

Newsletter

SUMMER 2017

issue 13



Save the date



AGM



Both Clydesdale Housing Association and Clydesdale Tenants and Residents Group's Annual General Meetings this year will take place on Wednesday, 6 September 2017 at 7pm in Lanark Memorial Hall.

Invitations to all share- holders will be posted out nearer to the time, with more details about the event and the schedule for the evening.

If you would like to attend but are not yet a share-holder then please call Elizabeth Miller on 01555 665316 for further details.



Welcome to our New Website

– we hope you enjoy it!

As more and more of you have been using our website we became aware that our old website really needed a refresh, so we have been busy developing a new one.

The website has been developed for use on smart phones, tablets as well as desktop computers and laptops which means it now fits in well with your busy life and can be used anywhere while you are on the go. These improvements will also make it easier for you to find any information you may need and to communicate with us for a range of things including: reporting repairs, finding a home and our latest news and events.

Please have a look at these improvements and more at:
www.clydesdale-housing.org.uk

Remember to keep an eye on the website as it will be updated regularly with news and other new information.



Creating great places to live



A good adaptation can help you stay in your home for longer and ease your daily life.

We receive annual grant funding from the Scottish Government to carry out medical adaptations in the properties we own.

Adaptation work ranges from the fitting of grab rails or lever taps, to a walk in shower or hoists/lifting equipment.

Can I get help to adapt my home?

If you feel that you could benefit from an adaptation to your home contact your local Occupational Therapist (OT) via your doctor or social worker. They'll make an assessment which will tell us how we can help you.

If you'd like to know more about adaptations please contact Kirsty Sinclair on 01555 665316

We carried out a number of estate inspections recently and identified items for uplift which were dumped in gardens and common areas.

Did you know?

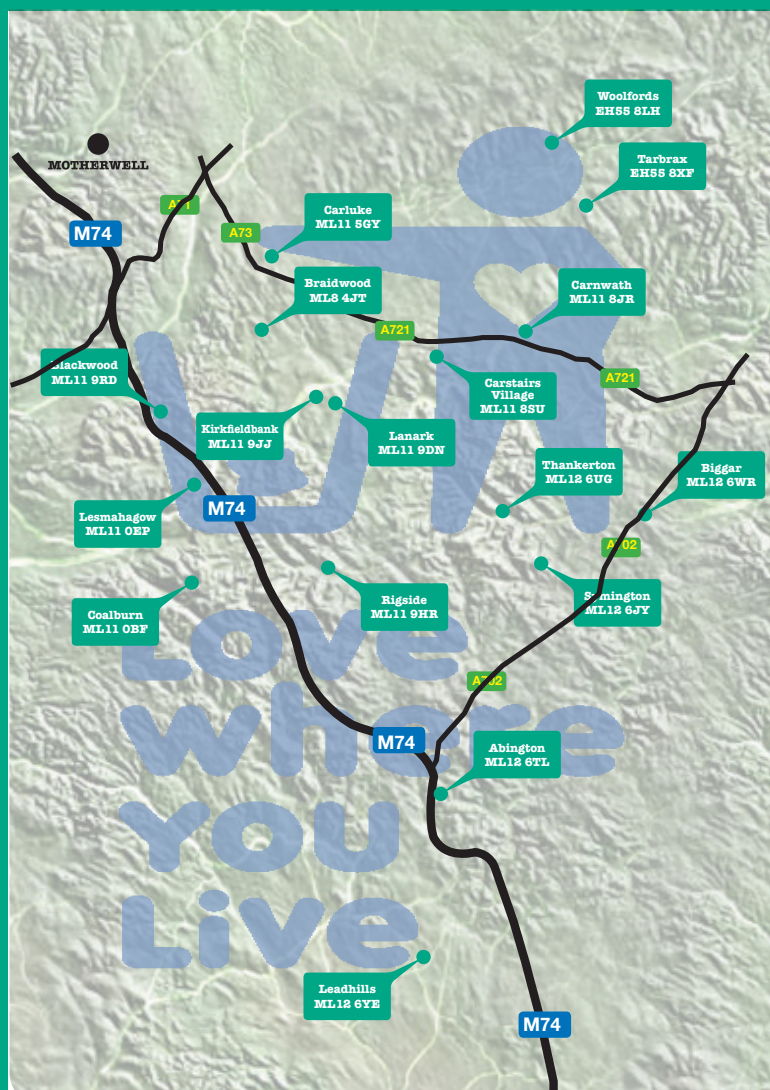
- As a tenant it is your responsibility to keep your garden and any common areas clean and well kept.
- Each tenant is entitled to **ONE** free uplift per year starting on the 1st April of each year?

