

Garrion People's Housing Co-operative Covid-19 Newsletter

We hope you, your friends and families are safe and well during these strange and challenging times. Like many of you we are all adapting to lockdown and the challenges it brings.

Over the past three weeks since lockdown our staff have been working incredibly hard to provide the best possible service to you and our community during these unprecedented times. We have adapted in the way we work, so to keep you updated of these changes we have created this special Covid-19 newsletter.

Stay safe and remember our staff are here to help so just pick up the phone.

From Everyone at Garrion Peoples Housing Co-operative



Just one of the rainbow pictures created by children which you can put in your window.

Garrion Peoples Housing Co-operative Ltd

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✉enquiries@gphc.org.uk

www.gphc.org.uk

Tenant Safety – Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS)

With us all spending more time at home due to COVID-19, there can be an increased risk of fire. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service have issued advice on staying safe within your home.

For the latest COVID-19 news from SFRS please visit www.firescotland.gov.uk. Please note that during COVID-19 SFRS have suspended their home fire safety visits.

Follow this checklist as part of your night time routine to reduce the chances of fire happening in your home and help protect your escape route if there is a fire.

- Switch off and unplug all electrical appliances not designed to be left on overnight.
- Stub out all cigarettes and always empty ashtrays. Pour water over cigarette ends before putting them in the bin outside.
- Close all doors – it can keep your escape route free from smoke and may stop a fire spreading.
- Make sure the main door keys are to hand.

Tips and Advice on Fire Safety

General Cooking

- Make sure your home has working smoke alarm(s)
- Make sure your cooker is or has been fitted properly by a qualified fitter
- Keep your oven, cooker and grill clean and make sure there's no fat on it
- Keep tea towels, cloths and kitchen paper away from the cooker
- Keep fats and oils away from the cooker
- Cook with handles turned to the side to avoid them spilling
- Use a flameless lighter on gas cookers instead of matches or a lighter

Chip pans and deep-frying

Modern electric deep fat fryers are much safer than traditional chip pans as they have a safety switch that cuts them off to stop them overheating and catching fire.

Try not to use a traditional chip pan if you can because there's always a high risk of fire. If you do use a traditional chip pan, follow our safety advice:

- Only ever fill one third full
- Turn the handle to the side – but not over any of the other cooker rings
- Fry in small amounts – overfilling could cause spills
- Make sure food going in it is dry, not dripping wet or covered in ice.

You should never

- Deep fry when you've been drinking alcohol or taking drugs or if you are feeling tired
- Leave the pan alone - It only takes a second for a fire to start

You should never

- Hang or dry clothing and towels on or near the cooker
- Leave your cooker, grill or oven on when you go out – even on a timer
- Leave electrical wires or cords near the cooker
- Keep anything on top of an eye-level grill
- Put anything metal in your microwave – even tin foil

Other Kitchen Appliances

Washing machines, tumble dryers and dishwashers have powerful parts that heat up, any of which could start a fire if something goes wrong. Follow our safety advice:

- Always switch appliances off at the wall before going to bed or going out
- Always plug straight into a wall socket and avoid adaptors for lots of plugs as they can result in electricity overload

You should never

- Never leave them running when going out or to bed



Closure of office and CentrePoint

Due to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak in the UK the Co-operative has been required to make significant changes to our services.

As you will be aware the office and CentrePoint closed to our customers on 17 March and will remain closed until further notice.

Staff are now working from home and are committed to offering an uninterrupted service to our customers during this difficult time, where possible.

Our phones still operate Monday to Friday from 9am to 4.30pm and will be answered by a member of staff as normal. If your call goes onto voicemail please leave a message and someone will be in touch as soon as possible. The contact number is **01698 687222** or alternatively email enquiries@gphc.org.uk.

The Co-operative's staff will continue to work remotely to ensure services to you continue with as little disruption as possible. We will be reviewing our working practices regularly in line with Government and NHS guidance and will keep you updated via our website www.gphc.org.uk

Checking in with Tenants

We are contacting many of our tenants, particularly elderly and vulnerable. The response from tenants so far has been excellent with everyone appreciative of the Co-operative contacting them. We have offered assistance and advice and it has been reassuring to hear how family, friends and neighbours have been looking out for each other.

We will continue to make contact and check in with tenants and will signpost and refer them to other services where necessary.

