



CUNNINGHAME
HOUSING ASSOCIATION

CUNNINGHAME

AU

Wishes you a

MERRY

Christmas

AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

Winter Newsletter

2023



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Our offices will be closed from 4:30pm on Thursday 21st of December until 9:00am on Thursday 4th of January 2024. If you have an emergency during this time please contact the following:

EMERGENCY CONTACTS



NHS 24
111



Repairs
0800 068 1466



Power Cut
105



Scottish Water
0800 077 8778



Scottish Power
0800 092 9290

NEW BUILD DEFECTS CONTACTS

Emergency defects in new build properties can be reported by calling the following numbers:

Irvine Road, Kilmaurs

0121 206 2864

West Byrehill, Kilwinning

Plumber - 01294 468113

Electrician - 07800 906 921

Joiner - 07792 099 717

Heathhall, Dumfries

0330 7260179

Green Street, Saltcoats

Plumber - 01294 468113

Electrician - 07811 273 361

Lift - 0800 181363

Fire Sprinkler System - 0800 505 3225

Bridgehousehill, Kilmarnock

Plumber - 01563 820559

Electrician - 07817 643761

Joiner - 07727 643 761

TENANT NEWS



All our tenants and residents' groups are meeting regularly again, face to face, working hard, giving up their own time to support their local communities. Our tenant groups are active in Ardrossan, Dalry, Vineburgh (Irvine), Kilbirnie, Longpark (Kilmarnock), Stevenston/Saltcoats and Largs. They welcome any new or interested tenants.

We are delighted that a new tenants group is now meeting in Annan following two public meetings. Their next meeting is on the 31st January.

The Association is always looking to support new groups or individuals to become involved in a way they are happy with.

CUNNINGHAME FORUM

The Cunninghame Forum is a quarterly meeting of group committee members and other individual tenants to share best practices, experiences, give their views and ideas. They also get the opportunity to meet senior staff and invited guests.

The next Forum meeting is due to be held by our Longpark, Kilmarnock group in March 2024.



The Forum visiting a local foodbank in October 2023

CUNNINGHAME SCRUTINY GROUP (CSG)

The CSG have completed their latest exercise looking at 'Shared Spaces' which includes-



Landscaping/
gardens/pathways
/drying areas



Common
entrances/door
entry systems



Bin
Areas



They visited 16 areas in 6 towns and interviewed 27 tenants to gather information and identify good working practices and areas for improvement. The evidence was used to produce a detailed report containing 21 recommendations.

The group presented their findings and recommendations at a special Board of Management meeting on the 23rd November. This was very well received, and an action plan will be agreed to help the Association improve their shared spaces for the benefit of our tenants.

The group is supported by an independence facilitator from the Tenants Information Service and our Community Participation & Engagement Officer.



TENANT VOLUNTEERS

Do you want to make a difference to how CHA's services are delivered?

CHA is looking for new members for our Tenant Scrutiny Group. The group's role is to review different aspects of the services provided by the Association and recommend improvements.

If you are a CHA tenant and are keen to:

- get involved,
- learn about housing,
- visit interesting places,
- meet new people,
- help further improve CHA services to our tenants.

We want to hear from you

This is a voluntary role, so is unpaid, however, all expenses incurred in carrying out the role will be reimbursed.

Expressions of interest are encouraged from all sections of the community to ensure that the panel reflects the diverse communities who live in Association housing.



GET INVOLVED

If you are interested in becoming involved in a new local tenants group or our Cunninghame Scrutiny Group, or get more information on how to share your views and participate, please contact:

Ian Macpherson, Community Participation and Engagement Officer



01294 606 012



imacpherson@chaltld.org

WE NEED YOUR VIEWS!

Our rent consultation was launched on 24th of November 2023. We are looking for your views on the proposed rent increase of 4.6% for 2024/25. Complete the consultation by 22nd December '23 using the QR code, visiting our website or by calling 01294 607553.



WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR VIEWS!



