

# newsletter

THE NEWSLETTER OF TRAFALGAR HOUSING ASSOCIATION



*Merry  
Christmas*

and a Happy New Year  
from all at Trafalgar  
Housing Association

## **Christmas office closure**

The office will close on Friday  
22nd December 2017 at 12  
noon and re-open at 9:30am  
on Thursday 4th January 2018.  
Should you have an EMERGENCY  
during this period please contact  
BIELD on 0800 783 7937

# PREPARING FOR WINTER

Nobody wants to have to deal with an emergency during the holiday period. Here are some simple but effective measures you can take to protect both yourself and your home during this time:

- Before calling out the association's gas engineer for an emergency repair, please ensure there is credit in your pre-payment meter.
- Find out who your electricity, gas and water suppliers are (the information will be on your utility bills) and take a note of their emergency contact information should you need them.
- Leave background heating on if cold weather is expected or you are planning a holiday over this period. This stops your pipes freezing up in a cold snap.
- Consider leaving contact details or keys with a trusted neighbour or relative if you are going away in case you have left a tap on or something happens. Damage can be much worse if no one can get to deal with a problem.
- Be careful with candles and Christmas lighting – they look nice, but should be under supervision at all times or turned off when vacating the property.
- Check batteries in your smoke detector and stock up on torch batteries in case of power cut – a torch is safer to use than candles especially if children are around.
- Check all medical supplies are in order and prevention plans are in place should you be unable to get to your local pharmacy. Ultimately, think of your neighbours and look to assist where possible. The simple kindness of even clearing snow from a neighbour's path goes a long way at this time.

## Winter can bring extra problems – here are some hints to help you:

- Make sure you know where the stopcock is (often under the kitchen sink) and check it. If the stopcock does not work, contact our office.
- Check that overflows are not running as these could freeze and cause damage.
- If you're away (holiday etc) then keeping a minimal level of heat in the property to stop things freezing would be sensible if cold temperatures are expected.
- If thermostatic controls area available then try to maintain a consistent temperature of between 18-21 degrees.
- It is better to keep the heating on a lower heat for a longer period than quick blasts of higher heat.
- If cost is a factor then at least try to heat at key times of moisture production (cooking/showering/laundry) to avoid damp and mould problems.

### If trouble strikes:

- If cold water pipes freeze, turn off the main stopcock. Never use a naked flame to thaw pipes – apply gentle heat, e.g. hairdryer.
- If hot water or heating pipes freeze, call the office or emergency number. Make sure that you turn off any heating appliances.
- If a pipe bursts, turn off the main stopcock and turn on the taps to drain the system quickly. Switch off all heating appliances and call the office or emergency number.

### Getting the most out of your heating:

- Understand your heating system – if you are not clear on how to use and control the heating system then take the time to find out. This will improve conditions and may also save money.

### Please do not pour cooking oil & fat down drains

- With extra cooking over the festive holidays please remember not to pour waste cooking oils and hot fats down the sink as this can cause blockages – let the oil cool and put it in the bin, or collect it in a container and mix with nuts and breadcrumbs to make a tasty treat for garden birds.

## USEFUL TIPS!

If your central heating breaks down/not working check the following:

- Is the power to the appliances turned on?
- Is the boiler thermostat set correctly?
- Is the timer switch set at the correct time?
- Is the room thermostat set properly?
- If you have a prepayment gas meter does it have credit?

# Window Replacement Programme

A window replacement programme is currently underway within Phase 3 (12-20 Trafalgar Street) of the Association's stock. The company carrying out the work is Benview Construction and the product being fitted is Nordan aluclad windows. Work commenced at the beginning of November and is due to be completed by the end of January. So far feedback from tenants has been very positive with some commenting that their homes have never been warmer.