This will enable those tenants who are self-isolating to live a healthy and independent life while remaining at home.

Are you needing support while shielding, self-isolating or during lock down?

Within our community many local groups are providing support and help to those in need, everything from shopping to befriending. If you are needing support please contact

In the Wishaw area contact
Getting Better Together
01501 825 800

(Press option for office and phone will get diverted to staff who are homeworking)

Coming SoonText Messaging Service

We are introducing a new text messaging service this will help us get information as quickly as possible to you. It is vital that we have up to date contact numbers for all our tenants to enable this service to work efficiently. Please contact us with your mobile number as soon as possible.

If you prefer us to contact you via e-mail please send your e-mail address to enquiries@gphc.org.uk

Pop your name & address in the subject line along with your up to date information.



Information on our repairs service during Covid-19

Reactive Repairs Service – Changes to our Repairs Service

The Co-operative's contractor, Rodgers & Johnston (R&J), are continuing to provide a repairs service, however, they have taken the decision to limit this to EMERGENCY repairs only. Please be aware that this might alter if their staffing levels reduce due to the continuing spread of the Covid-19 virus.

Our Gas Heating Contractor Saltire Gas are still carrying out GAS SERVICING, URGENT and EMERGENCY repairs.

Gas Servicing remains programmed at the moment, however information and guidance is changing on a daily basis. We will be closely monitoring the situation when new guidance is issued by the Scottish Government, Saltire or the Health and Safety Executive.

Our contractor will take the necessary precautions during gas servicing to protect our tenants.

Please contact us on: **01698 687222** if you have an emergency in your home.

If your emergency occurs outside office hours please contact **Saltire Gas Repairs** on **0845 606 1555** for all gas heating repairs or **Rodgers & Johnston** on **0844 247 2120** for all other emergency repairs.

Our list of emergency repairs are as follows:

- Significant leaks from water or heating pipes, tanks or cisterns where the tenant is unable to stem the flow;
- Significant water ingress to property where the tenant is unable to stem the ingress;
- Choked toilet (where there is only one toilet in house);
- Toilet unable to flush (where there is only one toilet in the house);
- Full loss of lighting (check no appliance has tripped);
- Full loss of power (where no power cut in the area and all appliances have been checked by tenant);
- Unsafe electrical power or lighting socket, or electrical fitting;
- Unsecured external door or window on a lower level (cannot be locked from outside & inside)
- No heating;
- No hot water (where there is no shower in the property);
- No water supply (no water coming from taps);
- Repairs to showers where there is no bath available;
- Broken windows;

Please be aware to continue to ensure the safety of our staff, tenants and contractors, we will not deviate from this list.

Benefits and Money Advice

If you require welfare rights, general or specialist advice via our AFTAR Project please contact the Co-operative and we will pass your details to Maria at Citizens Advice Bureau. She will contact you within 48 hours of receiving the request. Maria will carry out an initial benefit/financial assessment and allocate a telephone appointment as necessary.

Telephone only appointments are available during the outbreak as Citizens Advice Bureau continue to support financial inclusion and money advice services.



What happens when I report an emergency repair?

When you call us about your emergency repair, we will ask you questions about your current situation and whether you are self-isolating so we can understand how best to protect you and your family, as well as the contractor that attends your home.

Please be patient with us while we ask these questions. These are required to protect the health and wellbeing of you, our staff and our contractors, which is essential in allowing us to maintain services.

If it is deemed essential that a contractor does attend your home, they could:

- Ask some further questions when they call you to arrange access
- Ask some further questions when at the front door of your property
- Wear appropriate PPE such as a face mask and gloves before entering your home
- Ask you to stay in another room while they carry out the repair to ensure appropriate social distancing is adhered to
- Ask you if they can wash their hands before and after the visit

We kindly ask you to minimise interaction with our tradespeople as they carry out your repair. It is imperative that you stay in another room while they are in your home. All tradespeople will show you identification when they arrive at your home. When the works are complete, the tradespeople will advise you that they have finished and will see themselves out. By following these steps, we believe that we are minimising the risk of infection but still maintaining an emergency service.

Skip Service

Unfortunately the skip service has been suspended due to COVID-19 as the Council are unable to meet the requirements of this service.

We will keep tenants advised as and when the service can resume.

