

RCHA NEWS



The Newsletter of Rutherglen & Cambuslang Housing Association

Winter 2022



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

The Staff and Committee of Rutherglen and Cambuslang Housing Association would like to wish our tenants and customers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year in 2023.



Service over the festive period

➔ The Association offices will be closed over Christmas and New Year from Friday 23rd December (from 1.00pm) until Thursday 5th January 2023. During these times if you have an emergency repair, please call the Freephone number listed below. The Association would again like to

ask that residents please take the time to look out for elderly or disabled neighbours living nearby who you may be concerned about to ensure they remain safe and well during the winter months particularly during periods of colder weather.

EMERGENCY REPAIRS

FIRE, FLOOD, BREAK IN, GAS ESCAPE & POWER FAILURE

TELEPHONE:
FREEPHONE 08001693379
or 0141 647 4917





Christmas Tree Lights

→ Be safe this Christmas and make sure that you get your tree lights checked out by a suitably qualified electrician. Most Christmas tree lights are packed and unpacked once a year and it is easy for people to think that because they are only used for a couple of weeks once a year that they must be safe. This is probably true but we recommend that you check first so as to ensure the safety of your home and family.



→ **The whole of Great Britain has been shocked at the recent Enquiry findings into the death of young two-year-old Awaab Ishak who died in 2020.**

The coroner found that his death was directly caused by living in a damp and mould affected flat with his parents. Rochdale Boroughwide Housing (RBH) were found by the coroner to have failed Awaab and his family in carrying out their responsibilities as a social landlord and by neglecting their 'Duty of Care' towards the Ishak's and many others.

This follows on from other national television campaigns highlighting the shocking damp and mould ridden properties in England. There are approximately 450,000 homes in England that are suffering with problems of damp and in particular Condensation Damp and the resulting black growth mould. This despite efforts to upgrade their social housing stock through their 'Decent Homes' legislation 2004.

Rutherglen & Cambuslang Housing Association would like to reassure their tenants that they have and always will treat Condensation Damp and Growth Mould as a top priority. The Scottish equivalent of 'Decent Homes' is our 'Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)' legislation 2015. The Scottish standard is far more rigorous and more highly regulated than the English standard. The pictures of dripping water and vast areas of walls

Black Mould Growth and the Death of a Toddler in Rochdale

and ceilings covered in black and damp mould, that you see on the national news broadcasts, could never happen in any of our housing stock or probably anywhere in Scotland for that matter.

RCHA have successfully helped many of their tenants, found suffering minor outbreaks of black growth mould, appearing on surfaces within their properties. Apart from issuing information leaflets we raise awareness through our publications and newsletters. We adopt a range of measures to make our homes more energy efficient with new Double-Glazed windows, new highly efficient Gas Boilers, Thermal Imaging Surveys, and a range of De-Humidistat extract fans. We will work with our tenants and take all measures possible to help eradicate the problem. In addition, RCHA properties are meeting the required targets set by The Scottish Governments 'Energy Efficiency Standards for Social Housing 2032 (ESSH)'.

Tenants wishing to know more about how they can help reduce the instances of black growth mould occurring within their properties, and the remedies available to them, should call our maintenance department team for advice. We are always available to visit and carryout property inspections on request.

J McNulty

Building Manager





Frost Alert

➔ This time of year has fallen upon us once again – and it is time for the Association to remind all tenants about the problems that the freezing temperatures of this country can bring. Frozen water supplies or burst pipes are all too common at this time of year but tenants following a few simple steps can avoid all of these Christmas disasters.

- Keep your house warm day and night
- Locate the stop valve in your house now, don't leave it too late (the Association will be happy to help if you require it)
- If you go away in the winter turn off the main stop valve and drain the system (again contact the association if you need any help)

If You Get a Burst Pipe

- Turn the water off at the stopcock
- Switch off electricity at the fuse box
- Switch off any water heaters
- Switch off central heating
- Open all taps to drain down your system
- Collect water in your bath for washing and w.c flushing
- Warn neighbours who may suffer damage
- Contact the Housing Association for further assistance



Annual Rent Review



➔ In our previous Newsletter we mentioned the Governments recent legislation regarding rents and the Associations budget planning for next year. If you have not already got in touch with your views on the proposed rent increase next year of 5% please contact us as soon as possible.

