

YOKER HOUSING ASSOCIATION HOLIDAY HANDBOOK DECEMBER 2022 NEWSLETTER



The Management Committee and staff at Yoker Housing Association Ltd wish you and your family a safe and happy holiday. We look forward to seeing you in 2023!

Festive Opening Hours: The Association's office will close on Friday the 23rd of December at 1 p.m. and will re-open on Tuesday the 3rd of January 2023 at 9 a.m.



0141 950 9050



housing@yokerha.org.uk
maintenance@yokerha.org.uk



www.yokerha.org.uk



Page Number	Topic
01	Tenant Scrutiny
02	Rent Consultation Results
03	Tenant Reward Scheme
04	Winter Weather Advice
05	Maintenance Information
06	Gas Servicing / Rechargeable Repairs
07	Additional Help
08	Festive Fun
09	Paying Your Rent
10	Methods of Payment
11	Estate Management
12	Development News / Policy Updates
13	Community Information / Staff Updates
14	Emergency Contact Numbers

TENANT SCRUTINY

What is Tenant Scrutiny?

Tenant scrutiny is the critical examination of services by evaluating performance information and data specific to that area of service delivery. Tenant scrutiny aims to improve organisational performance and the standard of services being delivered.

What can be scrutinised?

Scrutiny activities can include service-specific scrutiny (where a particular service or policy is scrutinised). Alternatively, scrutiny activities can cover a range of activities (where the Association's performance is scrutinised on a regular or systematic basis).



Who benefits?

Ultimately, it is the residents who are the main beneficiaries of successful scrutiny. Scrutiny allows residents to question their landlords on issues such as why a service is delivered in a particular way or whether costs can be reduced while continuing to provide a good level of service. The answers to these questions may lead to recommendations being presented to the Association which could result in changes to how services are being delivered.

Our scrutiny experience!

During October 2022 we held scrutiny sessions in relation to the Association's most recent kitchen and bathroom replacement programmes. We experienced a low level of participation, but despite this, the Association received some very useful feedback from the tenants that attended the sessions.

Do you want to be part of future Scrutiny activities?

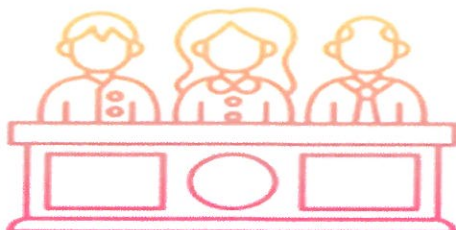
If you would like more information on how to participate, or wish to offer suggestions on areas of service delivery that you think should be subject to scrutiny, please contact Housing Services on 0141 950 9052.

Want to be involved but not scrutinise?

The Association consults with tenants through the use of surveys, questionnaires, our website and newsletter. We would encourage residents to provide feedback and opinion by completing any questionnaires or surveys they receive from the Association. This allows the Association to gain an understanding of tenants' views that could lead to change in how a policy or service is delivered.

The Association is always happy to engage in different forms of participation and is happy to consult with tenants in a group setting. If you wish to register your interest in forming a tenant group, please contact Housing Services on 0141 950 9052.

OPEN MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING



During 2023 the Association is looking to hold an open Management Committee meeting. An open meeting will allow tenants who are interested to gain a better understanding of the role of the Committee and Committee Members.

RENT CONSULTATION 2023 / 2024

During early 2023, the Association's Management Committee will be making decisions regarding the level of rent increase that should be applied from 1 April 2023. When considering its decision, the Management Committee considers the affordability of current rent levels, how our rents compare to those of other landlords and the financial viability of the Association.

As part of the review process, the Management Committee also considers the views of tenants. In order to collect feedback and opinions, the Association consulted with 620 tenants during December 2022. As part of the consultation process, tenants were asked to confirm whether or not they considered their current rent charge to be affordable and were also asked what they consider to be an appropriate level of rent increase that should be applied from 1 April 2023.

