

THE WAVE



Photo by Chris Humphreys Photography Ltd.

ISSUE 4

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

EICR VISITS

Every rental property in Scotland must have an EICR carried out every five years.

WE'RE TURNING 50!

Help us shape our celebrations for the big milestone in October.

TENANT ADVICE

What to expect if you have an RTS meter after the service is switched off in June.



Welcome to The Wave

It's lovely to be back with our first newsletter of 2025, particularly as this year marks a very special milestone for Harbour Homes - we're turning 50! We'd like to celebrate with as many of you as possible, so please share your ideas and stories with us (p3).

This is also the year we launch our new 2025-28 Strategic Plan which you can read about on our website. Many thanks to those of you who shared your feedback on our draft goals earlier this year.

Alongside this, I'm excited to announce four new values for Harbour which will guide our work in the years to come. These values outline the essence of Harbour and what we stand for, most importantly putting customers at the heart of everything we do. Look out for these on our website where we'll share what they mean and how they will show up in the services we deliver to you.

Happy reading!

Heather Kiteley, Chief Executive

CONTENTS

03	We're turning 50!	08	Granton Street Party
04	What is an EICR?	08	New homes in Leith
05	Leith Gala Day	09	Defibrillator training
05	FourSquare donations	10	Job search success
06	Exploring Parliament	11	Tenant advice
07	Rabbie Burns Virtual Walk	12	Pet photo competition



Photo by Chris Humphreys Photography Ltd: Here's the sun shining on the community at Granton Harbour! We love this bird's eye view of our tenants' new homes at Chestnut Street.

WE'RE TURNING 50!

In October we will reach a big milestone. We will have been providing great, affordable homes for people in and around Leith for an incredible 50 years! Would you like to help us shape the celebrations in 2025?

- Tell us how you think we should mark our 50th anniversary
- Share your memories or photos of life in Leith over the last 50 years with us
- Let us know if you're celebrating a 50th anniversary this year too
- Visit our special 50th anniversary-themed stall at Leith Gala Day on 14 June

We'd love to hear from you. Please get in touch by emailing **comms@harbour.scot** or calling us on **0131 554 0403**.



WHAT IS AN EICR?

In the last issue of The Wave, we included this handy Q&A about EICR visits. With more electrician visits scheduled over the coming months, we thought it would be helpful to remind you of what these important visits are.



Q: What is an EICR?

A: An Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) is a certificate which details the safety and overall condition of all electrical installations and fittings in a property. It identifies defects, deterioration or damage which may indicate potential danger in things like light fittings, plug sockets, fuse boxes and wiring – basically ensuring they are safe and that there are no risks of electric shocks or fire hazards.

Q: Why is an EICR required?

A: An EICR is a legal requirement. Every rental property in Scotland must have an EICR carried out every five years (three in some cases). It is for your safety as well as that of your neighbours in the same building.

Q: How long does it take?

A: This really depends on the condition of the electrics in your home, but usually between 2-4 hours. The electrician will do their best to finish in that time, but sometimes follow-up work will be required.

Q: Do I need to do anything beforehand or on the day?

A: In many properties the fuseboard is located

within a cupboard, probably the one where you keep amongst other things your vacuum cleaner (and perhaps your Christmas tree and decorations!).

The electrician does need clear access to this, so we do ask that this cupboard be clear before they arrive. They also need to test a selection of sockets and switches so, if you can, please ensure that any furniture which maybe in front of these are pulled out to allow access.

Q: What happens if I don't provide access?

A: Whilst we understand the inconvenience sometimes caused, we also hope you understand the importance of having safety checks carried out in your home. It is for your safety and is a legal requirement for all housing associations in Scotland. If access is not given, we are required to arrange a 'forced entry' and any associated costs, such as the services of a locksmith/joiner, will be charged back to you. We'd prefer not to gain access this way, but the safety of our tenants is our priority and we must also meet our legal requirements.

If you'd like to chat about EICRs or have any questions, please call 0131 554 0403 or email assetcompliance@harbour.scot.

LEITH GALA DAY

Leith Festival Gala Day is an open-air market at Leith Links on Saturday 14 June 2025.

We'll be returning to Leith Gala Day this year on Saturday 14 June. If you're heading along to Leith Links, come say hello!

Our stall for 2025 is extra special as we're celebrating our 50th anniversary this year. Pop by for some birthday fun and fingers crossed for a sunny afternoon!



What happens to items left behind in empty properties?



When a property becomes empty, items can sometimes be left behind by the previous owner. What happens to unclaimed furniture or white goods before the next owner moves in?

We're delighted to say that we have donated our first collection of items to FourSquare, an Edinburgh charity supporting people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.



We donated various unclaimed items including bed frames, living room furniture, a washing machine, fridge freezer and a TV.

By donating to FourSquare, these items will be diverted from landfill and sold in their charity shop, Edinburgh Furniture Initiative (EFI), on Gorgie Road.



Exploring Parliament

Our sheltered housing tenants enjoyed a guided tour of the Scottish Parliament in March.

They found it informative and interesting, and the tour guide explained the design of the building and the functions of the Parliament.

Tenants were impressed with its accessibility and the availability of folding stools. Everyone enjoyed a nice lunch afterwards – especially the haggis, neeps and tatties!