We provided a one off estate bulk uplift and litter picking service last week (9 & 10 April).



Close Cleaning Service

Our close cleaning services will operate as normal at this time. This will include an enhanced clean to all handrails, push bars, door entry system and window handles within the common close areas.

Litter Picking Service

We have managed to provide a litter picking service as frequently as we can and will continue to review this service as the need arises.

Key staff have driven around the estates to look out and address any urgent issues to ensure our community is safe.

Refuse Collection

As far as we are aware, services from North Lanarkshire Council Waste Management will operate as normal.

To prevent an environmental issue we ask that tenants ensure that all rubbish is placed in the appropriate bins as normal.

Paying Your Rent

The Co-operative recognises that these are exceptionally difficult and challenging times for everyone. One area you might be concerned about is paying your rent. The rent you pay is vital for the Co-operative to operate effectively. Your rent payments allow the Co-operative to provide our repairs service, keep your home safe and energy efficient as well as a number of other services and the staff that help provide them.

We need you to continue to pay your rent, however we understand there might be a delay in accessing welfare benefits or issues and concerns with your employer which might also impact your ability to pay your rent as usual and on time.

Please let us know if you are struggling to pay rent and we will be able to discuss your options. We can work together to establish an affordable repayment plan, taking into account your individual circumstances.

We will ensure tenants who experience loss of earnings because of the pandemic are supported so that they are not at risk of homelessness. If this is the case please contact your Housing Officer as soon as possible.

How To Pay Your Rent

As our offices are closed due to COVID-19, there are alternative ways to pay your rent:

Online banking

You can set up payments via online banking to pay your rent. It is a convenient way for you to manage your payments. All you require is your unique rent reference number (as detailed within your rent increase letter) and the Co-operative's bank details -

Branch Name Clydesdale Bank
Sort Code 82-68-28
Account Number 60248083

On The Internet

You can register online at www.allpayments.net using your 19 digit reference number from your payment card to use this service. This enables you to pay your rent online, free of charge, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. You will be asked for the details on the allpay card that we have issued and you can pay by using your debit or credit card.

By Phone

Have your payment card, pen and paper handy with your debit or credit card when you dial 0844 557 8321 for Allpay's automated phone payment service, available 24/7. Each time you use this automated service you will be given an authorisation code as proof of payment. Please keep a note of this code.

Text message

You can use your payment card and debit or credit card to register for this service at www.allpayments.net/textpay. Text 'pay' plus the text code provided to you during registration along with the amount you want to pay and your password (the last four digits of your debit or credit card) to 81025.

Bank Payment (standing order)

Standing Order is a reliable and convenient way to pay your rent. Contact the Co-operative to obtain a form. Standing Order Forms are available in the office or are available to download and complete from the Co-operative's website www.gphc.org.uk

Phone app

You can make debit or credit card payments to your rent account using the allpay payment app, which is available to download for free for Apple and Android smart phones. Visit www.allpay.net/app for more information.

Please remember that it is still important to pay your rent. If you are facing any difficulties, please call us on 01698 687222 and ask for your Housing Officer

Has your income been affected by COVID-19?

Our experienced Housing Officer will be on hand to assist tenants. If you are struggling to pay your rent please contact us as soon as possible. We can make realistic and affordable arrangements. We can also refer to a Welfare Benefit Advisor through our AFTAR Project who can complete benefit checks and maximise your income.

We will continue to support our tenants during this time of uncertainty and financial hardship.

How do I Pay My Rent if I am unable to Work due to COVID-19?

Depending on your income and savings, you could get some help with your rent from Housing Benefit or the housing costs element of Universal Credit. You can apply for Universal Credit by visiting www.gov.uk/universalcredit

Universal Credit

If you're concerned that your income may be affected due to the Coronavirus or you need advice on benefits, please visit www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/coronavirus. Here you'll find information about claiming Universal Credit, what to do if your earnings change and how to make a new claim.

Please visit this website regularly as it will be updated and display the most up to date information.

What if my Universal Credit payments or Housing Benefit does not cover my full rent charge?

It is possible the Universal Credit or Housing Benefit payment may not be sufficient to cover the whole of your rent. You may also be eligible to apply for Discretionary Housing Payments to cover the shortfall.