At the date of publication of this newsletter, of the 620 surveys issued, the Association received responses from 127 tenants, representing a response rate of 20.5%. The results of the tenant consultation are shown below:

How affordable do you consider your current rent?		
	Responses	%
Very affordable	31	24.4%
Fairly affordable	69	54.3%
Neither affordable nor unaffordable	24	18.9%
Fairly unaffordable	3	2.4%
Very unaffordable	0	0.0%
Question not answered	0	0.0%
Total	127	100%

What rent increase should be applied next year:		
	Responses	%
No rent increase	67	52.8%
Increase of between 1.0% and 5.0%	47	37.0%
Increase of between 5.0% and 7.5%	8	6.3%
Increase of between 7.6% and 10.0%	0	0.0%
Increase of 9.6% (CPIH)	2	1.6%
Increase of 11.1% (CPI)	0	0.0%
Questioned not answered	3	2.4%
Total	127	100%



The Association wishes to encourage as many tenants as possible to participate. This can be done by completing the questionnaire and returning it to the Association's office or online at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/72B28RP>

TENANT REWARD SCHEME

Did you know that the Association has rewarded tenants with over £450,000 since 2011 through our **Tenant Reward Scheme**? This year, the average tenant reward payment was **£190.90**.

The Association will be reviewing the continuation of the tenant reward scheme in 2023 as the Scottish Government has indicated it may extend rent increase restrictions to landlords from 1 April 2023. If those restrictions are imposed then the tenant reward scheme may become unaffordable to the Association and may have to come to an end.

An announcement is due from the Scottish Government in the middle of January 2023 and the Association's Management Committee will make its decision once clarification is obtained from the Scottish Government.

In the event that the scheme does continue into 2023, you will have to take full responsibility for ensuring that your rent is paid on time and in accordance with the qualifying rules summarised below ...

How do you qualify?

To qualify you **MUST**:

- ◇ Pay your full rent **on/before** the 1st of each month.
- ◇ **Not** pay by cash or cheque at the office.
- ◇ Have **no** rent arrears during the qualifying period.
- ◇ **Adhere** to an arrangement to pay any other outstanding debts.
- ◇ **Not** give notice to terminate your tenancy prior to 15 December 2023.
- ◇ Pay **only** by bank transfer; Allpay rent card; standing order or Direct Debit.

... also remember that ...

- ◇ Any rechargeable repairs **must** be paid in full by the end of the month following issue by the Association, or have an agreed repayment plan that is maintained.
- ◇ You need to have enough money in your bank account. If your bank rejects your payment, **you may lose your reward!**

Assuming that it goes ahead, the tenant reward scheme for 2023 will run from **1 March 2023** to **1 December 2023**.

Your reward payment will be based on the **difference** between your annual rent on **31 March 2023** and your annual rent on **31 March 2020** (or your tenancy start date if you signed up after 31 March 2020).

For full details, you can contact a member of staff on 0141 950 9052; email: housing@yokerha.org.uk or find a full copy of the policy online at www.yokerha.org.uk

Are you an Owner?

You can qualify for a £15.00 reduction on your next quarterly management fee by paying your invoice within 14 days of the issue date and by keeping your account clear of arrears.

WINTER WEATHER ADVICE

Tackling Condensation This Winter

Condensation occurs when properties are not properly heated or ventilated, and where warm, moist air hits cold surfaces such as window panes. As a tenant you are expected to ventilate and heat your home properly so that damp or condensation does not develop.

Activities such as cooking, showering, washing and drying clothes creates extra moisture in your home.

To reduce condensation, you should:

- ◇ Cover pans when cooking.
- ◇ Use extractor fans in kitchens and bathrooms.
- ◇ Close internal doors when you cook or shower.
- ◇ Dry clothes outdoors or using a vented tumble dryer.
- ◇ Open your bedroom windows for 5 to 10 minutes when you get up.
- ◇ Heating your home daily on a low temperature such as 15 degrees (18 degrees is the Government's recommendation) in all rooms can prevent damp and mould.

If you still have issues with condensation and require further advice or assistance, please contact the Association's Maintenance department on 0141 950 9051.