As we mentioned last time the Association will soon be finalising the budget for the forthcoming year. As we are a Registered Social Landlord and a non-profit making organisation any surpluses that are made each year are set aside to re-invest in our properties to ensure that they continue to meet modern standards and that we continue to provide good quality housing in the years ahead.

This year more than ever the Staff and Management Committee of the Association are very aware of the enormous financial pressures and difficulties many of our tenants are experiencing, this situation has been reflected on carefully while considering the Associations annual budget.



An important consideration before any proposal to increase rents this year was to ensure any increase was set at the lowest possible level while ensuring the Association can still meet our essential financial obligations. Our analysis of the budget and comparisons with other Registered Social Landlords plans for next year indicate similar difficult discussions taking place with similarities in the figures being discussed.

We will be writing to tenants early in the new year further outlining our rent review proposals for next year and will again welcome any tenants feedback on this issue now or during the consultation process.



Newsletter Going Digital



→ The Association are always looking at ways to improve how we communicate with our tenants and ensuring that we also do this in an efficient and cost-effective way as we all experience the pressures of the cost-of-living crisis. With this in mind, we are looking to deliver all our future communications and newsletter next year in a more digital way by email or letting our tenants know by text message that our newsletter is ready to read on our website. Please make sure that we have your up-to-date email address and mobile number when contacting our office and look out for more information on this in the new year. You can also have your say on how you prefer we communicate with you in our upcoming Tenant Satisfaction Survey.



Access to Association services from your Smartphone or Computer



→ Our Tenant Portal enables our tenants to manage many of the issues relating to their tenancy without calling our office. The site enables you to pay rent online, view rent statements, report repairs, view repairs history, give feedback and update contact details.

Registering and getting started is easy, on the Website(www.randcha.co.uk) you can create an account on the top right-hand corner of the Home page at "Your Account" Login/Register, shown in the above image.

To create an account all you will need to give is the details here on the right, once you have hit the register button at the bottom you will then be asked to create a Password enabling you access to the tenant portal with all the above information and options available to you.

Your tenant number will be at the top of any correspondence you receive from us, if in doubt we can provide you with this number on request.

If you have any other questions about the process, please contact a member of our Housing Management team.

You can now contact the Housing Management and Repairs section direct via email with any particular enquiries you have, the email addresses are:-

Email: housing@randcha.co.uk

Email: maintenance@randcha.co.uk



Your tenant number *	Your tenant number is a required field
Your surname *	Your surname is a required field
Your year of birth *	Your year of birth is a required field
Your postcode *	Your postcode is a required field
Your email address *	Your email address is a required field

Register



Bulk and Household Refuse

➔ In many of our local communities we have seen increases in fly tipping of Bulk items and general household refuse in recent years. This problem usually gets worse over the festive period, could we again ask for everyone's co-operation to ensure removal of these additional refuse items is properly organised.

These problems are unsightly, can cause an increase in vermin issues and sometimes can become a fire hazard (please see the separate leaflet we have enclosed with this Newsletter).

We sometimes see an increase in packaging and discarded household items during the festive period,

The Cleansing Department operate a free uplift service, they can be contacted on Tel **0303 123 1020** to arrange removal.

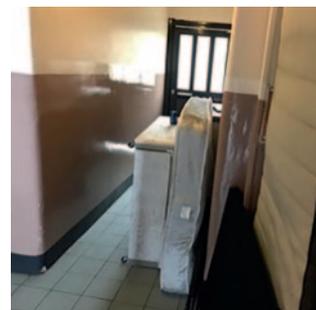


This should help ensure at the start of the New Year our communities are kept clear of unsightly packaging/bulk items and any resulting problems.



Fire Safety in common areas

➔ Anyone who continues to leave bulk items and refuse in the common close or communal areas should read the attached and be fully aware of the potential danger to life that this practice causes. Items stored or discarded in the common close pose a real danger through the risk of fire raising. Please discard of these items properly or store items elsewhere to ensure the safety of your family members and others living in the close. Don't put yourself and others in danger, please use the proper procedures in place for disposal of refuse and bulk items.



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



SCOTTISH
 FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
 Working together for a safer Scotland



Weekend Payments

South Lanarkshire Council



➔ **South Lanarkshire Council have Introduced the above financial assistance for households with children in receipt of free school meals, SLC advise that:-**

As part of a package of measures aimed at providing additional financial support to households during the current cost of living crisis, we will provide cash payments to households with children in receipt of free school meals to cover weekend days from the beginning of November 2022, up to the end of March 2023.