NORTH AYRSHIRE HOUSING ALLOCATION POLICY REVIEW

We are currently reviewing the North Ayrshire Housing Register (NAHR) Allocation Policy in partnership with the other NAHR landlords – North Ayrshire Council, Riverside Scotland and ANCHO. The Policy sets out rules by which the NAHR landlords have jointly agreed to let our houses and ensures we comply with the law in allocating houses.

We want to consult with you to help influence the policy. Our survey questions are based on feedback from NAHR partners from their knowledge and experience of letting homes in North Ayrshire. If you have any other areas you feel need reviewed, space has been provided within the questionnaire for you to feedback on them too.

You can also drop into our CHA office, Quayside Offices, Dock Rd, Ardrossan, KA22 8DA on the 17th of January 2024 for help to complete this consultation.

Please complete the survey online by scanning this QR code:



The consultation closes on 21 January 2024.



SAVING FOR CHRISTMAS

Whether you have started shopping for Christmas 2023, or already thinking about saving for Christmas 2024, let us help with your festive finances with some top tips.

OPEN A CHRISTMAS ACCOUNT

Open a separate savings account for all your Christmas expenses. You can do this via your current bank, or your local Credit Union (You will have additional benefits being a member of a credit union such as, free life insurance, access to loans, their own members lottery and much more).

COMPARISON WEBSITES

Have you looked into price comparison websites for the best deals on car, home, and insurance, loans, credit cards, energy and more? If used, they can help you make significant savings.

BUDGETING

Write down your income and expenses to highlight areas you could save money. If you are a couple, you should do this together. Gather all bank statements, household bills and receipts. Do not be tempted to guess or estimate. Budgets rely on accurate incomes and outgoings and the only way to be sure is having your bills in front of you.

Remember to include one off payments, such as insurances, vet/dentist bills, unexpected costs, birthday's etc. If you have a car, you should include those expenses.

SWITCHING ACCOUNTS

If you are thinking ahead to 2024, switching accounts could get you more out of your savings by shopping around and switching to a savings account with a higher interest rate.

You can get £200 for FREE when you switch from a non-nationwide account to a FlexDirect account through Nationwide, all you need to do is have two active Direct Debits as part of the switch, check out their website for more information.

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

The holiday period should be about celebration and creating lasting memories, not worrying about food or basic necessities. If you are experiencing financial difficulties or concerned about your food being sparse in your cupboards over Christmas, we urge you to reach out to our Financial Inclusion Officer. Here's how our Financial Inclusion team can assist you:

**FOR MORE
INFORMATION
SCAN HERE**



Communication is essential especially during the festive period, and we recognise that affording mobile top-ups might be a challenge. To ease this burden, we offer sim cards to tenants who may struggle to keep their mobile phones active.

We understand the importance of having access to food and heating, especially during the holidays. Our team can make referrals to local foodbanks and organizations like Lemonaid to help ensure that you and your family have enough to eat and stay warm throughout the festive period.

Our team can conduct thorough benefit checks to ensure that you are receiving all the entitled benefits and that the amount received is accurate. This can make a significant difference to your financial situation, providing you with the support you deserve.



PAYING YOUR RENT THIS CHRISTMAS

Christmas can be the busiest and most expensive time of year. Present buying, food for Christmas dinner and planning for the arrival of family, the cost begins to rack up and paying your rent is another worry in the back of your mind. Although the holidays are a time of relaxation and spending time with family, we know you may be worried about how much Christmas is going to affect your finances and paying your rent.

Missing December's rent payments means you could start 2024 in arrears, which can be very difficult to catch up from. Whilst money may be tight, start by setting yourself an affordable budget, and prioritise your most important bills, including rent, gas and electricity.

Struggling to pay rent this Christmas or worried about how you will afford the basic necessities such as food or energy costs? Contact your Housing Officer as soon as possible on 01294 607553.

There are different and convenient ways for you to pay your rent:



Direct Debit is the simplest and most convenient way to pay. Call 01294 607553 to set a direct debit up.