Proper Planning Prevents Poor Performing Pipes

Avoid burst pipes this winter.

Keep your central heating on **at all times** during the cold weather (the recommendation from the Government is to set your thermostat to eighteen degrees Celsius). This will prevent considerable damage to your home.

Are you going away over winter? If switching off your central heating, turn your radiator's valves to the frost setting to prevent your pipes from freezing.



Avoid Dampness Despair

If you notice any damp patches in your property, please monitor and report these to the Association at the earliest opportunity.

Do not paint over the damp patch even if you think it has dried out. Painting over the patches may prevent us from being able to trace and rectify the problem.

Stay Safe

Keep warm. Wear more than one layer of clothing.

Be prepared. Check your GP's festive opening hours and ensure all of your prescriptions are ordered on time. When invited, go for your flu jab.

Drink up. Make sure to drink at least one hot drink each day.

Don't sit still. Moving around every hour or so, even when indoors, will keep you warm and healthy.

Leave draughts, cold and flu at the door. Close all doors behind you and make sure your cupboards are stocked with cold and flu remedies.

Are you going out? Watch out for the ice! Make sure to wear shoes with good grips.

MAINTENANCE INFORMATION

MAINTENANCE PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK

Our Maintenance department is responsible for day-to-day repairs, safety checks and improvements to your homes.



The Association continually monitors the maintenance service provided by issuing monthly Performance Feedback Questionnaires. We would appreciate if you would take the time to complete and return these to the office. Questionnaires can also be returned by email, or completed online via the Survey Monkey address enclosed in the questionnaire letter.

In addition to this, the Association has begun carrying out post-repair inspections in the form of random spot-checks. This allows us to identify any work that has been completed, and confirm that it has been done to a suitable standard. We would be grateful if you could co-operate by arranging appropriate access to your property if requested.

Thank you in advance!

Satellite System

If you wish to receive digital television signals, you must have a Freeview television, Digibox or subscribe to Sky via satellite system.

If you are interested in connecting to the Sky system, this can be done for a charge of £70. This charge is for connection only and is payable to the Association. Please note that all tenements are limited to one feed per flat, therefore access to Sky Plus is limited and Sky Q is **not** available.

Smoke, Heat and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

All properties have now been fitted with smoke, heat and carbon monoxide alarms in accordance with Scottish Government legislation.

If these are found to be disconnected within your property, this will be considered an essential repair and they must be refitted. You must not remove any safety alarms — if you do the costs associated with replacing these will be recharged.

Bin it, don't flush it!

Please don't flush nappies, wipes, sanitary towels, gum, condoms, wrapping paper, old phones, unpaid bills, junk mail or goldfish down your toilet.

Your drains cannot cope and you will be recharged!

GAS SERVICING

Gas Servicing is both *your* and the *Association's* responsibility!

Gas servicing is an essential yearly service that the Association is **legally** required to carry out in accordance with the Gas Installation and Use Regulations.

You must provide the Association with access to carry this out before the last inspection's expiry date to ensure the continued safety of you and your neighbours.

The Association will write, giving you 28 days notice before the anniversary date of your last check. **You** should contact us **immediately** upon receipt of your letter to arrange a suitable appointment.

If you do not allow access, we will arrange a forced access for us to undertake this work. **You will be recharged for the associated costs** regardless of whether or not we force access on the day.

Working together will ensure the safety of all our residents so please call to book in your gas safety check when requested to do so.

STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO FOLLOW IF YOU SMELL GAS!

- ◇ Turn off **all** gas appliances.
- ◇ Turn off gas supply at meter.
- ◇ Put out all open flames (e.g., cigarettes, candles etc.).
- ◇ **Do not** touch any electrical switches to prevent sparks / fire.
- ◇ Open all windows and doors to let the gas out.
- ◇ **Immediately** phone the Scottish Gas Network (SGN) on **0800 111 999**.
- ◇ Think you have a **gas leak**? **Never** attempt to deal with this yourself. Call SGN and report it on **0800 111 999**.

