



**West
Granton**

Housing Co-op
sustaining and championing
the co-operative way

SPRING 2022

newsletter

Office Closure over the Easter Period

The WGHC Office will be **closed**
for the Easter Public Holidays on

Friday 15th April and

Monday 18th April 2022



Rent Increase 2022-23

Following a tenant consultation, Committee took the decision to increase rents by 4%. All tenants were notified in writing. The new rents will apply from Monday 4th April 2022. WGHC continues to offer one of the lowest rents for a social landlord in the Edinburgh area.

All rent payments are due on a weekly basis or by payment in advance. You can choose to pay your rent by monthly direct debit, cash or debit card in the office, over the phone by debit card or bank standing order. If you are in receipt of Universal Credit, this year WGHC are able to notify the DWP directly of your new rent charge.

As always, if you wish to discuss changes or payment options please contact the Housing Management Team on **0131 551 5035** or alternatively you can email the Team at mail@westgrantonhc.co.uk

Emergency Central Heating Repairs Out-of-Office Hours

McGills (formerly Kingdom Gas)

Telephone: **01334 650452** OR **0800 3899 463**.

Email: Heatingservices@mcgill.co.uk

For all other Emergency Repairs Out-of-Office Hours

Hanover Telecare on **0800 917 8039**



Independent Debt Advice Service for WGHC Tenants



If you are a WGHC tenant and need advice about getting help with your debts, **don't sit and worry!** – **Take action now** and contact a member of our **Housing Management Team** on **0131 551 5035** who can arrange to refer you directly to a specialist Debt Advisor through **CHAI** (Community Help and Advice Initiative Ltd). WGHC along with other ARCHIE partners have set

aside funding for 2022-23 to provide debt advice via CHAI and have an appropriate data sharing agreement in place that complies with both the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 – ensuring and providing you a guarantee that your personal information will only be used and seen by appropriate personnel and not shared with any staff members at WGHC.

Welfare Rights Advice for WGHC Tenants



If you need a benefit check or help claiming Personal Independent Payments, Carers Allowance, Pension Credit or wish to appeal a benefits decision please contact a member of our **Housing Management Team** who will be happy to refer you directly to an independent Welfare Rights Advisor. Again, WGHC along with other ARCHIE

partners have set aside funding for 2022-23 to ensure that WGHC tenants can access the Port of Leith Housing Association Welfare Benefits Service. All personal information remains confidential and any work carried out on your behalf remains between you and the advisor, and is not shared with any staff members at WGHC.

The Young Person's Guarantee – Help to Work

The Edinburgh Guarantee which began in 2011 to help school leavers has been expanded. Now anyone needing support or assistance can get information on jobs, training, education or employment support.

Check out the website www.edinburghguarantee.org or phone **0131 529 3525**



Rising Energy Costs – Changeworks can help

If you know someone who is worried about rising energy prices you are not alone. WGHC can make a referral for any of our tenants who are struggling with energy bills, debt or disconnections. Your

supplier does have to help you come to a solution if you are having difficulty making payments. You can contact your supplier to negotiate a deal OR **Changeworks** can help you.



Fuel Assistance Fund for WGHC Tenants

You can get help from WGHC if you are struggling to pay your energy bills or top up your pre-payment meter. Each case will be considered according to individual circumstances.

For more information please contact a member of the Housing Management Team on **0131 551 5035** or email hm@westgrantonhc.co.uk

Someone's knocking at the door, someone's ringing the bell...

How to check an officer's identity



If Police Scotland contact you, they will do so in person, by phone or by email. This will depend on the circumstances surrounding why they need to contact you.

Contact in person

If one of their officers contacts you in person, they'll show you their police warrant card. This is proof of their identity and authority and you can verify this by dialling **101**.

Contact by phone and email

If one of their officers needs to speak to you on the phone or by email, they'll identify themselves clearly.



They'll never:

- ask you for your bank details or PIN
- ask you to transfer funds to another account
- ask you to hand over cash or bank cards to a courier
- ask you to pay a fine or a fee to them or a third party over the phone or online
- ask you for remote access to your computer, passwords or log in details over the phone or online
- ask you to 'assist' in an investigation by doing any of the above
- communicate in an abusive, threatening or coercive manner
- ask you to click on a hyperlink to participate in an investigation

Remember if you're unsure about whether the person you're dealing with is a genuine police officer – stop – and call us on 101 to check their identity.

YOU are paramount in everything we do

WGHC's business plan clearly indicates that **"Our tenants are paramount in everything we do"**. This is echoed on the first line of our website homepage. This mantra is supported by our 3 core values: **Service, Consistency and Learning**. We seek to promote the 3 core values at every opportunity, so these, again, are published on our website homepage and the footer of each and every e-mail we send. In a further effort to better serve you, we have extended our office opening hours by 2 hours per week. They were 09.15 thru 16.00hrs. As of 1st March, they will be 09.00 thru 16.15hrs – an extra 30mins per day, Monday to Thursday. Friday operational hours remain unchanged.



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Our new hours are:

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday

Office opens at **9am** and closes at **4.15pm**

Wednesday

Office opens at **2pm** and closes at **4.15pm**

Friday

Office opens at **9am** and closes at **4pm**

Lunch – every day, 1-2pm

Full details are shown (in real time) on our website www.westgrantonhousing.coop/about-wghc

Committee Matters

Remember, you can find a copy of the Minutes from the Committee Meetings from our web site www.westgrantonhousing.coop

Your Committee of Management is:

Wendy Riordan (Chairperson)

George Thomson (Vice Chair)

Colin Fraser (2nd Vice Chair)

Elizabeth Robertson

Donna Anderson

George Nicol

Amanda Aitchison

Joe Moir

Jim Hemphill

Fiona Marshall

Stacey Powch-Scott

Jon Douglas

The next Committee Meeting will take place on Wednesday 16th March 2022
Minutes for the December Meeting 2021 are on the website as detailed above.



Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) – Notifiable Events

West Granton Housing Co-op must tell the Regulator about any material, significant or exceptional issue, event, or change within our organisation and how we intend to deal with it, or where appropriate provide them with a reasonably detailed explanation as to why a significant change has happened.

In the last quarter WGHC has had 3 notifiable events.

The table below provides details of the events and the status of each one:

Month in which the event occurred	Details of the Notifiable Event	WGHC Status	SHR Status
December	Governance issues	Resolved	Closed down by SHR on 13/01/22
September	Change of WGHC's Model Rules	Resolved Approved by the Financial Conduct Authority	Closed down by SHR on 15/02/22
September	Governance issues	Resolved	Due to be closed down on SHR on 17/03/22