## STOP A FIRE, SAVE A LIFE

- Check your smoke alarms are working and advise the Association if they are not and we will have it checked out.
- Keep portable heaters away from curtains and furniture and never use them for drying clothes.
- Never leave electric blankets switched on when in bed, unless it is marked 'suitable for all night use'.
- If you have been drinking alcohol, do not cook.
- Think about how you would get out of your house if you were to have a fire. If there is a fire in your home, close the door where the fire is. This will help protect your escape route and help to slow the fire spreading so quickly. Get out and stay out, and dial 999.
- Smoke inhalation is the main cause of death from fire in the home. Make sure cigarettes are put out properly. Never smoke in bed.
- Unplug or switch off portable heaters when you go out or go to bed.
- Make sure candles are extinguished before you go to bed.
- At night time switch off and unplug all electrical appliances not designed to be left on overnight.



## The common stair is your only means of escape in the event of a fire.



Have you ever thought what you would do if fire were to break out in your stair? It may not necessarily be in your flat! A fire started in a common stair could kill you and your family. Even a small bag of rubbish can create enough smoke to fill a whole stair. Items left in a common stair are often deliberately set on fire.

### Keep it clear

- Get rubbish, old furniture, etc out of the building
- Make sure storage areas are kept locked
- For advice on uplifting items contact your local Council

### If fire does start

- Keep doors closed to prevent smoke filling your house
- Dial 999 and ask for the Fire and Rescue Service, giving as much information as you can



For free home fire safety advice  
**CALL 0800 0731 999**  
or visit our website at  
[www.firescotland.gov.uk](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk)



**SCOTTISH**  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE  
Working together for a safer Scotland

# THE WARM HOME DISCOUNT SCHEME 2017/18

This winter you could get a £140 discount on your electricity bill through the Warm Home Discount Scheme.

## Eligibility

You qualify for the discount if on 9 July 2017 all of the following apply:

- your electricity supplier was part of the scheme
- your name (or your partner's) was on the bill
- you were getting the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit (even if you get Savings Credit as well)

## If you don't qualify

- You may be able to apply directly to your electricity supplier for help if you don't get the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit but:
- you're on a low income
- you get certain means tested benefits

## Further information and advice

For further information and advice visit [www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme](http://www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme) or contact Margaret or Angela at the association's office.

# TENANTS HOME CONTENTS INSURANCE

Trafalgar Housing Association does not insure tenants' furniture, floor coverings or any other personal items. In order to protect your personal possessions, you need to take out home contents insurance to protect against theft, water damage, fire and other household risks.

**Thistle Tenant Risks** home contents insurance scheme is a special insurance scheme for social housing tenants living in Scotland. The scheme offers flexible payment options and all social housing tenants are eligible to apply.



Further information is available at [thistletenants-scotland.co.uk](http://thistletenants-scotland.co.uk) or by phoning **0345 450 7286**. Alternatively, you can contact Margaret or Angela at the association's office.

# Management Committee Update

We now have a total of 10 people on our management committee who are all local residents within Trafalgar.

They are John Munro (Chair), Eleanor Shannon (Vice-Chair), Carol Scholes (Secretary), Annemarie Bailey, John Butcher, Elizabeth Grass, Nicola Lyden, Eileen McGhie, Harry Robertson and Bernadette Swindon.

As we have space for up to 15 on our committee we will shortly be advertising externally for further applicants.

# Tenant Satisfaction Survey Prize Draw

A huge thank you to all our tenants who returned their completed repair Tenant Satisfaction Survey Questionnaires throughout the year. Your feedback on the repairs service is very important to us and we would urge all tenants to return their slips to us after they've had a repair