Have you considered sharing an uplift?

Have you considered talking to your neighbours to ask if they need any items uplifted?

This would increase the amount of uplifts you could benefit from each year and keep your estates neat and tidy.

For further information on sharing uplifts or to report items that have been dumped in gardens or common areas please call the Housing Services Team on 01555 665316.



Pet Policy Consultation Feedback

Our Management Committee decided to consult tenants on proposed changes to our pet policy.

All tenants were given the opportunity to have their say in a number of ways including by email, text or by returning the questionnaire in a freepost envelope.

Pets Policy Consultation Have Your Say!

We would like your views on potential changes to our Pets Policy. Your feedback is an important part of our decision-making process, so please take a few moments to complete our survey and have your say.

Question 1 - Your tenancy agreement with us allows you to keep one domestic pet. If a tenant wishes to keep more than one domestic pet, or another type of animal, then they must request permission to do so.

Do you think this is reasonable?



Yes

[]

No

If you answered no please let us know why you feel this way.

94.9% of tenants thought this was reasonable

Question 2 - A domestic pet to us means a dog or a cat or a bird or a rodent (such as a hamster, gerbil or mouse) or a small non-poisonous reptile (such as a terrapin or tortoise) or a non-poisonous insect or amphibian (such as a newt).

Do you think this is reasonable?



Yes

[]

No

If you answered no please let us know why you feel this way.

87.3% of tenants thought this was reasonable

Question 3 - If you have a dog, we ask that it is kept under control at all times and that you clear up any dog fouling from communal areas.

Do you think this is reasonable?



Yes

[]

No

If you answered no please let us know why you feel this way.

Question 4 - As a tenant, you are responsible for the behaviour of any pets owned by you or anyone living with or visiting you.

Do you think this is reasonable?



Yes

[]

No

If you answered no please let us know why you feel this way.

Question 5 - As part of our Pet's Policy review we would like to apply a limit of the number of domestic pets you keep. We would like to limit the number of domestic pets you keep to 2 per household.

Do you think this is reasonable?



Yes

[]

No

If you answered no please let us know why you feel this way.

97.5% of tenants thought this was reasonable

97.5% of tenants thought this was reasonable

77.2% of tenants thought this was reasonable

The total number of responses received was 79 which accounts for 10.7% of the tenants surveyed.

Based on the outcome of the survey our Management Committee approved the proposed changes to the policy

Thank you to everyone who took part in the survey

What happens next?

The closing date for your feedback is Monday 24 April 2017. If this sounds like something you would be interested in getting involved with please contact Jane Guthrie, Depute Chief Executive on 01555 665316 or jane.guthrie@clydesdale-housing.org.uk We will consider all responses and comments before finalising changes to our Pets Policy.



What You Told Us

It is important that we find out what you think so that we know what we are doing well and what we can do better. During our recent Tenant Satisfaction Survey we asked you what your priorities were:

89% of you told us that repairs and maintenance was your priority

88% of you told us that the overall quality of your home was your priority

54% of you told us that keeping you informed about services and decisions was your priority

23% of you told us that the management of your neighbourhood was your priority

13% of you told us that grounds maintenance to common areas was your priority

● **92%** of tenants said they were satisfied with the overall service we provide

● **96%** of tenants said they were satisfied with the helpfulness of our staff when reporting repairs

● **95%** of our tenants said they were satisfied with the system for reporting repairs to us

● **84%** of our tenants said they were satisfied with the quality of their home



IMPORTANT NEWS...!!!

WE HAVE IMPROVED THE RESPONSE TIMES FOR OUR ROUTINE REPAIRS

In the past we responded to your requests to carry out routine repairs within 10 working days. For the past few months our Technical Services Team have been reviewing how we can improve on the services we provide to all of you.

