

CATHCART CDHA Cathcart & District Housing Association

STANDARD



The Newsletter of Cathcart & District Housing Association

WINTER 2024 • ISSUE 53

Winter Holidays

During the holiday period, our repairs and maintenance service will be emergency only.

We will be closed from 12.30 pm on Tuesday 24th December 2024 and will re-open on Monday 6th January 2025 at 9 am.

During this time, emergency numbers will be in operation.

It is important that you recognise these numbers are for genuine emergencies only such as loss of power, boiler breakdown, or burst pipes. Routine repairs will be carried out as soon as normal business hours resume in January.

Please ensure that you phone the relevant trades:

- Boiler and Gas Central Heating – **0800 595 595** (City Building)
- Electrical Central Heating (91 and 99 Spean Street ONLY) – **07976 962 560 OR 07884 053 839** (Central Energy Plumbing)
- For everything else, including electrical, joinery, plumbing, and roofing – **0141 556 3500** (CLC All Trades).



UPDATE TO OFFICE OPENING HOURS

In the earlier part of this year, we carried out a footfall survey of attendance at our office and found that general footfall had reduced considerably. More people use email/telephone as the main means of contact.

From 11 November following a business review, the office will be

closed all day on a Wednesday. This will allow staff to work uninterrupted and attend to fieldwork, as necessary. Appointments will still be available if required and should be made in advance with the relevant officer. The office will also close at 1pm on Fridays to allow for staff training.

Our new office hours are:

Monday: 9am - 1pm, 2pm - 5pm
Tuesday: 9am - 1pm, 2pm - 5pm
Wednesday: Closed
Thursday: 9am - 1pm, 2pm - 5pm
Friday: 8:30am - 1pm
Saturday: Closed
Sunday: Closed

Tenant Engagement Panel

Cathcart and District Housing Association recommenced working with a Tenant Engagement Panel (TEP) in October 2024. The panel is made up of tenants to allow them to discuss any matters that concern them and for the Association to provide updates on performance, forthcoming policies

and to listen to their views on how CDHA communicates with our tenants.

The first meeting covered a review of CDHA's newsletters and the tenant's handbook and an insight of the work provided by our Energy Adviser.

Meetings are scheduled to be held quarterly with the next one planned for **Thursday 23rd January 2025** at 2 pm at CDHA's office.

If you would be interested in attending or would like more information, please email Grant Dyer at Grant@cathcartha.co.uk.



TENANTS HANDBOOK UPDATE

We recently updated our Tenant's Handbook. The Tenant's Handbook aims to cover all aspects of your tenancy and should be read in conjunction with your tenancy agreement.

The latest copy can be found on our website at www.cathcartha.co.uk

Hard copies are available upon request.



SAMARITANS

Remember,
we're here
all week long,
if you need us.

Call free day
or night on **116 123**

BULK UPLIFT



We provide a bulk uplift service for our tenants and factored owners.

The bulk uplift service is for collecting standard items such as small household furniture and other items that will not fit in a normal household waste bin. Commercial and trade waste is not included in the contract and will attract an additional fee. Trade waste includes kitchen and bathroom rip-outs, contractor materials, and fixtures such as wash-hand basins and toilets.

Our contractor, CleanScene, carries out this service and is in our area every Tuesday and Wednesday.

Tenants and factored owners can request an uplift by emailing bulk@cathcartha.co.uk or calling our office on 0141 633 2779.

When contacting us, please provide your address and a list of the bulky items requiring removal.

Some items will attract a fee. These are noted below:

- Rubble, builders' waste and heavy landscape material
- Waste arising from work carried out by a contractor
- Sheds, greenhouses and other outbuildings
- Volume garden waste such as tree/bush cuttings
- Tree trunks
- Soil
- Cast iron baths (these must be broken up into manageable sized pieces)
- Central heating equipment, including boilers and radiators
- Windows

The following items **cannot** be collected:

- ✗ Cast iron washing poles
- ✗ Supermarket trollies (contact the supermarket directly)
- ✗ Metal garage doors
- ✗ Garden rollers
- ✗ Gas cylinders (can be disposed free of charge at a recycling centre)
- ✗ Safes
- ✗ Paint (can be disposed free of charge at a recycling centre)
- ✗ Oil (can be disposed free of charge at a recycling centre)
- ✗ Car batteries (can be disposed free of at a recycling centre)
- ✗ Storage heaters

Uplifts are costed once items to be removed have been viewed or photos of what must be uplifted have been received. There is a minimum uplift charge of £80 for the CDHA postcode area.

Example of a bulk uplift:



Example of trade waste:



Replacing Your Radio Electricity Meter

What is the Radio Teleswitch Service (RTS)?

The Radio Teleswitch Service (RTS) uses a radio signal to tell some older electricity meters when to switch between peak and off-peak rates. RTS was introduced in the 1980s and is now reaching the end of its natural operational life. This means that the equipment that produces the radio signal can't be adequately maintained anymore.