Bank transfer to Sort Code 09-02-22 and Account Number 10697883. Put your name and address as the reference.

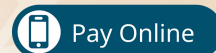


Pay using your card or over the phone - call us on 01294 607553



Use your Allpay card at any store with a 'PayPoint' sign or call Allpay on 0330 041 6497.

Visit our website and click 'Make a Payment' on: <https://www.cunninghame-housing.org/how-to-make-a-payment/>



Struggling to pay rent this Christmas or worried about how you will afford the basic necessities such as food or energy costs? Contact your Housing Officer as soon as possible on 01294 607553.

We are here to help you.

WINTER ENERGY SAVING TIPS

Keep your gas and electricity bills under control this year with some useful energy saving tips.

Put on another layer before you turn the heating on



Make sure furniture isn't right up against your radiators



Defrost your freezer to remove the build-up of ice



Only put the dish washer on when it's full



Wash clothes at 30 degrees to save electricity



Turn the heating down when no-one is in the house



Keep lids on your saucepans when cooking

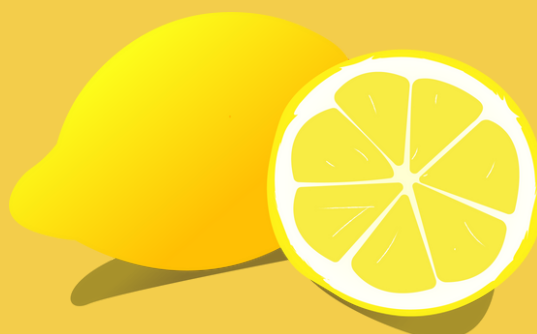


Don't dry wet clothing on radiators



LEMON AID FOR YOU FUEL POVERTY ADVISORY SERVICE

FREEPHONE: 0800 221 8089



FREE AND IMPARTIAL ENERGY ADVICE IN THE COMFORT OF YOUR OWN HOME

ARE YOU...

- Struggling with your gas and electricity or other fuel costs?
- Worried about your gas and electricity debts?
- In dispute with your energy supplier?

Help Is Available...

Scan here for support



HOW WE CAN HELP

RE-CONNECT YOUR SUPPLY

We can help you get back on supply if you have been cut off or disconnected.

REDUCE DEBT

We can help you reduce your gas and electricity debts.

ENERGY BUDGET HELP

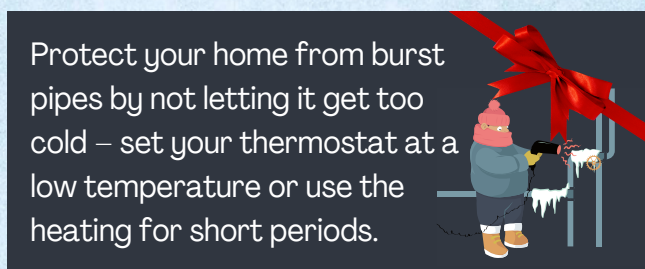
We can help you budget and re-negotiate your energy debt recovery rate.

ADVOCACY SERVICES

We work on your behalf dealing with energy supplier and billing issues.

THE TWELVE DAYS OF [A SAFE] CHRISTMAS

With the most wonderful time of the year fast approaching, it's important to look after yourself and your family during the festive period. Additional stress, bad weather, festive decorations and cooking all bring extra hazards over the Christmas period. So, while lords are leaping and ladies are dancing, here are our twelve top tips to staying safe:



THE SEASON OF GOODWILL AND GOOD NEIGHBOURS

Most people want to celebrate during the festive period with friends and family, but while you're 'Rockin Around the Christmas Tree', give a thought for your neighbours, so your 'White Christmas' doesn't turn into 'Bad Santa'.

Here's our top tips to enjoy the festive season whilst giving consideration to your neighbours:

While we don't want you to be 'Home Alone', give a thought for how many people you can realistically fit in your home if you're having a get together. Too many will cause excessive noise and possible parking issues.