In May 2017 our Management Committee agreed with our Technical Services Team and decided that from June 2017 onwards the response time for all routine repairs should be reduced to 7 working days

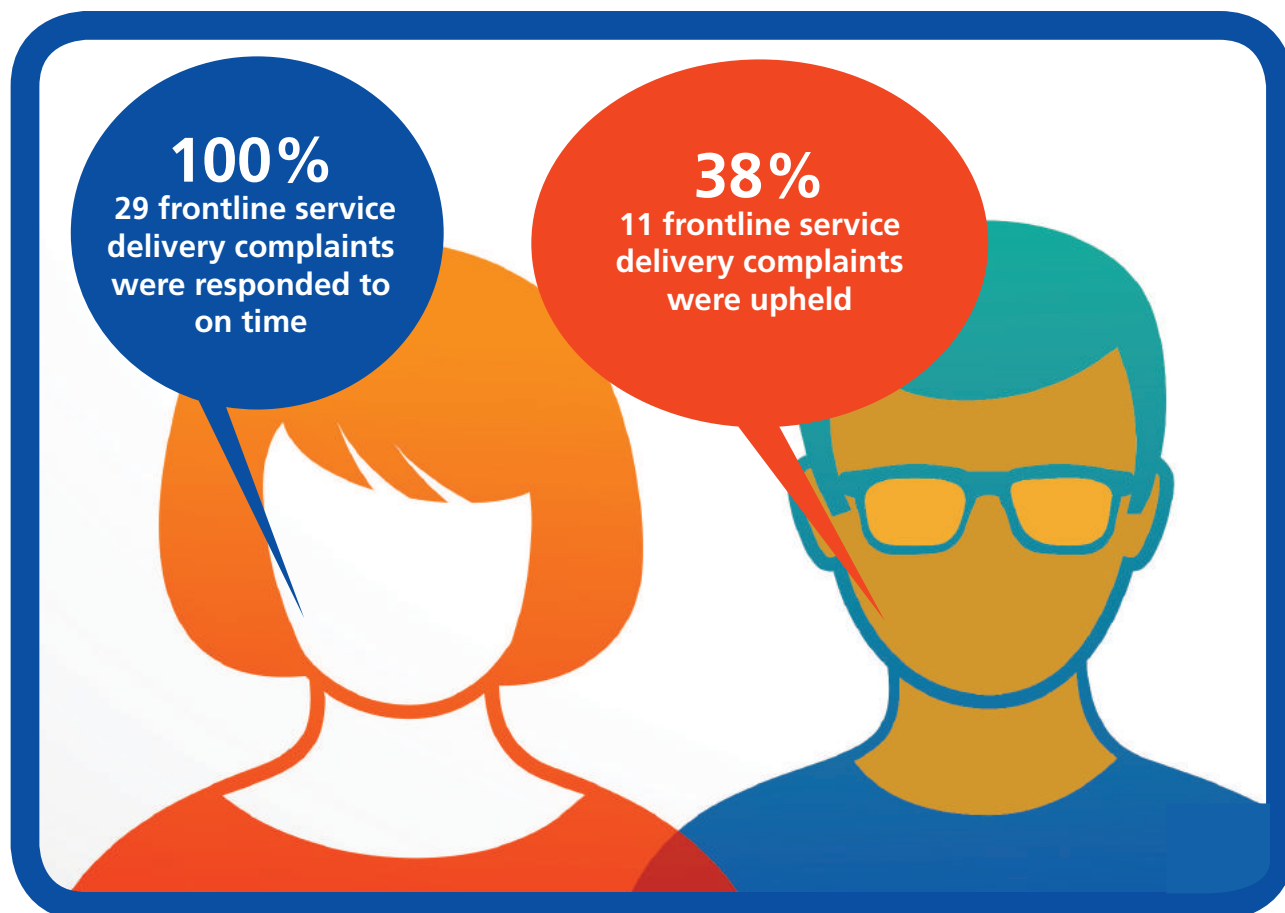
Our Technical Services Team are working hard to meet our tenant's priorities.



Complaints



From the 1st April to 30 June 2017 we received 29 frontline service delivery complaints



Type of Frontline complaints	Number of complaints	On Time	Number upheld
Reactive Repairs	4	4	1
Planned Maintenance	11	11	5
Estate Management	3	3	0
Cyclical Maintenance	8	8	4
Contractor COC	1	1	1
Communication	2	2	0

What does upheld mean? - If you are told that your complaint has been upheld it means that we agree with you that the service you received did not meet our standards.