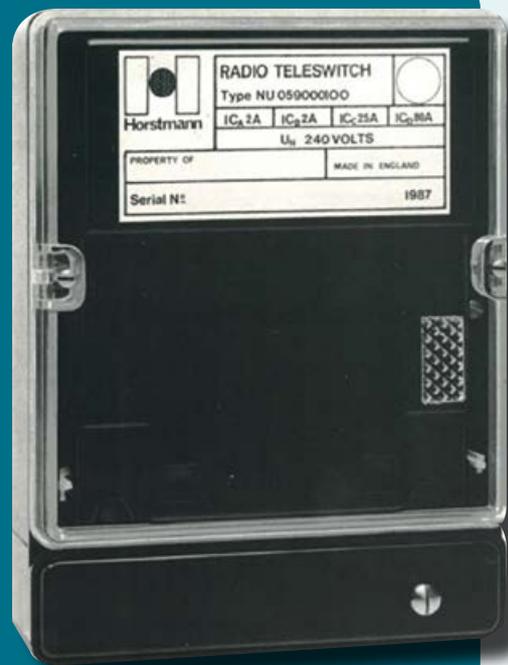
The technology that supports RTS meters will end on **30 June 2025**. Without the technology to tell RTS meters when to switch between peak and off-peak rates, they

may no longer work properly, and it may mean that a consumer's heating and hot water supply stops functioning as normal.

If you have an RTS meter, your electricity supplier will get in touch to arrange an upgrade to a smart meter before this deadline.

They must make sure you have a suitable meter installed, and that your service is not disrupted.

We expect electricity suppliers to replace all RTS meters before the technology supporting RTS ends in June 2025.



Support to upgrade RTS electricity meters

Ofgem is working with energy suppliers, distribution network operators, consumer groups and others as part of the RTS Taskforce to support people with an RTS electricity meter.

If you have an RTS electricity meter your electricity supplier will contact you to arrange an appointment to upgrade your electricity meter. You should arrange an upgrade of your meter to avoid losing heating or hot water after 30 June 2025. Read details about the end of the RTS and what Ofgem is doing to help here: <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications/end-radio-teleswitch-service-rts-what-were-doing-help>

Find out if you have an RTS meter

You may have an RTS meter if:

- it switches between peak and off-peak tariff rates
- it automatically turns on your heating or hot water
- your home is heated using electric or storage heaters
- there is no gas supply to your area, including households in rural areas and high-rise flats.

Get in touch with your electricity supplier if you're still not sure which meter is in your home.

If you do not know who your supplier is, follow the steps here: <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/information-consumers/energy-advice-households/finding-your-energy-supplier-or-network-operator>

Teleswitch

Upgrading to a smart meter

A smart meter will give you a similar service to your RTS meter. You'll also get other benefits, including:

- electricity readings submitted automatically
- access to 'smart meter only' tariffs
- the ability to monitor your energy usage
- accurate bills based on the electricity you've used, not estimates.

If you're not able to upgrade

In some instances, your supplier may not be able to offer you a smart meter at the moment.

If this is the case, they must make sure you have a suitable meter installed, and that your service is not disrupted.

You should contact your supplier to understand the options available to you.

If you do not want a smart meter

Upgrading to a smart meter is the best option for RTS customers. If you choose not to upgrade:

- your heating and hot water may be left continually on or off
- your electric storage heaters may charge at the wrong time of day, possibly leading to higher bills
- your supplier may be unable to confirm your electricity usage during peak or off-peak times, and your electricity costs may be higher than before
- you'll have a more limited choice of tariffs.

Talk to your supplier for more information.

Get support

You can get advice and information on [energyadvice.scot](https://www.energyadvice.scot).

Fibre Broadband Upgrades

What is a full fibre upgrade?

Throughout the UK the fibre optic broadband infrastructure is being upgraded to provide the most up-to-date, secure, reliable and fastest internet services available.

The installation is free for all owners and tenants and can be installed quickly and using invisible line technology which allows the installers, mainly BT Openreach, to install the cabling under the street/path lines.

How does this affect me as a tenant?

You may see a small white box appear outside your property door. The box is able to be used by over 650 internet suppliers. At any point, you can connect your current provider or a future one to the most updated broadband line.

Do I have to use it?

No, currently the line can sit dormant if required. Over the next few years, all UK internet suppliers will be changing to full fibre broadband so you will be ready to go live when required.

Where can I find further information?

<https://www.bt.com/help/broadband/full-fibre/how-is-full-fibre-installed>

Contents Insurance

Contents insurance is a type of home insurance policy that covers you against loss, damage, or theft to your personal belongings and home possessions. It can also cover you if you take items out of the home or on holiday, for example. Please note, it is different from buildings insurance which protects the structure of the building and permanent fixtures.

It is your landlord's responsibility to buy buildings insurance but the responsibility for insuring your belongings lies with you as the tenant.

You do not have to take out home contents insurance, however, we would recommend that all tenants do, either through the Thistle Tenant Risks Home Contents Insurance Scheme or by making

your own arrangements because if any of your contents are lost, stolen, or damaged you will have to pay to replace them.