Noone wants a 'Silent Night', but have music at a reasonable volume, and keep it low later at night when neighbours may be sleeping. Keep windows and doors closed to contain any noise to your home.

When 'Santa Claus is Comin to Town' kids can be very excited. Keep windows and doors closed if they are up extra early to contain noise and let neighbours have a lie in.



While 'It's a Wonderful Life' for most people at Christmas, you might have a neighbour who doesn't have family or is struggling during the festive period. Spare a thought for them, check in on them if you can, and wish them a Merry Christmas.

CHA TEAM NEWS

As we approach the end of 2023, here's an update on staffing changes at CHA this year:

FOND FAREWELL

We say goodbye to some staff who have moved on to pastures new:

- Jordan Fee, Administration Assistant (Development)
- Keith Hood, Clerk of Works
- Hugh Steel, Clerk of Works
- Sandra McMillan, Administration Assistant
- Ricky Wilson, Painter / Plasterer (Direct Works)
- Laurence McCluskey, Development Manager
- Chris Cooper, Electrician (Direct Works)
- Jade Gorrie, Area Team Manager is enjoying maternity leave and will be back late 2024

WARM WELCOME

While we bid farewell to some staff, we also have some new team members or familiar faces in new roles:

- Ryan McLean, Apprentice Electrician (Direct Works)
- Chloe Alexander, Apprentice Administration Assistant (Direct Works)
- Heather Craig is covering a temporary Area Team Manager post
- Hazel Clark has moved from Corporate Services to Housing Services
- Holly Byrne is covering a temporary Housing Officer post
- Graeme McManus, Electrician (Direct Works)
- Frazer Sharpe, Electrician (Direct Works)
- George Love, Plasterer (Direct Works)

MEET THE REPAIRS TEAM

Meet our repairs team of 4 Repairs Assistants and 1 Clerical Officer. We are customer focused and are responsible for processing all repairs to our contractors. We also attend to works required for planned maintenance, medical adaptations, gas and electric safety checks and all tenants' queries.

The team works closely with the Association's Property Maintenance Officers, Planned Maintenance Officers, Housing Officers and contractors to ensure that all job lines or inspections are handled as quickly as possible.



Pictured left to right: Aimee Hale, Toni McKinnon, Lynn Anderson and John Coulter



Tenants can report an emergency repair by calling us direct on **0800 068 1466** or scan the QR code.

For non-emergency repairs please call the freephone number or report the repair online using the QR code. Repairs staff will contact you the next working day.

CHA FUNDRAISING

CASH 4 KIDS AYRSHIRE

This Christmas, CHA Group staff raised donations for Cash 4 Kids Ayrshire. Brand-new toys were carefully chosen, and generously donated by the association's dedicated staff. This ensures that children most in need will wake up to a present under the tree on Christmas Morning. An extra £400 was donated by the Association to enhance the charities festive efforts.



NORTH AYRSHIRE FOODBANK

Staff also collected food donations for North Ayrshire Foodbank. Collection efforts resulted in a remarkable donation of essential items and a substantial financial contribution with a cheque amounting to £1500. The food items and money donated will ensure that no person or families go hungry over the festive period in the local area.

TENANT ADVENT CALENDAR

We are giving away a variety of shopping vouchers worth £50 in our daily advent calendar. The winners are selected at random between 1st-21st December 2023 and contacted by their Housing Officer to arrange delivery in time. We hope these vouchers will be used to buy food and treats for families to enjoy during the festive period. Scan the QR code to view today's winner and see how much they have won.



STAFF SPOTLIGHT

What is your role within the organisation?

I am a Marketing Co-ordinator for the Association

How long have you worked for CHA?

I have worked for CHA since March 2023

Name one thing on your bucket list

I'd love to go to Costa Rica to visit the sloth sanctuary or swim with the wild pigs in the Bahamas.

What is your favourite part about the job?