Complaints help us to improve - please do not hesitate to contact us if you are dissatisfied with the services we provide to you.

Benefit Changes

Universal credit is a new benefit for people of working age, who are in or out of work. It replaces Housing Benefit, income based jobseeker's allowance, income-related employment and support allowance income support, working tax credit and child tax credit.

In some parts of Scotland, full service Universal Credit has already been rolled out, this means it can be claimed by families with children, people with health conditions and people who are in work as well as job seekers.

On the 4th October 2017 full service Universal Credit will be rolled out in South Lanarkshire.

Waiting for the first universal credit payment

Unlike the benefits it replaces the first payment of Universal Credit will not be paid to you until around six weeks after you initiate the claim. This may cause some tenants extreme financial difficulties.

Paying your rent

Universal credit is paid directly to you, including the housing costs element, which is a big change for many of our tenants who are accustomed to having their housing benefit paid directly to us.

Did you know arrangements can be made to have the housing costs element paid directly to us?

How can we help you?

There are some Universal Credit payment options that can help you manage your rent account. These are called 'alternative payment arrangements'.

An alternative payment arrangement means your rent will automatically get paid to us each month from your Universal Credit payment

If you're currently applying for Universal Credit, or about to apply Talk to your Housing Officer who will help you through your Universal Credit journey.



Paying Your Rent on Time – it's simple and convenient

It's important to pay your rent on time. Every tenant is due to pay their rent **on or before the 28th day of every month**. We use the money we collect to deliver the services we provide – like a quicker repairs service and making improvements to your homes.



There are 7 simple ways to pay your rent:



Post Office/Paypoint/ Payzone– using your Allpay card. Your nearest outlet can be found on <http://allpay.net/outlet>



24/7 Telephone – Allpay on **0844 557 8321**. It has secure and authorised payment processing and you can make payments by telephone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You must have your Allpay number.



Internet – online at www.allpayments.net using your debit or credit card – you must have your Allpay card number.



Standing Order - contact us on **01555 665316** to have the standing order form sent to you.



CAIpay – Contact us (during office hours) on **01555 665316**. Payment can be made using your debit or credit card.



Cheque - posted to the office and made payable to Clydesdale Housing Association. Please write your name, address and reference number on the back of your cheque.



Direct Debit - contact us on **01555 665316** to arrange this, having your bank details to hand.



talk to us



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Housing Officer

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Lisa Cochrane

Housing Officer

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Jacqui Hart

Housing Assistant

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Iain McMillan

Housing Officer

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Why talk to us?

Telling us what you think enables us to make changes to the services you receive, to make them better for you, and more suited to what you need. We know that the only way to find out if we're doing a good job, is to ask you, our tenants.

Neighbours Behaving Badly?

Everybody has the right to live safely and peacefully, without worrying about being bothered or harassed.

Everyone who becomes one of our tenants signs a tenancy agreement. As your landlord we take on obligations through the tenancy agreement, such as providing a repairs service. Tenants also have their obligations under the tenancy agreement. Amongst other things, tenants are obliged not to disturb or cause nuisance to neighbours.

Have you got neighbour problems?

Everyone needs good neighbours but unfortunately not everyone has them. People can cause nuisance, disturbance or distress to their neighbours in many ways:

- Making too much noise
- Verbally abusing or assaulting them
- Racially harassing them
- Damaging their property
- Carrying out illegal activities

If you are experiencing any of these problems contact our Housing Services Team on 01555 665316



Polite Parking



If you own a car or motorbike and park it in a car park or bay we have provided, you must make sure it is roadworthy, properly taxed, licensed and insured.

You must not park commercial vehicles, caravans, boats and trailers on any of our properties unless you have our written permission. You must also not:

P carry out major vehicle repairs (minor repairs such as changing a tyre is acceptable)

P park in places that are not authorised spaces

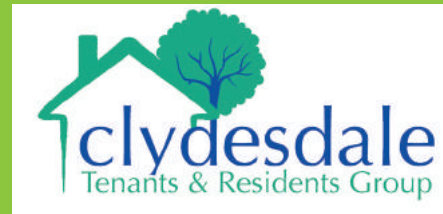
P block roadways, access areas, footpaths or cause any other obstruction

P leave untaxed, unlicensed or un-roadworthy vehicles, including those holding a 'SORN' (Statutory Off-Road Notification) within parking areas set aside for tenants or on the public highway.