The Thistle Tenants Risks scheme was designed for tenants in social housing, and you can pay premiums by cash fortnightly or monthly, monthly by direct debit, or annually. To find out more, there are 3 ways to contact Thistle Tenant Risks:

- 1 Call 0345 450 7286
- 2 Request an application pack from your local housing office.
- 3 Visit www.thistletenants-scotland.co.uk where you can also request someone to call you back.

Tips To Prevent Frost Damage

There are some simple steps to take to help prevent your pipes from freezing:

- Leave the central heating on for short periods of time throughout the day.
- Let warm air into your roof space by keeping the trap door open.
- Keep the cupboard door under the sink open, this will let warm air move around the pipes.
- Keep room doors slightly open to allow warm air to move around the house.
- Ensure that you have insurance for your contents and personal belongings.
- Know where your stopcock is so that you can switch off your water if there is a burst. Most frozen pipes occur in the roof space and below sink units and can cause considerable damage if they burst.

If you have a frozen pipe:

- Thaw it out slowly by using hot water bottles or towels soaked in warm water.
- Do not use direct heat such as blowtorches as this may cause permanent damage to the pipes. The use of blowtorches could also lead to a fire in the home.

Managed Migration to Universal Credit

If you are receipt of 'legacy benefits' which include tax credits, income support, job seekers allowance, employment and support allowance or housing benefit (if you are pension age you are not affected) – you may soon get a letter from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) advising you that your benefits are coming to an end.

This is because these benefits are being phased out and replaced by Universal Credit. The letter from the DWP should advise you of the date that you need to claim Universal Credit by, to ensure that you do not get less on Universal Credit than you did on your old benefits.

Get in touch with our Welfare Rights service for an appointment as soon as you receive your Migration



letter, they will ensure your current benefits are maximised before you move to Universal Credit, which means you will receive the maximum transitional protection when you claim, and they will assist with your new Universal Credit claim.

Warm Home Discount

You can get £150 off your electricity bill if you qualify for the Warm Home Discount scheme.

To get it you need to either:

- get the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit or:
- be on a low income and meet your energy supplier's criteria.

Check your supplier's website to see if you are eligible. If you need assistance contact our Energy Advice Service.

Pension Credit and The Winter Fuel Payment

To be entitled to a Winter Fuel Payment, a claimant needs to be entitled to Pension Credit at any point during the 'qualifying week' (commencing 16th September). So, they need to make a claim for Pension Credit to ensure that their entitlement will be backdated to include 22nd September or before.

Pension Credit can be backdated up to three months. So, claimants need to make their claim for Pension Credit on or before 21st December to ensure the 3 months backdate includes a day in the qualifying benefit week.

If you would like our Welfare Rights Service to check if you have an entitlement to Pension Credit, they can complete a quick benefit check, either over the phone or face to face, and if you qualify, they can assist with your claim.

Contact our Welfare Rights, Debt & Energy Advice Team at:

advice@southside-ha.co.uk

<https://www.southside-ha.org/welfare-benefit-money-debt-advice/>

Tel: 0141 422 1112

Winter Fuel Payment

The Winter Fuel Payment in Scotland is now the Pension Age Winter Heating Payment, in 2024 it will still be delivered by the DWP and in 2025 will move to Scottish Social Security. This year the Governments' made the much-publicised decision to means test this payment, therefore, to qualify you must be in receipt of Pension Credit or another qualifying benefit:

Eligibility:

- Be born before 23rd September 1958

Be in receipt of Pension Credit, Universal Credit, Income-Related ESA, Income Support, Income-Based JSA or Child Tax Credit or Working Tax Credit of not less than £26 for the tax year 2024/25, in the qualifying week (16th - 22nd September 2024).

Energy Advice Service



**We have launched our new Energy Advice Service!
Get ahead of winter energy bills, contact us today!**

What we offer:

- A Home Energy Efficiency visit by one of our Energy Advisers to identify ways to help reduce the cost of your bills
- Practical Energy Saving tips
- Heating System Guidance to help you get the best value for money, understand thermostats, meters and billing
- Help you find the most suitable tariff and payment method for your circumstances
- Complaints Assistance, we can liaise with your Energy Provider
- Financial Support - we can assist you to access available grants and assist with fuel debt
- Specialist referrals to our Benefit & Debt advice services to help maximise your income and reduce your expenditure.

Contact us at energyenquiries@southside-ha.co.uk or call **0141 422 1112**.

Some Energy Saving tips

Keep Warm!

- 1 Close your curtains as soon as it starts getting dark
- 2 Tuck your curtains behind the radiator or shorten them, do not have them covering the radiator
- 3 Move your bed or sofa away from external walls
- 4 Don't block a radiator with furniture
- 5 Wear layers to keep warm. Clothes made from natural fibres keep you warm and help regulate your body temperature.