My favourite part of the job is that everyday is different, there is always something happening so there is never a quiet moment.

What is one thing that you wish people knew about your job?

There is a lot of planning and design work that goes on behind the scenes. I spend most of my days writing blogs and press releases, working on formatting the website and social media. Every few months I design and produce the newsletters including, the one you are reading just now!

EDEN QUINN



BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

The Association held its 39th Annual General Meeting on 6th September 2023, which was attended by 23 members. This represents 50% of the membership, many thanks to our members for attending.

The AGM was informed of the Association's financial performance for the year 2022/23 by the Association's auditor. Linda Anderson, Acting Chief Executive Officer outlined in detail the Association's activities during the year.

Following the Annual General Meeting, the Board of Management met to elect new office bearers for 2023/24. The 2023/24 officer bearers are:

Chairperson



Janet Strang

Vice Chair



Brenda Johnstone

Secretary



Drew Hall

Following resignations from Lesley Keenan and John McLaren, the Board of Management currently has 13 members.

The Board of Management have agreed a recruitment timetable to advertise for new Board members. This will take place in January 2024 with recruitment packs being made available online or by contacting CHAs Head Office.

TIS NATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Cunninghame Housing Association is thrilled to announce that Ian Macpherson, Community Engagement & Participation Officer, was awarded 'Outstanding Contribution to Tenant Participation (Housing Staff)'. This award, sponsored by The Scottish Government, recognizes Ian's exceptional dedication and commitment to advancing tenant participation practices within the housing sector.





Cunninghame Furniture Recycling Company

Festive Opening Hours

Closed: Thursday 21st December at 5pm

Last Day For Collections: Friday 15th December

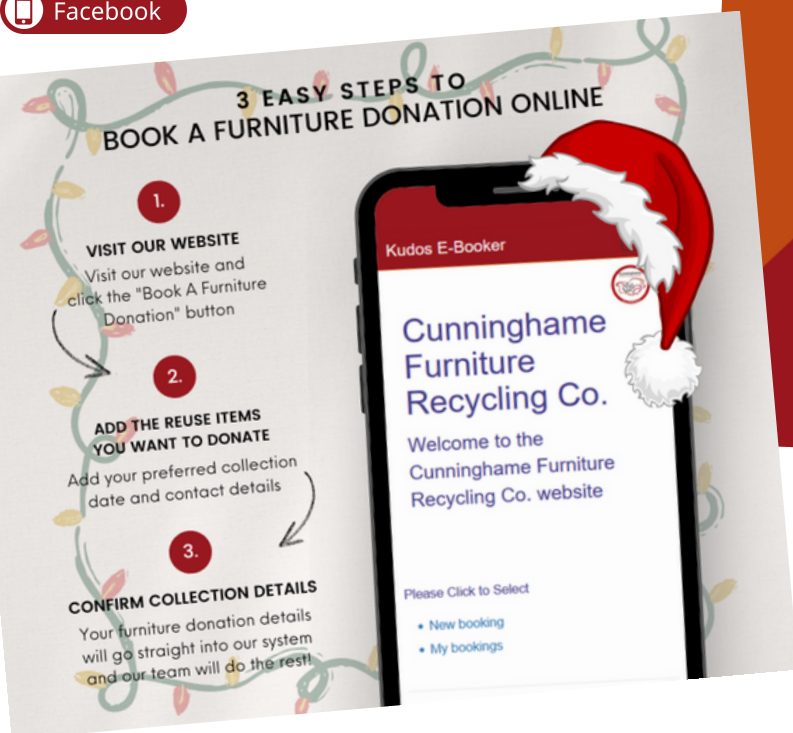
Last Day For Deliveries: Thursday 21st December

Reopen: Thursday 4th January at 9:30am

Remember to keep an eye out on our social media for
information on our upcoming:



While our showroom may be
closed for the holidays, our
online booking system is open
24/7 for furniture donations



**Sale Starts
4th January!**