In line with the current level of funding provided to cover school holiday periods, payments will be made monthly, with five payments made in total covering November 2022 – March 2023.

The above payments are in addition to support delivered through the continuation of free school meals over the school holidays. Payment dates for future weekends will be confirmed nearer the time. Although all P1 to P5 pupils receive a free school meal in school, in line with Scottish Government funding arrangements, the payments referred to above will only be made if you get any of the following benefits and are therefore eligible for free school meals:

- Income Support
- Universal Credit (and your earned income is less than £660 as assessed by the Department for Work and Pensions in the assessment period immediately preceding the application for free school meals)
- Job Seekers Allowance (income based)
- Employment and Support Allowance (income related)
- Child Tax Credit only (with a gross annual income less than £17,005 as assessed by HM Revenues and Customs on your Tax Credit Award Notice TC602)
- Working Tax Credit and Child Tax credit (with a gross annual income less than £7,920) as assessed by HM Revenues and Customs on your Tax Credit Award Notice (TC602)
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999



If you have any other questions about free school meals during the weekend from November 2022 – March 2023 use our enquiry form. (The enquiry form can be obtained on the SLC website under Free School Meals).

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Add your voice, help us improve services...



→ Would you like to help improve social landlord services in Scotland? Add your voice to the National Panel of Tenants and Service Users!

The Panel is one of the ways that the Scottish Housing Regulator can hear what tenants and service users think and make sure it focuses on the important things. Members receive occasional surveys and invites to take part in other feedback exercises. Participation is always optional and you can leave at any time.

We want to include a diverse range of people on the Panel, including those who are not involved in other ways of giving views on landlord services. Members include council and housing association tenants, people who have used homeless services, homeowners who receive social landlord factoring or common repairs, and people living on social rented Gypsy/Traveller sites.



Tenant Satisfaction Survey

→ From time to time the Association carries out an independent survey to find out how we are performing in our key service areas. As part of our continuous improvement, it is important for us to find out areas where we are performing well and identify areas where we could do better.

We are now about to embark on our latest survey and will take the form of door to door and telephone interviews by an independent company.

In addition to the services we provide, the survey will include questions about affordability of our rents and access to online services and welfare advice.

The company carrying out the survey will be Research Resource and we will write to tenants nearer the time when the survey work is about to start. All responses are anonymous and the more tenants that take part will make the survey more accurate and useful.

All the surveyors will carry identification and a letter of introduction from the Association. Please be alert to the dangers of bogus callers, always ask to see identification and phone the Associations office if you are suspicious of anyone saying they are representing the Association – please always be alert to the dangers of bogus callers and always ask to see identification if you do not recognise callers to your home.



Christmas Word Search

K	F	A	M	I	L	Y	T	R	N	K	B	J	L	H
Y	M	U	T	J	C	O	R	B	S	X	G	O	J	H
Y	U	P	L	R	C	A	R	O	L	S	I	Y	I	F
Y	C	M	R	R	E	Q	N	W	E	E	V	E	N	N
L	H	F	E	E	P	E	H	D	N	D	I	J	G	O
S	R	B	T	D	S	C	S	S	Y	W	N	G	L	R
Y	I	Q	M	T	Y	E	R	C	M	C	G	S	E	T
U	S	T	O	C	K	I	N	G	S	J	A	E	I	H
U	T	L	I	G	H	T	S	T	G	S	D	N	W	P
L	M	F	L	I	O	V	S	M	S	N	J	S	E	O
K	A	V	F	X	B	I	Z	G	I	I	G	D	T	L
B	S	R	E	B	Z	S	L	E	I	G	H	X	C	E
F	K	Y	O	L	Q	H	R	N	S	N	O	W	R	U
X	N	L	R	J	F	Z	C	D	N	D	E	X	X	V
H	S	T	A	R	W	S	A	N	T	A	T	L	V	M

BOW
CANDY CANE
CAROLS
CHRISTMAS
ELF

FAMILY
GIVING
JINGLE
JOY
LIGHTS

NORTH POLE
PRESENTS
REINDEER
SANTA
SLEIGH

SNOW
STAR
STOCKINGS
TREES



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