RECHARGEABLE REPAIRS

The following services / repairs are rechargeable to tenants:

- ◇ The tenant has requested that the work be carried out and **the Association is not responsible for the cost** (e.g. a tenant requests locks to be changed or for the installation of electrical and white goods).
- ◇ Damage has occurred as a result of neglect / abuse by the tenant, household occupier or visitors to the tenant's home.
- ◇ Emergency services have forced entry.
- ◇ The repair is considered the tenants responsibility under the terms of their tenancy (e.g. replacement of lightbulbs, thermostat batteries etc).
- ◇ The tenant has locked themselves out and forced entry is required.



ADDITIONAL HELP IS OUT THERE!

Glasgow NW Foodbank

The Association acts as a referring agency for Glasgow NW Foodbank.

The Association can issue vouchers for the foodbank to tenants in need. To find out more information about the foodbank or to request a voucher code please contact a member of Housing Services on 0141 950 9052.

The foodbank is open on Tuesdays and Fridays from 12.00 p.m. to 2.00 p.m.



The address of the foodbank is:

Glasgow NW Foodbank
Blawarthill Parish Church
Millbrix Avenue
Glasgow
G14 0EP



Drumchapel Money Advice Centre

Drumchapel Money Advice Centre (DMAC) is an independent money advice service who can provide assistance to tenants of the Association. DMAC is a free of charge service and can assist tenants with the following issues:

- ✧ Rent Arrears
- ✧ Council Tax Arrears
- ✧ Welfare Benefits entitlement
- ✧ Housing Benefit & Council Tax Benefit
- ✧ Appealing against benefit decisions
- ✧ Working Tax Credits & Family Tax Credits
- ✧ Debt Counselling
- ✧ Benefit Overpayments
- ✧ Representation at Benefit Tribunals

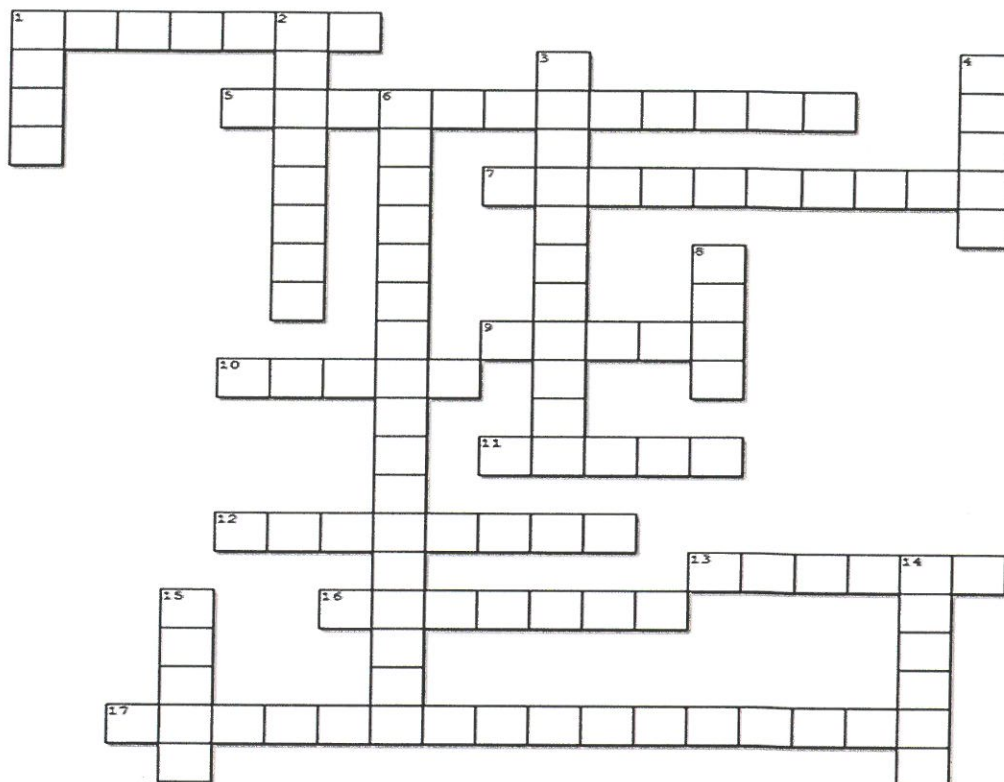
*Drumchapel
Money Advice
Centre*

To arrange an appointment with an advisor please contact DMAC on 0141 944 0507 or, alternatively, contact Housing Management on 0141 950 9052 who will arrange an appointment on your behalf.

