activities. With a number of national and regional lockdowns taking place since March, many charities are experiencing difficulties accessing funding through fundraising events.

When Cancer Research UK asked for people to go out on their bike and raise money for the charity, a group of keen

cyclists on Lewis rose to the challenge. Nineteen people cycled 300 miles each during the month of September and raised an incredible £7,913.93 (+£1,195.80 in gift aid). Our Chief Executive, Dena Macleod, and I were part of the group that raised just over £1,000 between us.

The miles were covered in all weather, from beautiful September sun to typical windy Western Isles weather. It all added to the challenge and a sense of achievement at the end of it. It took us to parts of the island we would not go to in our day to day lives

but trying to find new and exciting routes did just that.

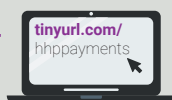
A big thank you to all who donated to this important cause. Your donations spurred us on.

Cancer Research UK is focused on finding a cure for all cancers. Most of us have been touched by cancer either through friends, family or own experience. The funds raised will help bring the day forward when all cancers are cured.

*Katia Petteloot, Finance Manager*

## 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](https://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



**Please note we are currently unable to take cash payments**



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