We will consult tenants on any parking issues that we are made aware of, so that we can avoid careless parking on estates, arguments between neighbours about parking, vehicles being dumped illegally and problems for emergency vehicles if routes are blocked.

If you require any further information in relation to this article please contact our Housing Services Team on 01555 665316

Your garden – your responsibility



When someone moves into a Clydesdale Housing Association property we all want them to feel it's their home and have a real sense of security and pride as soon as they are given the keys. The team at Clydesdale Housing Association work hard to maintain our homes to a high standard but there are some areas that are our responsibility – and one of those is the garden.

It is one of the conditions of our tenancy agreement, a very important one that states we must look after our garden, keep it tidy and make sure it's maintained to an acceptable standard.

If you don't keep your garden tidy, not only does it look messy but it can help bring the whole neighbourhood down and annoy your neighbours. In serious cases it can be seen as a breach of your tenancy agreement and could put your tenancy at risk.

You don't have to be particularly green-fingered to create and enjoy a neat and tidy garden. Here's a quick rundown of what should be done on a regular basis:



Grass - in the spring/summer growing season grass needs cutting regularly, at least once a fortnight



Hedges - should not be allowed to grow higher than 1.8 meters (6ft) which is line with the high hedge act.



Weeds - you shouldn't allow weeds or shrubs to spill over and encroach onto your neighbour's property.



Rubbish - Gardens should be rubbish free and all grass cuttings, hedge clippings or any other 'green materials' disposed of by using the garden waste bins (red bin).

Smart Meters



Smart meters are gas and electricity meters that can make your life easier.

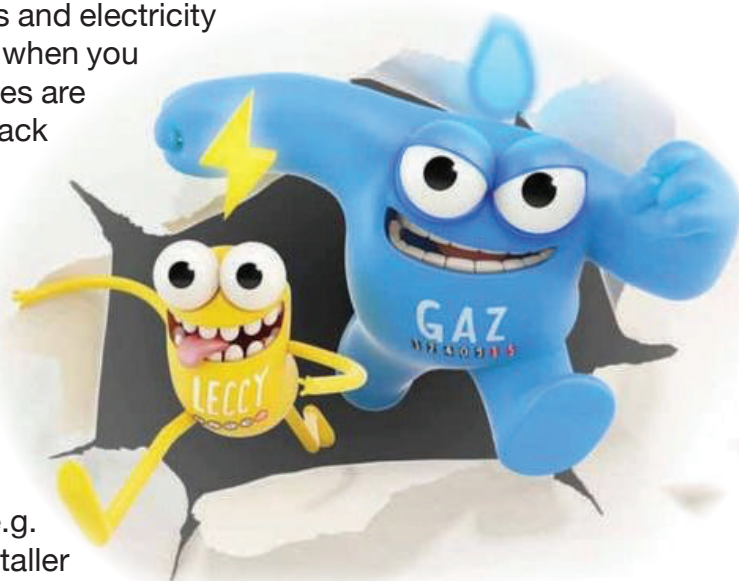
You will always know what you are paying for your energy - with a smart meter, you get an easy-to-understand portable display that shows exactly what you're spending in near real time. More transparency around energy usage and costs will help prevent you getting into debt with your energy supplier.

It will end estimated bills – you will only pay for the energy you use.

Smart meters show you exactly how much gas and electricity you are using in near real time, so you can see when you are using the most energy and which appliances are most responsible. Knowing where to cut back can save both energy and money.

As smart meter technology also works with prepay meters, it will make it much easier to top up credit. Depending on your supplier, you'll be able to top up directly online or through a smartphone app. There will be no more keys or inconvenient visits to the shop (although that option will still be available).