FESTIVE FUN

GUESS AND WIN

ANSWER ALL CORRECTLY AND RETURN TO THE OFFICE BY 4 PM on JAN 10TH 2023 FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN A £25 ASDA VOUCHER



Across

1. How many scrabble points do you get for the word Christmas? (7)
5. How do you say Merry Christmas in Spanish? (5, 7)
7. Which plant is known as the Christmas flower? (10)
9. What was the colour of the suit Santa wore before Coca Cola commercialised him and changed it to red? (5)
10. What is Will Ferrell's character's name in Elf? (5)
11. Jesus was given 3 gifts by the wisemen on his birth, Gold, Frankincense and what? (5)
12. What Jewish celebration takes place this year between Sun 18th Dec and Mon 26th Dec? (8)
13. Which country does the upside down Christmas tree originate from? (6)
16. Alphabetically, which one of Santa's reindeer comes first? (7)
17. What was the name of Cliff Richard's 1988 number 1 Xmas single? (9, 3, 4)

Down

1. What is the name of Kristoff's reindeer in Frozen? (4)
2. What is Scrooge's first name? (8)
3. Who was Scrooge's business partner? (5, 6)
4. In which country is it tradition to have KFC for Xmas dinner? (5)
6. An angel got their wings each time a bell was rung in which Christmas movie? (3, 1, 9, 4)
8. In the twelve days of Christmas how many ladies were dancing? (4)
14. What spice is associated with Eggnog? (6)
15. In Home Alone, where were the McCallister's going when they left Kevin behind? (5)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PAYING YOUR RENT

Under the terms of your tenancy, you are required to pay your rent, in advance, on or before the first of each month. If you are in receipt of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit it is still your responsibility to ensure your rent account is maintained in accordance with your tenancy agreement. You can request a statement of your rent account at any time by contacting Housing Services on 0141 950 9052.



Whilst we appreciate that people can experience difficulty in meeting their financial commitments, we are continuing to find that tenants do not engage with the Association and choose to stop paying their rent. The implications of not paying rent impacts directly on the Association's financial ability to maintain properties and provide services to residents. By not paying your rent, you are also putting your tenancy at risk.

If you experience financial difficulties and are unable to afford to make payment of rent, we would encourage you to contact the Association as soon as possible. By doing so, we can agree a suitable and reasonable repayment arrangement and, where applicable, refer you to Drumchapel Money Advice Centre (DMAC) to obtain independent money / welfare advice and assistance.



Did You Know?

DWP
Department for
Work and Pensions

UC
Universal
Credit

If you are in receipt of Universal Credit you can ask the Department of Works and Pension (DWP) to pay your rent costs directly to the Association.

By doing so, it will ensure that regular rent payments (given your circumstances do not change) are received and this will allow the Association to monitor any changes / discrepancies on your behalf.

METHODS OF PAYMENT

ALLPAY

Simply take your rent card to any shop / outlet which displays the Allpay logo, along with your payment method (i.e. card or cash) and hand them to the cashier. Once payment has been made you will receive a receipt. Please retain this receipt for your own records and for proof of payment. If you do not have an Allpay rent card, or if you require a replacement, please contact Housing Services on 0141 950 9052 and we will order one to be delivered to your home or the Association's office.



DIRECT DEBIT

The easiest way to pay your rent is by setting up a direct debit. All you need is a U.K. current account or building society account that accepts direct debits. You can set up a direct debit on your preferred payment schedule (e.g. weekly, fortnightly, monthly). This can now be set up over the telephone and only requires 7 days notice. If you would like to set up a direct debit, or make a change to your current arrangement, please contact the Association on 0141 950 9052 and we will be happy to assist you.



