

THE WAVE



ISSUE 2

Your tenant magazine, bringing you news and updates close to home

PET PHOTOS

Our popular pet photo competition is back! You could win a £25 voucher.

ENERGY ADVICE

Our Energy Advice Officers are here to help if you need support with utility debt.

REMINISCENCE

Sheltered housing tenants reflect on what it was like to go out in the good old days.



Welcome to The Wave

While winter is behind us, many are still feeling the effects of high energy bills and other issues that come with the colder months, such as preventing damp inside our homes (p7). I'm pleased to share that we have some funding available to help tenants who are struggling with utility bill debt (p4).

I'm also pleased to report that we have seen an increase in satisfaction with our services (p6), and we will soon start work on developing a new tenant portal. This will make it even easier to access our services when you need them.

I hope you enjoy this issue of The Wave and get involved in the pet photo competition on page 9! We're also on the search for keen cooks to share their recipes with us for the next issue (p16).

Happy reading!

Heather Kiteley, Chief Executive

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Artwork by Donald Huggan: Donald is an artist and tenant living on Constitution Street. This is a charcoal drawing of the view from his flat.

TENANT UPDATES

Office payments

Please note we will no longer be accepting cash in the office from 1 April 2024. Payments can be made by direct debit or AllPay.

Pets

Our pet photo competition is back! Find the details on p9 plus a few tips and reminders for tenants who have pets at home.

Utility fund

Do you need help with energy bill debt? We have limited funding available to support tenants who are in utility arrears (p4).

New homes in Granton

Tenants have been gradually moving into our new development at Granton Harbour over the winter months. Read more on p5.

Rent consultation

Following our rent consultation with tenants last year, rents will increase by 5% from 1 April 2024.

Book bundle winner

Along with Edinburgh Community Books, we were pleased to deliver the mystery book bundle to winner Sinclair Bremner. Happy reading!



Funding to help tenants with utility bill debt

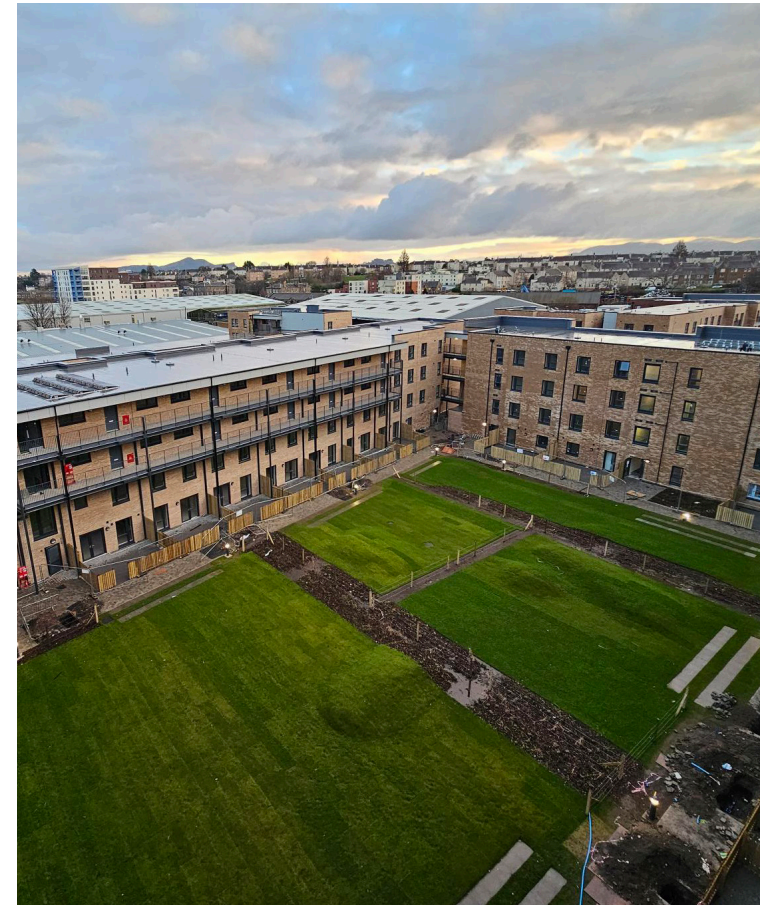
If you are facing utility arrears, our Energy Advice Officers may be able to help.

Our Tenant Advice Service has secured funding from the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA) to help tenants struggling with energy debt.

If you would like to access this support, please get in touch and you will be referred to our Energy Advice Officers. The grants can be provided as part of the energy advice journey we offer to tenants.

Funding is available until 31 March 2024 on a first come, first served basis. There may be other funds available for tenants after this date.