Cost saving:

Energy Saving Measures	Average annual saving
Switch off standby on appliances	£40
Draught-proof windows	£70
Turn off the lights when you are not in the room	£7
Where possible, wash laundry at 30 degrees	£22
Avoid using the tumble dryer	£45
Time your shower to 4 minutes	£50
Don't overfill the kettle, boil only what you need	£26
Swap one bath per week for a shower	£8



Universal Credit Deductions

If you have deductions from your Universal Credit for overpayments, advances or debts and these are currently more than 15% of your personal allowance, these will reduce from April 2025.

The government is creating a new Fair Repayment Rate which caps deductions made through Universal Credit for debts at 15% of the standard allowance from its current level of 25%.

In statistics published after the budget, it was clarified that the Fair Repayment Rate will reduce the 'overall cap' for UC deductions from April 2025.

Minimum wage increase

Rising from £11.44 to £12.21 an hour from April 2025 (and the rate for 18-20 year olds rising from £8.60 to £10.00 an hour).



Carer's Allowance/ Carers Support Payment (Scotland)

Carer's Allowance: Increasing the earnings limit to the equivalent of 16 hours at the National Living Wage from April 2025.

This measure will raise the Carer's Allowance Weekly Earnings Limit from £151 a week to the equivalent of 16 hours per week at the National Living Wage (£196 a week) from 7th April 2025.

The Weekly Earnings Limit will then increase in line with future National Living Wage increases.

We assume that Carer's Support Payment in Scotland is likely to follow suit. Northern Ireland has already done so.

This means that those currently working and receiving Carer's Allowance will be able to increase their hours to 16 at National Living Wage without losing their entitlement to Carer's Allowance.



Benefit Uprating

Working age benefits will be updated 2025-26 by the September 2024 Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation rate of 1.7%.

The government will maintain the State Pension Triple Lock for the duration of this Parliament. The basic and new State Pension will increase by 4.1% in 2025-26, in line with earnings growth, meaning over 12 million pensioners will receive up to £470 per year extra.



XL Bully Guidance

The rules have changed if you own an XL Bully dog in Scotland.

XL Bully dogs and the law

On 1st August 2024, it became illegal to own an XL bully type dog in Scotland without an exemption certificate or having applied for an exemption certificate to own that dog.

It is also an offence to:

- have an XL Bully in public without a lead and muzzle
- breed or breed from an XL Bully
- sell, give away or rehome an XL Bully
- abandon an XL Bully or let it stray.

Applications for a Certificate of Exemption to keep an XL Bully dog have closed. New exemptions can only be granted by a court order.

If you have a Certificate of Exemption, you must follow these rules for the life of the dog:

- Keep the dog at the same address as the certificate holder, you can temporarily keep the dog at a different address for up to 30 days in a 12-month period.
- Tell the Local Authority, Police, and the Association if you permanently change address.
- Advise the Local Authority, Police, and the Association if the dog dies or is exported.
- You must have third-party public liability insurance for your dog, you can change insurance, but there can be no gap in cover.
- Keep the dog muzzled in public places.
- Keep the dog on a lead in public places and someone over 16 years old must securely hold the lead.
- Keep the dog in secure conditions both in the house and garden so it cannot escape.

Further Information

Scottish Government XL Bully guidance:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/xl-bully-dog-rules/pages/overview/>

What to do if you find a stray, abandoned or out-of-control dog of any breed:

<https://www.mygov.scot/controlling-your-dog/report-an-out-of-control-dog>

Staff Safety

When visiting a customer's home, CDHA staff are required to assess any risks present. In the case of an animal posing a potential risk to a member of staff, we will refuse to enter the home. In this event, our staff will rearrange a suitable appointment with you.

In the case of an animal becoming a risk to our staff during a visit, they will leave your home immediately and reschedule the visit.

Our customers with XL bully type dogs in their homes will be asked to muzzle their dogs and secure them whilst our staff are present.

If you break these rules, you may be fined up to £5,000, sent to prison for up to 6 months, or both.

Copies of the exemption certificate must be provided to the Housing Association.



DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PIPELINE...

47 Craig Road, Cathcart

This project is now at planning stage. The planning permission application was made on 31 October 2024. We anticipate that process will take up to 9 months and further updates will be made as to the process.

The site at Craig Road is brownfield and currently occupied by garages with a large forecourt. The garages are now nearing the end of their life and bring little income to the Association. The forecourt presents management issues to the Association due to unauthorised parking and bulk waste dumping.

The strategic objectives for this proposal are:

- Contribute to Scottish Government target of 70,000 social rented homes as part of the Housing to 2040 Strategy Document.
- Contribute to the Glasgow Housing Strategy & SHIP priorities:
 - Promote area regeneration and enable investment in new build housing.
 - Tackle fuel poverty, energy inefficiency & climate change.
 - Promote health & wellbeing.
- To deliver excellent housing.
- To work towards the objective for Net Zero energy in use.
- To address general and housing needs in the Cathcart & District Area.
- To address the local CDHA social rented waiting list.
- To address the imbalance of private sector domination locally to create a sustainable neighbourhood.
- Physical regeneration of a hard to manage/maintain garage block, contributing positively to the urban townscape.