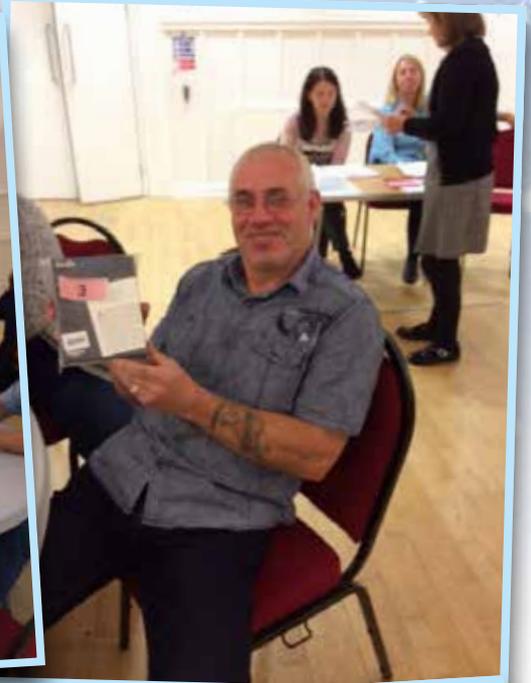
carried out. All returns are entered into the monthly prize draw for a £20 gift voucher. Congratulations to all the winners:

- December 2016 – Ms Goodwin
- January 2017 – Mrs Hillhouse
- February 2017 – Ms Martin
- March 2017 – Mrs Dillin
- April 2017 – Mrs McGhie
- May 2017 – Ms Mains
- June 2017 – Mrs Burke
- July 2017 – Mr Little
- August 2017 – Ms Morgan

# AGM 2017

We were very pleased to have a big turnout yet again at our AGM in the town hall in September. Our vice-chair Eleanor Shannon hosted the event and welcomed 35 shareholders and ten non-shareholders to the event. Congratulations to all those who were awarded a prize in our annual garden competition, and to those who got lucky in our prize draws or highly competitive prize bingo. Commiserations to those who didn't win anything but at least they got something to eat and drink!

Thanks to everyone who attended and for giving us such positive feedback in your survey forms, we do read all the responses and suggestions we get and will take them into account for next year.



# RECYCLING

Trafalgar Housing Association would like to say thank you to everyone who recycles. We actively encourage recycling and every close should have at least two blue bins and a brown food waste bin for everyone to use. We also keep a stock of food caddies and food waste bags which are given out at the office. Around 45% of waste in West Dunbartonshire is recycled but to meet the Scottish Government commitment to recycle 60% by 2020 we need to do more. Please help by recycling as much as you can and use the correct bins and bags:

- Blue bins/bags - paper, tins and cans, cardboard and cartons, plastic bottles, and plastic tubs, pots and punnets
- Brown bin - fruit, vegetables (and peelings), bread, cakes, pasta, pizza, rice, dairy, eggshells, fish, meat, bones, tea bags, pet food
- Grey bin – only for waste that cannot be recycled
- Recycle glass bottles and jars at your nearest bottle bank



Trafalgar Housing Association is a member of HomeSwapper, a nationwide mutual exchange service. Tenants of the association are able to use HomeSwapper free of charge to look for a mutual exchange locally or nationally. The service is easy to use; simply join online and you will automatically be matched to any potential swaps. HomeSwapper will email or text the details to you and you can use that information to find a mutual exchange that's right for you. For information about the service, log on to [www.HomeSwapper.co.uk](http://www.HomeSwapper.co.uk) or contact Margaret or Angela at the association's office.

## GROUND MAINTENANCE / STAIR CLEANING

This year, ground maintenance is being carried out by Trayndale Garden Services Ltd and stair cleaning is being done by CSM Facilities Management Ltd. Although we monitor the performance of contractors, comments from tenants are always helpful, so please contact the office to let us know what you think of the standard of service provided.

# Christmas Card Competition

This year's winning Christmas Card entry was designed by Sara Furmanczyk. Here she is pictured with her winning entry alongside our resident Elf! Well Done Sara!!



All the other entrants received a selection box as a thank you for their efforts. Thank you to all who participated and took the time to draw some lovely pictures. We hope you will all enter again next year.