If you have energy bill concerns, would like energy efficiency advice or have issues with your meter readings, please get in touch. Email energy@harbour.scot or phone **0131 554 0403** to request a referral.



Welcoming new tenants to Granton

A new community is emerging at Granton Harbour.

We are pleased to welcome new tenants to our development at Chestnut Street. Residents have been gradually moving into their homes over the winter months. The views from the west-facing flats are quite special!

These new homes are just around the corner from our other development at Heron Place. As the community grows, our Placemaking Team will be engaging with various community groups in north Edinburgh to raise awareness of things to do and support available to tenants locally.

Our dolls house

We were pleasantly surprised when this charming dolls house was brought along to our office.

One of our tenants spotted the dolls house with its 'Harbour HQ' roof tiles in the Sue Ryder charity shop. She very kindly bought it for our reception and we love it!

It has so many small details, including the little anchor on the wall upstairs.

We're very grateful for this donation and it brings a smile to the team's faces each morning.





Next steps after the tenant census

A tenant satisfaction survey and census was carried out last year.

Between September and November last year, we carried out an in-depth survey with tenants to better understand perceptions of your homes, neighbourhoods and our services.

We'd like to say a big thank you to the 1,267 tenants who took part. That's over half of our tenant population!

The good news is, 88% of tenants are happy with the quality of their home and satisfaction with our services has improved. Looking at the feedback, we're going to start work on a tenant portal to make it even easier to access our services.

We also used the survey to ask about the presence of damp and mould in flats. A number of tenants told us this was something they had experienced. Since receiving the results, we've been working to find out how serious an issue this is and to decide what repairs are needed where.

Damp and mould is more prevalent over the colder months and there are steps we can take to prevent this in our homes. We've shared some tips on the next page to help all tenants maintain their home.

If you think you have a serious damp or mould issue in your home, please contact us on 0131 554 0403 so that we may take appropriate measures.

DAMP AND MOULD: THE FACTS

It's something we're all likely to face at some point, and the colder months can make it more challenging to tackle damp and mould in our homes. The good news is, there are steps we can take to prevent it.

What causes damp and mould?

Too much moisture in your home is one of the main causes of damp and mould indoors. Moisture sources include condensation from cooking, drying clothes, or using the bath or shower. These activities are unavoidable, but we can take steps to remove excess moisture from inside our home.

Other causes of damp may be more serious, including building defects or rising damp from the ground (more common in older buildings). Floods or leaking pipes can also lead to damp. In new-build flats, it's sometimes possible for damp to appear while the building is still drying out.

Where is it found?

Mould and damp can appear anywhere in your home. Common places are around windowsills, in bathrooms and kitchens, or in cupboards where damp coats and shoes may be stored. Mould can grow on all surfaces, not just walls and ceilings.

Is mould dangerous?

Mould is unpleasant and can trigger allergic reactions and irritation if you touch or inhale its spores. Common reactions include sneezing, eye irritation or a rash.

How to prevent damp and mould

The first step in preventing damp and mould is to identify where excess moisture is coming from. Once you know the source, you can take steps to reduce moisture in the air or request a repair if you discover the source is a leak.

Ways to remove excess moisture from the air:

- Leave space between furniture and outer walls.
- Use extractor fans in kitchens and bathrooms and wait until all visible moisture has cleared before turning these off.
- Close doors when cooking or showering.
- Cover pans when cooking.
- If drying clothes indoors, open windows from time to time to release excess moisture. Keep the room door closed to keep the rest of your home warm when doing this.
- Keep trickle vents open on windows as much as possible, particularly if you notice lots of condensation on your windows in the morning.

Tackling mould

Small occurrences of mould, such as around your bath or sink, can be removed safely at home. Wear protective gloves and consider using a face mask and goggles when using mould and mildew remover. If you have lots of mould growth in your home, this is more serious and you should let us know immediately.



Would you like to repot your plants with us?

We invited tenants to bring their plants to our garden last autumn for a repotting workshop.

However, due to unforeseen delivery delays, our newsletter didn't reach you all in time. We are keen to host another workshop in spring or summer if enough tenants are interested in coming along.

Let us know if you'd be interested by emailing comms@harbour.scot or phoning **0131 554 0403**. If we have enough interest to run the workshop, we'll be back in touch with dates and times.

How to spot common scams and fraud online

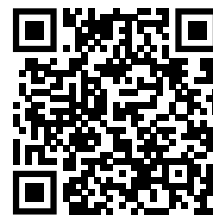
Spot signs of cyber fraud with this new guide recommended by our Tenant Advice Team.

It's a horrible feeling when you think you've been scammed, and it's even worse when you don't realise it's happened.

The new guide from Scotland's Cyber and Fraud Centre is full of useful tips including how to spot common online scams and what to do if something goes wrong.