CASH / CHEQUE

Whilst the Association tries to limit the number of cash transactions in the office, if you have no alternative means you may pay in cash at the office during office hours.

If paying by cheque you can do this via post or by handing it into the office. Please make the cheque payable to 'Yoker Housing Association Limited' and on the reverse write your name, address and reference number. Remember cheques can take some time to process, so please ensure to send them and allow enough time for them to be credited on / before the 1st of the month.



INTERNET BANKING

If you have access to internet banking, or have your banking app on your phone (you can download this from your device's App Store) you can pay via bank transfer. This service is available 24 hours, 7 days a week. Just remember to use your reference number in order for the Association to correctly identify your payment.

You can also set up a **Standing Order** through your internet banking if this is your preferred payment method. Remember to use your reference number. Please note that the Association does not have control over the maintenance of standing orders.



ESTATE MANAGEMENT

We need your help to keep the area clean and tidy!

Bulk Uplift

If you have any large items that require disposal, the Association's contractors will continue to collect these on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, on a fortnightly basis.

Please ensure that bulk is stored neatly and safely adjacent to the bin store area ensuring the items are not causing any trip hazards for other residents.

Please do not leave any bulk items inside closes or against buildings as these can act as a trip or fire hazard. Items left inside closes will not be collected.

Back Courts

The Association asks that you dispose of general waste properly into the bins provided. Failure to dispose of general waste properly brings vermin to the area e.g. rats, foxes and birds which in turn disperses the rubbish all over the back courts.

Tenants are advised to report an infestation of vermin to Glasgow City Council on 0141 287 1059 (Council Environmental Protection Emergency Line) or 0141 287 9700 (Environmental Control Cleansing Line).

Refuse Collection Dates

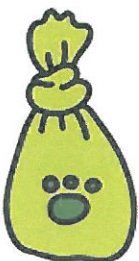
Glasgow City Council's (GCC) bin collection dates are changing over the festive period. Please familiarise yourself with the new dates and ensure all rubbish and recycling is placed in the correct bins on time for collection (**main door properties only**).

GCC have advised that tenement / flat collections may also be on a different day than usual. Please note that this is only over the festive period and normal service will resume in the new year.



Old Collection Day	Sunday	Monday	Sunday	Monday
Date:	25th Dec 2022	26th Dec 2022	1st Jan 2023	2nd Jan 2023
New Collection Day	Tuesday	Wednesday	Tuesday	Wednesday
Date:	27th Dec 2022	28th Dec 2022	3rd Jan 2023	4th Jan 2023

Please clean up after your pets !



Dog fouling has been a growing problem in the area over the past year. While we know that most dog owners clean up after their pets, some people still fail to do so. Remember that failure to clean up after your dog is a criminal offence. Please note if your dog fouls in the close and you do not clean it up, you will be recharged for any associated costs incurred by the Association in cleaning this up.

DEVELOPMENT NEWS



Blawarthill Hospital Site

The Association and its construction partner CWP, with funding support from Glasgow City Council and the Scottish Government, completed the first stage of the development of the old Blawarthill Hospital site in 2021.

In last year's newsletter we let you know that building work would shortly be commencing on the second stage — construction of fifteen new build properties. The Association is pleased to announce that building work is now well underway.

CWP has made great progress thus far and is aiming to have the properties completed and ready for letting by the Autumn of 2023.

The properties will be a mixture of bungalows and cottage flats and will be highly energy efficient with the aim of achieving the "Passivhaus" standard. Their high levels of insulation, good indoor air quality and low carbon footprint will help the Association to ensure adherence with regulatory requirements and assist with Scotland's climate change targets.

The new properties will be let in line with the Association's Allocations Policy. If you are interested in putting your name on our open waiting list please contact Housing Services on 0141 950 9052 who will be happy to assist you in completing an application form.



POLICY UPDATES

Tenants have a right to be consulted on any proposals that affect them significantly. The Association both welcomes and encourages the constructive views of tenants and other service users.