271 Clarkston Road, Cathcart

The Architects acting for A&S Homes, Ink Design, lodged a pre-application submission to the planning department to assess the fundamental viability of the proposals in early 2024. Following an exchange of information, a meeting was held in July with planning, who were overall in support of the proposals.

Subsequently, design development has taken place to amend the proposals in line with the Association's Design Guide, and to meet the Glasgow Standard, Housing for Varying needs, and other funding and statutory requirements. This process is about 90% complete.

Once this exercise is complete, the proposals will be submitted to GCC NRS Investment Technical Team for their assessment.

We anticipate this being submitted to the Council within the next month.

Hampden Project, Mount Florida

Following the feasibility study and subsequent discussions with the Council we will shortly be carrying out site investigation tests on the ground at the front of 33 and 55 Cumming Drive.

This will allow us to further discuss the implications of a development at this location.

Once the outcome of the site investigation is known we will then consider how we may improve the area. Discussions continue with Glasgow City Council about the type of project and the adjacent land behind 33 and 55 Cumming Drive.

Although this contract is a future project, we have approval to appoint a design team, and a procurement exercise is now underway. Once the design team is in place the working of the development will continue.

FIRE SAFETY

Smoke Alarms

Recent changes to legislation mean that every home in Scotland must have:

- one smoke alarm in the living room or the room used most
- one smoke alarm in every hallway and landing
- one heat alarm in the kitchen

All smoke and heat alarms should be mounted on the ceiling and be interlinked.

If you suspect your smoke alarm is faulty or damaged, even if by accident, please contact us urgently on **0141 633 2779 (Option 1)**. Do not attempt to disconnect the smoke alarm at any time as you will be immediately placing yourself at increased risk in the event of a fire.

Common Areas

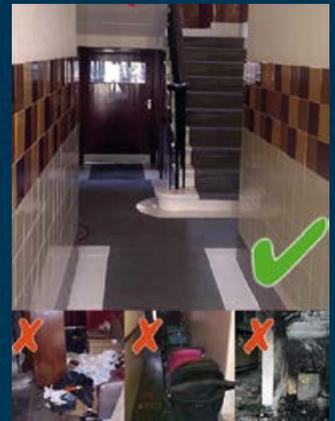
The common stair is your only means of escape in the event of a fire!

Keep it clear!

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

If a fire does start

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



Fire Safety Advice

The following information should be considered by all residents to ensure safety and prevent the risk of fire.

- It is essential that your home has a working smoke alarm. If a fire starts, this will give you and your family time to get to safety.
 - Fire often starts in the kitchen, and no-one should ever leave a cooker unattended while it is in use.
 - Stay in the room with any lit candles and make sure they are kept away from children and pets, and from curtains or other flammable materials.
 - 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.
 - Switch off portable heaters when you go to bed.
 - Close all doors – it can keep your escape route free from smoke and may stop a fire from spreading.
 - Make sure you can get out of the flat and know where your keys are.
 - Have an escape plan with your family.
 - Make sure your cooker is or has been fitted properly by a qualified fitter.
 - Keep tea towels, cloths and kitchen paper away from the cooker.
 - Keep fats and oils away from the cooker.
 - Do not leave electrical wires or cords near the cooker.
- If a fire does break out:**
- Get out only if safe to do so, stay out and call 999.
 - Do not use a lift, always take the stairs.
 - Stay low to the floor where the air is cleaner and cooler.
 - Shout to warn your family or anyone nearby – even outside.
 - If your clothing catches fire, stop, drop down and roll on the ground until the flames go out.
 - If someone else's clothing catches light, use a blanket, rug or thick coat to put out the flames.
 - If you can't get out, stand by a window and shout "fire" so firefighters can see and hear you.
 - Never open a door if it's warm to touch, there could be fire inside.

Tenant responsibilities

CDHA will include fire safety obligations within tenancy sign-up packs and will issue regular fire safety information packs and leaflets to remind tenants to:

- test smoke alarms on a weekly basis
- ensure all communal areas are not obstructed
- ensure fire doors are not propped open or otherwise disabled

Fire can take hold if batteries aren't disposed of safely!

Household batteries and items containing lithium-ion batteries which have been disposed of incorrectly are causing fires in recycling centres around the country.

We would encourage residents to recycle household batteries and items containing lithium-ion batteries, particularly vapes. They should never be placed in your general household rubbish as they contain chemicals that can catch fire and explode and need to be recycled correctly.

Supermarkets and shops that sell batteries also accept them for recycling. Households can use this handy locator to find the nearest recycling point:

<https://www.recyclenow.com/recycle-an-item/batteries>

Disposable vapes which have batteries that can't be removed, have been identified as a serious fire risk and must be taken to a recycling centre for safe disposal. They must not be put in recycling or residual waste bins. Shops that sell vapes have a legal responsibility to accept used vapes for safe disposal.

Most local recycling centres will accept batteries and should be deposited alongside Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) items. To find your closest recycling point at recycleyourelectricals.org.uk.



COMPLIANCE CHECKS



Are compliance checks important?