The helpful guide covers different types of scams including telephone, bank, parcel delivery, investment and pension, and cryptocurrency scams. It also describes how scammers can impersonate your friends and family members on WhatsApp.

We've shared the guide on our website which can be accessed by scanning the QR code to the right or visiting www.harbour.scot/homes/how-to-spot-frauds-and-scams. Feel free to download this and share with family and friends.



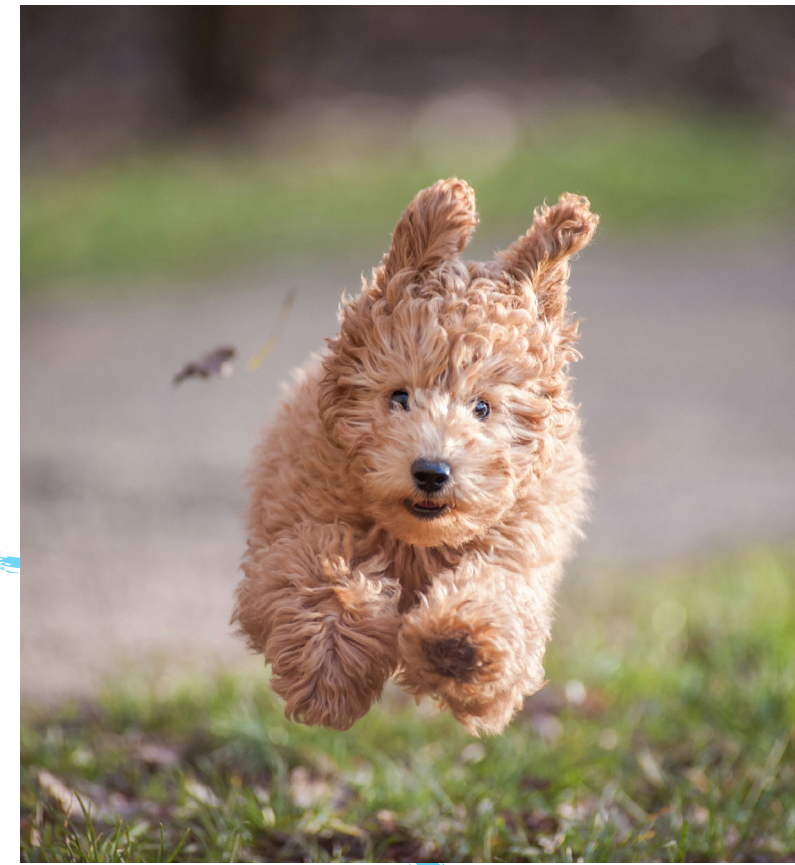
TAKE A LOOK!

PET PHOTOS!

Many of you will fondly remember our popular 'Pets of Portcall' newsletter competition. It's making a comeback in The Wave and we're excited to see what your pets are getting up to!

To enter the competition and be in with a chance of winning a £25 shopping voucher, send us a picture of your pet with this issue of The Wave. All pets, big or small, can be entered into the competition.

Visit harbour.scot/homes/pets or email comms@harbour.scot to send us your photo along with your pet's name. Good luck!



Thinking about getting a pet?

Love cats or dogs? Here are a few things to remember if you have a pet or are planning to bring one home.

We love pets, however it's important that we know if a cat or dog is living in your home.

Please ensure you have written to us if you have, or are planning to get, a pet. We welcome well-behaved pets into our developments, but we do need to know how many you'd like to keep and the type of pet you have.

Please use local parks and dog-walking routes to exercise your pet. Shared back gardens

and green areas are for all tenants, and not everyone is comfortable around animals.

We ask that all pet-owners be considerate of their neighbours and keep pets on a lead when in stairs or lifts.

And, it goes without saying, please also clean up after any mess your pet makes.

WHAT IS COMMUNITY WORKS?

Community Works is Harbour's employability service open to all tenants. We can help you to change direction, change jobs or look to get into volunteering, college or training. We have some certificated training available including preparing for job interviews, food hygiene and health and safety.

Our Employability Officer, Jane Whiting, works one to one with tenants (and others in north Edinburgh) to find out what they are looking for, analyse their skills and abilities, then make a plan to move forward. You can read a few of Jane's recent case studies below.

If you would like to find out more please email jane.whiting@harbour.scot or phone/text **07791158585**.



Photo: Jane Whiting

CASE STUDIES

Part-time work success

Sarah*, referred by Harbour Homes' Tenant Advice Team, had been a tenant for ten years. She was a single mother to two school age children, with her own business.

Unfortunately income from her business was seasonal and patchy at times, so she was seeking work for two days a week that fitted around school hours and self-employment.