During 2023, we will be looking to review the following policies.

- ◇ Decoration Allowance for Void Properties Policy
- ◇ Rent Setting Policy
- ◇ Lodger Policy
- ◇ Freedom of Information Policy
- ◇ Maintenance Policy
- ◇ Asbestos Management Policy
- ◇ Repair Response Times & Categories Policy
- ◇ List of Approved Maintenance Contractors
- ◇ Selection and Performance of Maintenance Contractors
- ◇ Emergency Policy & Procedures
- ◇ Legionella Policy



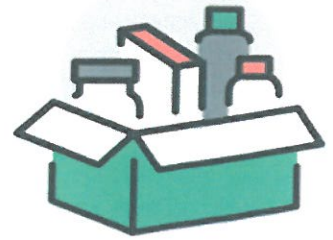
A copy of any of these policies can be obtained upon request. These policies can also now be downloaded from our website at www.yokerha.org.uk. If you wish to discuss any of these policies or wish to provide any feedback or suggestions you can do so by contacting Housing Services on 0141 950 9052 or by e-mailing your comments to housing@yokerha.org.uk.

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

The owners of DeeDee's café on Dumbarton Road have opened the North West Community Pantry. With the cost of living crisis, it is acknowledged that people are struggling with affording groceries but do not want to frequently attend a foodbank.

The community pantry is an alternative option where you can pay £2.50 and receive a basket worth of essentials.

North West Community Pantry opening hours are every Tuesday between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. and every Thursday between 12 p.m. and 3 p.m.



The Pantry can also offer assistance with obtaining computers and internet access. Should you require more information on this please ask a member of staff at the Pantry.

The address of the Pantry is:

North West Community Pantry
2344 Dumbarton Road
Yoker
Glasgow
G14 0JX



STAFF UPDATES



We are pleased to say that we have had another successful recruitment drive and have added additional housing services staff.

Derek, Kate and Sebastian will be working across maintenance, planned maintenance and housing services over the next few years. They have settled in well and are enjoying their new roles.

Sebastian says: *"I have been enjoying my time here and I, being Polish, hope that I will continue to help improve the communication between the Association and our Polish tenants"*.

At the end of March 2023 the Association will be saying goodbye to Gillian Leitch who is retiring. Gillian has worked for the Association for forty-one years and has always aimed to give the best customer service to all of our tenants and other service users.

We will all be very sad to see Gillian leave. As the Association's longest serving employee, she has been the "face of Yoker" for many years.

Gillian says: *"I have been working for the Association since leaving school. I have seen considerable change in property standards from the beginning of the refurbishment works in the early nineteen eighties. My work has been extremely fulfilling and I will miss talking with the tenants. However, looking to the future I know they'll be in safe hands."*



EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

The Association's automated telephone service can be used to access emergency contractors when the office is closed. Please dial **0141 950 9050** and follow the instructions to access an emergency contractor.

This service is for emergencies only - non emergency call-outs will be recharged to tenants.

If you wish to contact an emergency contractor directly, please use the following numbers:

Gas & Central Heating

HiFlow

Heating & Plumbing

0141 944 6060

Joiner

Clyde Technical

Services

07947 276328

Electrician

Clyde Electrical

Solutions

07376 290065



Other Useful Contact Numbers

Close Door

(No Entry/Exit Only)

Clyde Electrical Solutions

07376 290065

Stair & Backcourt

Lighting

Glasgow City Council

0800 595 595

GCC Noise Team

Operate from 5p.m. to 3a.m.

0141 287 6688

Gas Leaks

Scottish Gas

0800 111 999

Loss of Water

Scottish Water

0800 731 0840

Loss of Power

Scottish Power

0800 092 9290

SHOUT

(Mental health support)

Text **'SHOUT'** to

85258

SAMARITANS (24hr)

(From your mobile)

116 123

Drumchapel Money

Advice Centre

0141 944 0507

Office Hours during the Festive Period

The Association's office will close on Friday the 23rd of December 2022 at 1 p.m. and re-open on Tuesday the 3rd of January 2023 at 9 a.m.