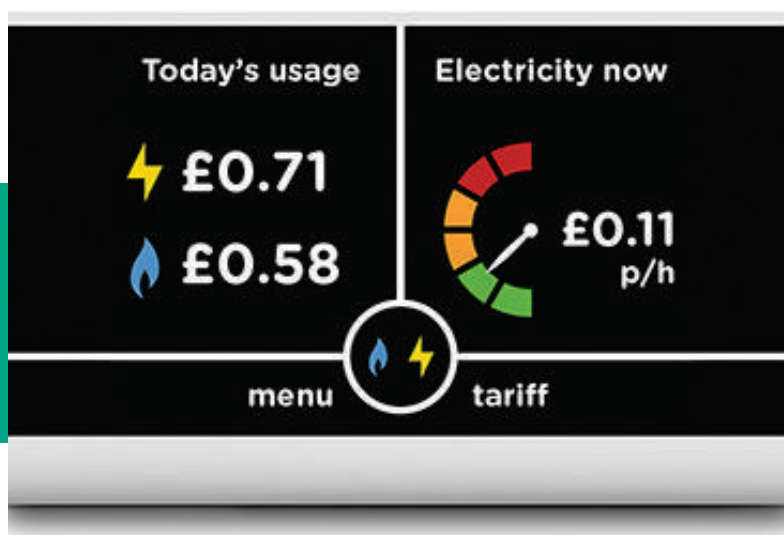
It makes switching between payment modes (e.g. direct debit or prepay) much easier as an installer will no longer have to visit the house and change the meter.



Smart meters will be installed by suppliers at no extra cost to you.

If you think this is something you would be interested in or you already have had one installed call our Technical Services Team on 01555 665316 and let them know who your energy supplier is.

You can get further details on smart meters at <http://www.smartenergygb.org/get-a-smart-meter>



Do you have home contents insurance?

If your home was flooded, or you had a house fire, how would you replace your belongings?

In the unfortunate event of a fire or flood, we would carry out the necessary building repairs to your home but you would be responsible for insuring your own belongings.

Replacing carpets, furnishings and belongings can add up to thousands of pounds so it is important that you insure your home contents. With a scheme arranged and administered by Thistle Tenant Risks, you can protect belongings and gain peace of mind knowing that, should the worst happen, you have cover.

Visit www.thistletenants-scotland.co.uk/ for more information.

Please note that other schemes are available.

Alternatively, please contact your housing officer on 01555 665316.



If you would like more information
Telephone 0345 4507286



Our Factoring Service

Did you know?



Our Management Fee is very reasonable

Our £12 management fee is based on the cost of running the service, this includes:

- Staffing costs
- Administration costs, such as stationary, telephones
- IT support

We do not make a profit from operating this service

We offer a wide range of services to our owner occupiers including:

- Garden maintenance for common areas
- Open space maintenance
- Communal lighting and utility charges
- Buildings insurance

We talk to you

Our Technical Services Team will talk to you to discuss maintenance work that is due to be carried out if the work will cost more than £150 per household.

We write every year and ask for your views on the service we provide.