# HELP TO IMPROVE YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Please help to keep your backcourt in good order. Unwanted items should not be left in backcourts unless uplift has been arranged. If you want to dispose of any items that cannot be donated, you can take them to West Dunbartonshire Council's Recycling Centre in Ferry

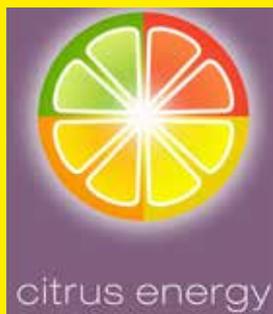
Road, Old Kilpatrick or arrange uplift by the council. Uplift can be arranged at the association's office. Alternatively, you can contact the council directly on 01389 738282 or call into the One-Stop-Shop which is located at 10 Sylvania Way South in Clydebank Shopping Centre.

There is a charge of £18.25 and you will have to pay this before uplift is arranged. The charge covers more than one item, so it makes sense to have all your unwanted items uplifted at the same time or share an uplift with your neighbours and split the cost.

## SAVE MONEY - SWITCH GAS AND ELECTRICITY WITH CITRUS ENERGY

Trafalgar Housing Association works in partnership with Citrus Energy, a social enterprise company that can provide you with a quick and easy service to help reduce your gas and electricity bills. You could save around £200 per year by simply switching your energy supplier using their completely free service.

It's easy to switch with Citrus Energy. All it takes is a ten minute phone call to their experienced team of advisers who will help you find the best energy supply deal for you from the widest range of energy



suppliers. Citrus will completely manage the full switching process from start to finish. All you need to do is have your electricity and gas bills to hand when you call on

Freephone 0800 221 8089.

Citrus Energy customers can also take advantage of further advice on effective use of heating systems, pre-payment meters and help to apply for other energy saving schemes

and benefits. Citrus will review your energy deal every six months to see if they can make further savings for you.

Switching with citrus energy is as easy as 1-2-3

1



Have your energy bills to hand

2



Call us on  
**FREEPHONE  
0800 221 8089**

3



...and we'll do the rest!



Throughout each year we make donations to many charities based at both a local level and also further afield. This year we made a further donation to the Beatson Cancer Charity which took our overall contribution up to £500. This is a charity we have continued to support as we all know someone who has benefited from the fantastic care and service they offer, and their work takes them into every community in Scotland.

These are some of the wonderful items and services which our donations contribute to, supporting the many patients and families who pass through the doors of the Beatson each and every day-

- £25 - will fund an hour of complementary therapy such as reflexology or massage to help patients.
- £75 - will help fund an hour of our highly experienced therapy management team to support patients.
- £150 - could fund a wheelchair to transport patients comfortably between wards and treatment rooms.
- £250 - raised will fund the running cost of our volunteer-led 'meet and greet' service for patients for one week.
- £500 - will help to fund a specialist relaxation chair for patients receiving chemotherapy.



## CONTACT NUMBERS

**Emergency Number**

**Bield Community Alarm Service :**

**Freephone - 0800 783 7937**

**Other Useful Contact Numbers**

**Scottish Water :**  
**0800 077 8778**

**Refuse Collection Bulk Uplift**  
**01389 737 000**

**Scottish Power**  
**0800 027 0072**

**Independent Resource Centre**  
**0141 951 4040**

**Scottish Gas**  
**0800 111 999**

**Dalmuir Library**  
**0141 562 2425**

**Paisley RAH**  
**0141 887 9111**

**Clydebank Health Centre**  
**0141 531 6300**

**Queen Elizabeth UH**  
**0141 201 1100**

**Vale of Leven**  
**01389 754 121**

**Gartnavel Hospital**  
**0141 211 3000**

**Housing Benefit**  
**01389 738 555**

**West Dunbartonshire Council Tax**  
**01389 737 444**

**Social Work**  
**0141 562 8800**

**Emergency Service**  
**999 Fire/Police/Ambulance**

**Police Non-Emergency**  
**101**

**Social Work Out of Hours**  
**Emergency**  
**0800 811 505**