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) can provide extra money when you need extra help to meet your housing costs. Please contact your Housing Officer who can assist you with this.

You should look into claiming benefits and other financial support that is available as soon as you can. If you already receive benefits and your income changes:

- Update North Lanarkshire Council for your housing benefit
- Report the changes to universal credit via your online journal

This will make sure you get what you're entitled to as quickly as possible

Universal Credit – Rent Increase

Were you entitled to Universal Credit prior to 31 March, 2020?

If you are in receipt of Universal Credit then it is your responsibility to notify the Department of Work and Pension (DWP) of any change of circumstances including changes to your housing costs (rent). It is therefore important you report your new monthly rent charge from 1 April 2020 to DWP. You can do this via your online Universal Credit account/journal "Update your Housing Costs".

You will receive a "to-do" requesting you to notify them of any change of housing costs. Please update this with your new rent charge as failure to do so will affect the amount of Universal Credit you receive.

If you are unsure of your new monthly rent charge please contact your Housing Officer.

Noise advice during COVID-19 pandemic

Everyone is going to be experiencing difficulties and stresses because of the current restrictions on movement. With people being confined to their homes and where available gardens, for most of the day for the foreseeable future.

A considerable number of people will need to work from home and children will be doing school work at home. The pandemic situation will also be resulting in increased anxiety for many people. These restrictions are clearly essential to reduce the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) and protect everyone's health and save lives. However, that means we will probably be seeing and hearing more of our neighbours than we are used to. In some situations, this may lead to frustrations or annoyance with noise we do not want to hear.

With this in mind, we would urge everyone to be considerate of their neighbours by thinking about how noise from your home could be causing problems and upset to others. For the same reason, we would urge everyone to be more tolerant and patient with noise and activity that they won't be used to hearing. There is a real need to show some good will at this time.

Reducing noise

Everyday household living generates noise, whether that's the washing machine, door closing, or the TV. However, disputes can occur when people are inconsiderate to others in how much noise your household creates and think about the impact it might have on your neighbours.

If you are approached/contacted by your neighbour and asked to keep the noise down react positively. Respect their right to enjoy their home without hearing all that is going on in yours. Keep in mind the need to maintain a 2 metre distance from any of your neighbours.

Stereo's TV and Music

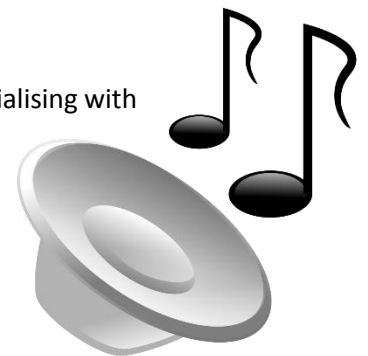
These are the most frequent causes for complaint. What is considered entertainment for one person can be torture for someone else. Avoid playing music so loud that your neighbours can hear it and keep the bass level down.

Try to position the speakers away from adjoining walls, floors and ceilings. Standing them on an insulating material can also reduce the transmission of sound. Please play your music at a reasonable level at all times. This includes any "online" parties in your home.

Parties

The current Government restrictions on socialising mean that you should not be socialising with anyone who you don't live with, including in any outdoor areas. Any complaint concerning noise from a party or a social gathering will be investigated. This may not only amount to a noise disturbance but also a breach of the Government Coronavirus social distancing requirement. This is not in any way acceptable behaviour, or behaviour that is likely to be tolerated.

Should you experience this you can report this to the Police on 101.



NEW Telephone Befriending Service

Our Community Centre plays an important part in people's everyday life, the many wonderful activities and support services that take place there help greatly to combat loneliness and isolation. With the centres currently closed and many of us in lockdown, we are now setting up a telephone befriending service.

If you would like to receive a phone call or know someone who would then please message via this page, or telephone 01698 687222 or enquiries@gphc.org.uk

What should I do if I need help with Gas and Electricity Costs?

The government has launched an emergency package with energy suppliers to ensure you do not face any additional hardship in heating or lighting your home during the coronavirus outbreak.

If you think you cannot afford to pay for extra gas or electricity because you have to self-isolate at home, support will be available through your energy supplier. Your supplier must take into account how much you can afford, and will explain options. No credit meters will be disconnected during the outbreak.