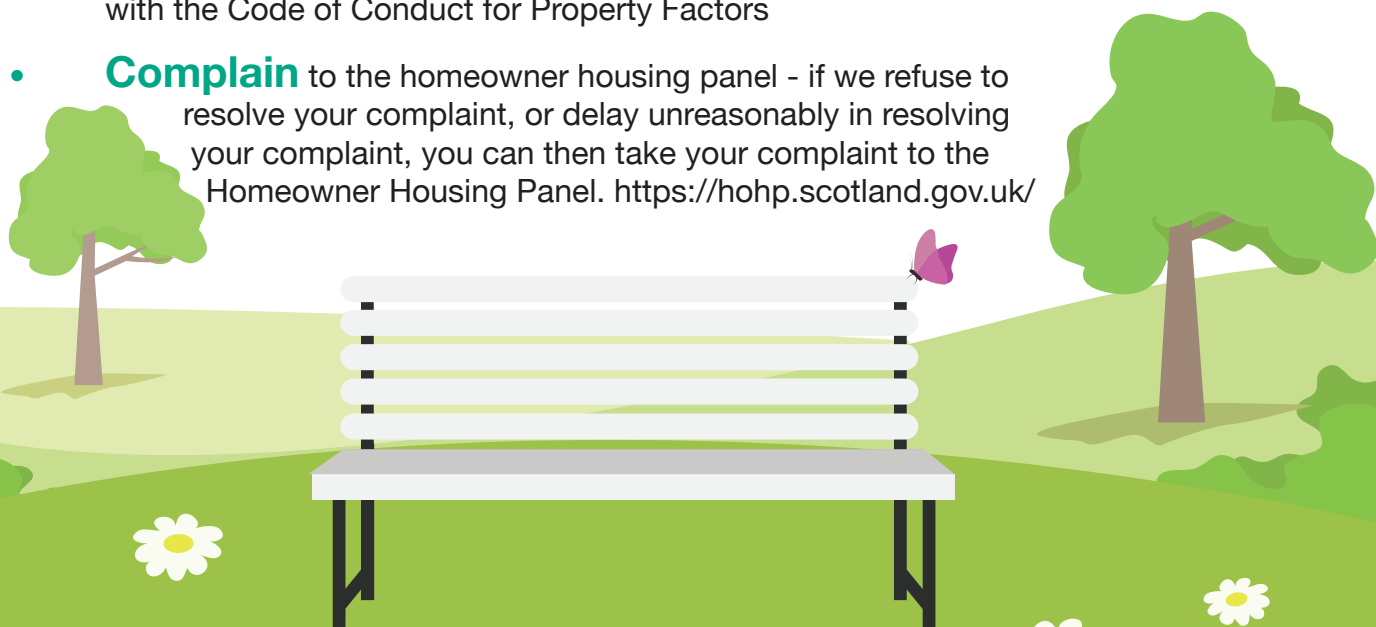
We listen to you

Through your contact with us we identify service improvements.

What you should do if you are unhappy with the service we provide

Here's what you need to do if you want to make a complaint about your property factor:

- **Contact us** - explain why you're complaining, e.g. we have not carried out our factoring duties correctly, or we have not complied with the Code of Conduct for Property Factors
- **Complain** to the homeowner housing panel - if we refuse to resolve your complaint, or delay unreasonably in resolving your complaint, you can then take your complaint to the Homeowner Housing Panel. <https://hohp.scotland.gov.uk/>



Your Newsletter Got a story?

Your Newsletter is posted to all our residents and a digital edition can be found on our website.

If you have any feedback, or have a story you would like featured then talk to Elizabeth Miller.

You can call her on 01555 665316 or email elizabeth.miller@clydesdale-housing.org.uk or post it to: Elizabeth Miller, Clydesdale Housing Association, 99 High Street, Lanark ML11 7LN



A Pat On The Back!



Sometimes you get in contact with us to say thank you. We have recently received feedback from some tenants who have been assisted by our Technical Services Team. Here's what they had to say:

'The joiners arrived and had the job done within one hour of reporting the repair. It's a great service and I am really pleased'

**– Mrs Bethel,
Lanark**



'The gardeners are great. Nothing is a bother to them'

**– Mrs Kerr,
Lanark**

'The painting contractor was well mannered, tidy and lovely. I am absolutely delighted'

**– Mrs Taylor,
Lanark**



'Fantastic service. Kirsty was on hand to offer help when needed'

**– Ms Orr,
Lanark**



talk to us

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Telling us what you think enables us to make changes to the services you receive, to make them better for you, and more suited to what you need. We know that the only way to find out if we're doing a good job, is to ask you, our tenants.

There are many ways
to contact us

talk to us



01555 665316



Email us at:
mail@clydesdale-housing.org.uk



Write to us at:
99 High Street, Lanark ML11 7LN



Drop into see us, our office opening hours are:
Monday – Thursday 9.00am – 1.00pm; 2.00pm – 5.00pm
Friday 9.00am – 1.00pm; 2.00pm – 4.00pm
Our office is closed every Tuesday
between 12.00pm and 1.00pm for staff training



Office closure details

Please note that the office will be closed on **Friday 22nd and Monday 25th September 2017** due to public holiday's and will re-open at **9am on Tuesday 26 September 2017.**

Detailed right is a list of telephone numbers, so that any emergency repairs you may have can be dealt with while the office is closed for example, you are having problems or faults with essential services such as electricity, water supply and gas - you should contact the relevant number:

- **Gas Escapes, call the National Grid on - 0800 111 999**
- **All Other Emergency repairs, call John Frood & Sons on - 01555 663927 or 07563 384282**