Yes. CDHA has a legal duty to each tenant to make sure their boiler is checked annually and that the electrics are inspected every 5 years.

What if I cannot attend the appointment?

Contractors will do their best to attend with plenty of notice. If you cannot make the appointment, we must be notified.

Forced Access – Really?

Yes, we have a duty-bound agreement in place to look after the checking of your boiler and electrics. We give everyone the opportunity to make an appointment at a date and time that suits them. Unfortunately, after 2 missed appointments, we need to arrange a 3rd appointment which will be a “Forced Access” as we need to ensure the inspection is completed. Under the terms of the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement Section 5, tenants must allow us access to their property to

carry out maintenance or safety checks. In the event of continued no access for gas safety checks or EICR tests, tenants should be aware that failure to provide access is a breach of their Tenancy Agreement. Under Section 5.11 it states ... “If you refuse us entry, to the house or the common parts we will have the right to make forcible entry provided we have given you every reasonable opportunity to let us in voluntarily. If we have to make forcible entry, in this situation, you are liable for the costs of any damage reasonably caused.”

What does this involve?

We arrange for a locksmith, gas engineer or electrician, and a staff member of CDHA to attend at a specific date and time. The cost of this appointment is charged back to the tenant. To arrange a forced access, it costs us approx. £200 hence we are keen for tenants to keep their appointments and work with us. Due to the cost and time involved, it is important that the appointments made are kept. We do not want to be in a position of recharging tenants for contractors having to attend their properties. We also don't want contractors and staff in your property when you are not home.

DAMP AND MOULD

As the winter months arrive, and it gets a bit colder outside we would like to offer some tips to help prevent damp and mould in your properties over the coming months.

Produce less moisture:

- Cover pans
- Dry clothes outdoors
- Vent your tumble dryer to the outside
- Avoid using paraffin or flueless bottled gas heaters.

Ventilate to remove moisture:

- Ventilate all the time, especially when someone is in
- Increase ventilation of the kitchen and bathroom when in use and shut the door
- Ventilate cupboards, wardrobes and blocked chimneys.

Heat your home a little more:

- If possible, keep low background heat on all day, with background ventilation
- Find out about benefits, grants and help with fuel bills.

PEST CONTROL



Are you experiencing pests, vermin or infestations in your home?

Pests being in and around your home can be a nuisance and, at times, a health and safety issue. Please see below for some advice on what to do when you have a potential infestation in your home, and some tips to help prevent infestations.

Mice & Rats



In the first instance, you should contact your local council's environmental health team. Details can be found below:

- **G42 postcodes:** Report online: www.glasgow.gov.uk/pestcontrol or call **0141 287 1059**.
- **G44 postcodes:** Report online: www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/pest-control

There may be a charge for the work the council do, which you will need to pay for.

We will liaise with the council following rodent control, and we will fill and block any holes in the fabric of the building, both internal and external, to prevent further access.

Ants



Ants or other crawling insects can be a nuisance in your home. You can buy treatments for insect infestations in shops or online. Carefully follow the instructions provided with the treatment and be especially careful if there are children and dogs or cats in your home.

Wasps



You can use a pesticide spray or powder to get rid of wasps' nests. If you choose a DIY method, you will need to act with care, as it may result in aggravated wasps and potentially cause injury.

It may be easier and safer to contact a local pest control company or your local council's environmental health team. Details can be found below:

- **G42 postcodes:** GCC offers a service for live wasps' nests to residents between June and September. This service is chargeable at £109. The exact location of the wasps' nest must be known, visible, accessible and no more than 20 feet from the ground.
- **G44 postcodes:** ERC offers residents access to pest control treatments through their contractor Graham Pest Control. This service is chargeable at £61.20 per visit. As with GCC, the exact location of the wasps' nest must be known, visible, accessible and no more than 20 feet from the ground.

Bed Bugs

Bed bugs can spread quickly through your home as they travel in furniture, bedding and clothing. If you think you may have bed bugs you should wash your bed linen and clothes at as high a temperature as possible (ideally 60°C), or dry them in a tumble drier, as any temperature above 50°C will kill them. Vacuum carpets thoroughly and you may use an insecticide for bed bugs. You will need to repeat this several times to kill the eggs.

Fleas

Like bed bugs, fleas can be tough to get rid of. If you suspect there are fleas in your home, wash all your bed linen and clothes at as high a temperature as possible (ideally 60°C) to kill the fleas. Thoroughly vacuum all carpets and furniture. If you are a pet owner, ensure that they are treated with flea prevention treatment regularly.

Remember! Prevention is better than cure, so follow these simple steps to minimise the chance of an infestation in your home.

- Keep all kitchen and food preparation areas clear and store foodstuffs in sealed containers.
- Don't leave dirty dishes, etc. in the sink or on drainers.
- Make sure any waste bins are securely covered and are emptied frequently.
- Make sure any gaps between/behind appliances, such as cookers, are cleaned regularly.
- Report any minor water leaks promptly to deny water sources.
- Make sure your home is clutter-free and tidy.
- Wash and dry bed linen on the hottest temperature setting permitted.