Customers with prepayment meters who are self-isolating or unable to leave their home to top up their meter should contact their supplier immediately to discuss options. These may include:

- sending someone to top up your prepayment card or token/key
- having funds added to your meter credit
- having a preloaded gas or electricity card sent to you in the post

The following numbers can be used to call your energy supplier:

BRITISH GAS 0333 202 9802

EDF 0333 200 5100

EON 0345 052 0000

NPOWER 0800 073 3000

SCOTTISH POWER 0800 027 0072

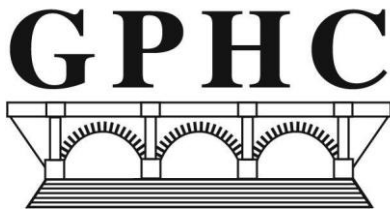
SSE 0345 026 2658

UTILITA for top ups please call 0345 2068 333
(please use your 19 digit top up card number)



Useful Numbers (Including Emergency Contacts)

- Saltire Facilities Management Ltd **0845 606 1555**
- (all gas central heating faults 24 hours)
- Rodgers and Johnston (all other out of hour EMERGENCY REPAIRS) **0844 247 2120**
- North Lanarkshire Council (housing benefits) **01698 403210**
- North Lanarkshire Council (Council Tax) **01698 302901**
- North Line – North Lanarkshire’s **01698 403110** contact centre dealing with Bulk uplift, bins, roads and lighting, abandoned vehicles, Dog fouling, dog nuisance, gritting
- TRANSCO (National Grid) (smell of gas) **0800 111 999**
- POLICE SCOTLAND **101** (**999** EMERGENCY)
- SCOTTISH WATER **0800 077 8778**
- ELECTRICAL DAMAGE to electrical supply or network equipment Call **105** or your own electrical supplier
- CRIMESTOPPERS **0800 555 111**



Message from our Community Team

Hello from your community team

During this strange time, everything can seem a bit more stressful and difficult. Just to say we are thinking of you and hope you, your friends and family are keeping safe and well.

Like many community teams we are trying to do our best to help our local community during COVID-19. We have a number of ideas and projects we are working on to help bring a smile during lockdown and we will keep you updated with progress. If you have any suggestions as to what we could do then please let us know, we would love to hear your ideas.

We know this can be an isolating and worrying time for us all and sometimes just having someone to chat to can really help. That's why we have set up a 'befriending' group, where volunteers from all over have joined to help phone people for a blether.

If you are in need of anything or simply want a chat from one of our befrienders please get in touch with us on 01698 687222 or email enquiries@gphc.org.uk If you wish to volunteer to become a volunteer befriender please contact Richard Bolton, Community Development Officer, on telephone 01698 687222 / 07495 549 065 or email richard@forgewoodcoop.org.uk for more details.

Please find enclosed a series of word searches, puzzles and colouring sheets. We are planning on creating of series of activity packs to help with lockdown. We will post out weekly activity packs during lockdown, if you would like to receive one of these packs please let us know by phoning 01698 687222 or email enquiries@gphc.org.uk

Keep safe and take care

Richard & Isla

Richard Bolton and Isla Dundas

Garrion People's Housing Co-operative Word Search

Hidden in this word search are staff names and streets of Garrion Peoples Housing Co-operative, they can be found going forwards, backwards or diagonally!

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

ALEX GEMMELL
CATHY BRIEN
CENTREPOINT
COOPERATIVE
ELAINE HYSLOP
GARRION
GOWKTHRAPPLE
HEATHFIELD

HOUSING
ISLA DUNDAS
JOANNA MCNALLY
JOSHCOLLINS
KENNEDY CHILAMBE
KEVIN PLUNKETT
KIERON SHEEHAN
LAWVIEW

PAUL LENNON
PAUL MURPHY
PEOPLES
RICHARD BOLTON
SHARON OROURKE
SMITH AVENUE
WOODGREEN COURT
ZARAH BANO

Sudoku

The objective is to fill a 9x9 grid so that each column, each row, and each of the nine 3x3 boxes contains the digits from 1 to 9

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| | | 2 | 4 | | 7 | | 1 | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | 2 | 1 | | | 5 |
| | | | 7 | | 8 | 2 | | |

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| 1 | | | | | 5 | 3 | | |
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| | 2 | | 7 | | | 5 | 4 | 1 |
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