Sarah had a very clear idea of what she would enjoy and have skills for, which is a great start. I

reviewed her CV and she was encouraged to apply for a supply role recommended by a friend. Sarah's application was a success and she got the job!

Making a change

Louise* came to see me after a friend had a good experience and was helped into a new job. Her confidence was low despite being very employable.

Louise had worked for the same employer for a long time and had found the work culture had changed from supportive and enjoyable to pressurised.

The role too had become more rushed as a call centre job and less focused on helping people which is what Louise enjoyed.

Louise had interview training with us, and I worked on a CV that accurately reflected her skills and abilities which was confidence boosting.

Louise successfully interviewed for a new job and changed to a friendlier small company, doing a different role which would be more diverse and project based. This was a really good result.

TENANT PARTICIPATION



RTOs: WHAT ARE THEY?

We support tenants to set up groups known as Registered Tenants' Organisations (RTOs).

The idea of RTOs has been around since 2001 when the Housing (Scotland) Act was published.

We love the idea, and we have supported various RTOs in the past at our developments. However, as this has been set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, there is certain guidance we all need to follow when setting up and recognising a new RTO. These legalities are what make setting up an RTO different from a more informal tenant or resident group. This includes submitting a formal application and having a constitution.

If this sounds complicated, don't worry! We can help you set up your RTO and provide guidance along the way. And it's worth it, as your group will be eligible for an annual grant to help you achieve your aims.

So, what exactly do RTOs do? Simply put, they look after and promote the interests of tenants living in a specific area (a development for example). Group members act together to discuss any issues and suggest improvements, or to campaign on topics such as traffic or parking.

They can also organise social events to help neighbours get to know each other. To help tenants set up run their RTO, we can provide funding, meeting spaces, admin support and training.

If you're thinking of setting up an RTO in your neighbourhood, please get in touch with our Tenant Participation Co-ordinator by emailing debbie.bayne@harbour.scot or call **0131 554 0403**.



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THE EDINBURGH DANCE HALLS WERE THE PLACE TO BE

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Reliving fun memories with reminiscence volunteers

Tenants from St Nicholas Court enjoyed spending time with Maureen and Sheila from the Heart of Newhaven who are reminiscence volunteers for a project called *Sharing the Past*.

Tenants gathered in January to talk about 'going out', what they used to wear and

where they used to go. The great Edinburgh dance halls were the place to be!

The volunteers brought along memorabilia to get the stories started. This included old records, magazines, photos, gadgets and scents like 4711 and Old Spice.

It was lovely to hear tenants sharing their stories about the fun times they had.

We'd like to say a big thank you to the reminiscence volunteers!



Five stars for our sheltered housing team

We are proud to have received a five-star certificate of nomination from Age Scotland's Services for Older People Awards!

This recognises the hard work and dedication of our team, and the positive difference each individual makes to the older people who live in our sheltered housing developments.

Stuart Purdy, Age Scotland's Chairperson, said it was hugely inspiring

to learn about the dedication of our team and the work we do on behalf of older people.

Our Sheltered Housing Services Manager, Maureen Combe, said:

"It's our absolute pleasure to support our tenants and to do all we can to help create a real sense of community among them. I'm thrilled that our team's dedication has been recognised by Age Scotland."

CARROT CAKE

This simple carrot cake is a tasty treat for spring.



INGREDIENTS

250g plain flour
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
1/2 tsp salt
2 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp nutmeg
3 medium eggs
180ml olive oil
50ml soured cream
2 tsp vanilla extract
330g dark soft brown sugar
300g carrots (grated)

For the icing

100g full fat cream cheese
100g butter (softened)
350g icing sugar (sieved)
1/2 orange zest (optional)

Cake

- Preheat oven to 150C, gas mark 2.
- Grease and line a 20cm round cake tin.
- Mix the flour, bicarbonate of soda, salt, cinnamon and nutmeg together in a large bowl.
- Beat the eggs, olive oil, soured cream and vanilla extract in a separate bowl. Stir in the sugar.
- Fold the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients then fold in the carrots. Mix well.
- Pour the cake mixture into the cake tin and bake for 1.5 - 2 hours, or until a skewer inserted into the middle comes out clean.
- Leave to cool in the tin slightly then tip out onto a wire rack.

Icing

- Beat the cream cheese and butter until smooth.
- Gradually add in the icing sugar and mix well.
- Mix in the orange zest for a tangy flavour!
- Once the cake has cooled, spread the icing on top.

Share your recipe with us!

Send your own recipe with your name and a photo of the dish to **comms@harbour.scot**. If we publish your recipe in the next issue you'll receive a £25 supermarket voucher!

WIN

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Request a different format by calling 0131 554 0403 or send an email to comms@harbour.scot.

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