SUSPECTED WATER LEAK



If you have a water leak in your home or coming from above in the first instance:

- Take all steps possible to catch the water in a bucket or similar container, emptying it regularly into a functioning sink or toilet.
- If the leak is in your home look for the water isolating valve or stop-cock, try under the kitchen sink (image below) or near your boiler. Turning it to the right should stop the immediate damage to allow a contractor to investigate.
- Move your personal belongings to mitigate any damage.
- Contact your upstairs neighbour, try the door and let them know you have a problem, asking them to check if they have a burst pipe or overflowing bath for example.
- If you live in a top-floor property or your neighbours are not in, please report an Emergency Repair as you would normally do so to allow a contractor to investigate.

HOW TO RESET A TRIPPED CIRCUIT BREAKER

A tripped circuit breaker can be easily reset by following a few simple steps:

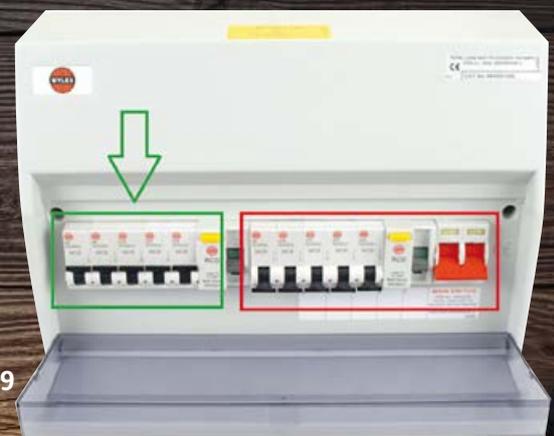
- Locate the breaker box which will likely be located in a cupboard or on the wall near the front door.
- Look inside the breaker box for a circuit breaker switch that has flipped off or is somewhere in the middle between on and off. Some breakers have a red window that shows when the breaker has tripped.
- Push the switch to a full “off” position and then turn it completely on. You should hear a “click” of the switch when it is on, and the power should be restored to the tripped circuit.

- Once you have restored power to the specific circuit then you should be able to operate electrical devices without circuit breaker problems.

If the same circuit breaker keeps tripping after you have reset it, then there may be a problem with a faulty electrical appliance or an overload of the circuit. Try unplugging all electrical appliances and reset the trip switch then plug each appliance back in and if the circuit trips, this will be the appliance that is causing the fault.

If you are unable to fix the circuit breaker problem on your own, please contact us on **0141 633 2779** and a member of our Maintenance

Team will advise you further. If the issue occurs out with office hours, please contact the appropriate contractor, who will advise you further and attend if appropriate.



HOW TO CLEAR A BLOCKED SINK

A blocked sink can be cleared by using a chemical unblocker product which can be found at supermarkets, or by using a plunger. Alternatively, a sink can be cleared by following a few simple steps:

1. Make sure your sink is dry.



2. Pour at least one whole cup of baking soda down the drain followed by two cups of boiling water.



3. Wait a few minutes.



4. Add one more cup of baking soda and a cup of white vinegar.



5. Plug the drain if you can. If you can hear it bubbling and fizzing, that means it's working.



6. Once the bubbles have all gone, you can wash them away with another two cups of boiling water.



7. Try to keep your sink clean and don't wash food or fat down the plughole (this will stop it from getting blocked again).



8. You should also repeat the above steps once a month to keep everything running smoothly.



SCAMS

Where to Report Scams

Scams

In Scotland, report all scams to **Advice Direct Scotland** by calling **0808 164 6000** (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm) or online at **www.consumeradvice.scot**

Fraud

If you have been the victim of fraud, report it to **Police Scotland** on **101** or **999** in an emergency.

Suspicious Emails

You can forward suspicious emails to **report@phishing.gov.uk** and send links from websites which you think are trying to scam the public to the **National Cyber Security Centre's** scam website reporting service at **www.ncsc.gov.uk/section/about-this-website/report-scam-website**



Suspicious Text Messages

If you receive a suspicious text message you can forward it to **7726**. The free-of-charge '7726' service enables your provider to investigate and take action if malicious content is found.

Recently Reported Scams

Roofing Scams

The Scam

During the autumn months, there is always an increase in reports of rogue traders offering to carry out unnecessary roof repairs or providing misleading information about work required on roofs.

Trading Standards Scotland shared in their Scam Share bulletin that one couple was cold called by a man who said he had noticed their gutter was leaking and offered to replace it. They agreed and paid him £600, leaving him at the property to finish the work. When they returned, he told them he had discovered dampness and rotten wood and that a whole new roof would be required, at a cost of around £18,000.

The couple were worried about the state of the roof and agreed to pay a deposit of £5,000. The following day, the man asked for a further £10,000, saying that a special coating would need to be applied to the new roof to 'damp-proof' it and protect it from frost and ice during the winter. Again, the couple felt pressured into paying the extra money but started to feel suspicious. They asked another roofer to inspect the roof - he found that the repair work had been done to a poor standard and that no coating had been applied.

Trading Standards Scotland asked a roofer who is part of Scotland's Approved Trader Directory to answer some frequently asked questions about roofing to help consumers make informed decisions and avoid scams.

Read the Q&A here: <https://www.tsscot.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Roofing-QA.pdf>

How to Avoid

Any unsolicited trader who offers to carry out work on your property must give you their business name and address. Don't agree to let a cold caller start work straight away - do plenty of research into their company and, if something doesn't look right, don't deal with them.

Rather than dealing with cold callers, find traders who have been vetted through a national or local authority approved trader scheme at **approvedtrader.scot**

Rogue traders often imply that urgent work is required in order to pressure householders into making a decision quickly. **Always take time to think before making a decision** - don't agree to make any payments for goods or services on the spot.



Council Impersonation Scams

The Scam

There have been recent reports of cold callers who claim to work for or on behalf of the local council. One couple was visited by a trader who claimed that the council had sent him to check all electrical appliances in every room of the house.

The couple felt suspicious, especially when the trader was unable to produce ID. They asked him to leave, then phoned the council, who confirmed that the man was not employed by them.

Another cold caller said he was working on behalf of the local council and offered to fix two ramps on a property and to remove rubbish.

He said that, although this service was being provided by the council, the householders would have to pay £5,000 for 'materials'.

They were suspicious as he was demanding payment on the spot, so asked him to provide his details and wait while they contacted the council to verify his identity. The man left without giving them any details and the council confirmed that they did not have any workers in the area.

How to Avoid

If someone knocks at your door and says they are working for or with the local council or housing association, ask them to wait and **close the door while you phone the council or housing association to verify their identity**. Genuine callers will be happy to wait while you do this.

Most councils and housing associations will send letters to residents if they are going to be working in their area. They will only attend properties to carry out checks by pre-arranged appointment.

Sign up for **Neighbourhood Watch Scotland Alerts** to stay up to date with what is going on in your community:

www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk

Report any suspicious behaviour to Police Scotland on 101 or 999 in an emergency.

Find out more

- Police Scotland: <https://www.scotland.police.uk/advice-and-information/scams-and-frauds/doorstep-crime-and-bogus-callers/>
- Trading Standards Scotland: www.tsscot.co.uk/priority-areas/doorstep-scammers
- Find traders in Scotland who have been vetted by Trading Standards: approvedtrader.scot



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our AGM was held on Monday 2nd September 2024 in the Association's offices. We are pleased to report that despite poor weather, the meeting was well attended with 17 members, and everyone enjoyed networking.

Our Auditors gave the members assurance that the organisation is a going concern and that all aspects of the audit had been met with no qualifications. The Auditors confirmed that the annual accounts for the year ended 31st March 2024 are true, fair, and free from material misstatement.

Our Management Committee was elected for the year commencing on 2nd September

2024 to September 2025 and we are happy to announce that we welcomed a new member to the Committee. We still have spaces left on the Committee to fill either by casual vacancies or if we are required to bring on any area of expertise.

As a tenant or owner in our area of operation, you can take out a share membership which will then allow you to attend the AGM in future years. If you are interested in becoming a Shareholder (lifetime membership costs £1.00) and would like to find out more, please contact our office and our Corporate Services Officer Emma will be happy to chat with you about this. Alternatively, please complete the membership application form on our website at www.cathcartha.co.uk.



ENGAGEMENT PLAN



The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) publishes an engagement plan for every Scottish social landlord each year.

The engagement plan describes their work with social landlords and sets out:

- Why they are working with a landlord.
- What the landlord needs to do
- What the landlord needs to send them
- What the SHR will do
- The landlord's regulatory status.

For 2024/25, the SHR has confirmed CDHA's regulatory status is 'compliant'. This means we meet the SHR's regulatory requirements, including the Standards of Governance and Financial Management. The SHR doesn't require any further assurance from us at this point, other than the annual regulatory returns required from all Registered Social Landlords.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 2024/25

Our office will be closed on the following dates:

Christmas

- Wednesday 25 December 2024
- Thursday 26 December 2024
- Friday 27 December 2024
- Monday 30 December 2024
- Tuesday 31 December 2024

New Year

- Wednesday 1 January 2025
- Thursday 2 January 2025
- Friday 3 January 2025

Easter

- Friday 18 April 2025
- Monday 21 April 2025

May Day

- Monday 5 May 2025

Spring Holiday

- Friday 23 May 2025
- Monday 26 May 2025

Glasgow Fair

- Friday 18 July 2025
- Monday 21 July 2025

September Weekend

- Friday 26 September 2025
- Monday 29 September 2025

Christmas

- Thursday 25 December 2025
- Friday 26 December 2025
- Monday 29 December 2025
- Tuesday 30 December 2025
- Wednesday 31 December 2025

New Year

- Thursday 1 January 2026
- Friday 2 January 2026
- Monday 5 January 2026



How to contact us: Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd, 3/5 Rhannan Road, Cathcart, Glasgow G44 3AZ. Tel: 0141 633 2779 or e-mail info@cathcartha.co.uk