To book a tour of the Scottish Parliament, visit their website: parliament.scot/visit/tours



RABBIE BURNS VIRTUAL WALK

Sheltered housing tenants have been retracing the footsteps of Robert Burns.



Photo: Anne MacDonald, member of the walking group.

To kick off 2025 our sheltered housing tenants took on a walking challenge, “In the Footsteps of Burns.”

This challenge started on 25 January (Robert Burns Day) and saw tenants virtually walk in the footsteps of the famous poet Rabbe Burns.

Burns is the best loved Scottish poet, admired not only for his verse and great love-songs, but also for his character and his high spirits. He came to fame when he was 27 years old.

The route took the group from Alloway in Ayrshire where Burns was born, to Dumfries where he passed away. Each group member walked a total of 55.7 walking miles and set their own goals to go at a pace that was good for them.

“My mobility has really improved by attending the exercise group.”

There were some Scottish treats to get everyone going, and a booklet which mapped out the journey. This showed the places they would pass through and gave an insight into Burns, his poems, his wife Jean Armour and his children. To end the challenge, we held a celebration where tenants received a certificate and lunch.

Sheila Quinn said “This walk gave me the incentive I needed to get healthier.” Mary Tilbrook added, “It gave me a reason to get up in the morning when I knew I had the challenge to complete.” Anne MacDonald (pictured) said “My mobility has really improved by attending the exercise group and by doing these challenges.” Fellow walker Michael Harrod said “I really enjoy the walking challenges. It’s very good for my body.”

Granton street party

Thanks to all who joined our end-of-summer street party!

We had great fun celebrating the arrival of over 300 new homes in Granton with a street party in September. Tasty street food was provided by The Scran Academy, with a menu of mac 'n' cheese and burgers. We also had family games with hook a duck being a firm favourite!

In the week leading up to the party, neighbours got involved with activities including family football, gardening and sketching and painting by the waterfront.

It was a great opportunity for those in the community to meet neighbours and to find out about activities in the area.



New homes in Leith



We're really pleased to have welcomed tenants to 20 new homes for social rent on Iona Street in Leith. The Iona Street development is made up of 14 one-bedroom homes, two two-bedroom flats and four three-bedroom properties.

The grass isn't always greener, but it can be

A reminder to dog owners that frequent use of the same grassy patch damages lawns. Please help keep our community green spaces in good condition by cleaning up after pets or training your dog to go somewhere else.

The discolouration of grass is caused by nitrogen levels in dog urine. To minimise any damage, you can also carry water with you to pour over the grass afterwards.



Our tenants learn life-saving skills

Tenants from our Sheltered Housing took part in training to learn Emergency First Aid and how to use an Automated External Defibrillator (AED).

The interactive session was led by Harbour Connections trainer Daniel Dey. Daniel said: "Basic Life Saving skills training gives bystanders confidence and experience in CPR and using an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) to improve chances of survival.

Maureen Combe, Sheltered Housing Manager said: "All those who took part really enjoyed the training. Daniel is an excellent trainer, he's patient and took the time to explain life-saving skills in a way that was easy to understand.

He is also supportive and encouraging, which made our tenants feel comfortable when asking questions. Being able to provide aid can be vital in an emergency, our tenants now have the confidence and skills to help others."

"Tenants have the confidence and skills to help others."

The 14 staff and residents left with a certificate in Basic Life Saving and AED Skills, but more importantly, feeling a greater sense of confidence in how to respond to a casualty who is experiencing either a heart attack or cardiac arrest."

Michael Harrod who took part in the training added "This was a great piece of training to do and a great experience all round. Very useful, the thought of saving someone's life. Daniel was a great trainer."



Chao came to see Jane Whiting of Community Works in October 2023 with her son Alan aged three. She had recently moved into a Harbour flat, and Alan had secured a part-time nursery place. Chao was volunteering as an Accounts Assistant for a charity (Pain Concern) and studying independently for professional accountancy exams with ACCA.

Chao had previously worked in a finance role in an accountancy firm in China, as well as running her own export company for a year.

Jane provided Chao with some feedback on her CV and job search guidance. Jane also sent over suitable jobs, especially in the public and voluntary sector.

Together they went through a few applications where the form was very detailed, or it wasn't clear what was required. Chao was clearly very driven, bright and would be an asset to a company, she just needed someone to give her a chance.

“I had no idea how to get started with looking for a job.”

In December 2024, Jane reached out to a contact, Jonathan Brigain, to ask more about getting into accountancy. He mentioned his company Accountancy Scotland would likely be recruiting a Junior Accountant. Jonathan and Chao were introduced, and he offered her a four day a week job working from home as a Trainee Accountant.

Chao said: “When I came to see you I had no idea how to get started with looking for a job. I had just moved home, was volunteering and studying and I needed help with my CV, job search and interview skills. I'm now enjoying putting theoretical work into practice and learning about working on clients' accounts and Accountancy Scotland's accounts.”

CHAO'S STORY: JOB SEARCH SUCCESS

How Community Works helped Chao find her new job.



To find out more about Community Works, email jane.whiting@harbour.scot or call 0131 553 8757.

Spotted a scam? Here's how to report it

Recently reported scams have varied wildly from council tax scams and cost of living scams, to streaming service (eg Netflix) and TV licence scams.

If you encounter a scam, it's a good idea to report it so that awareness can be raised for others who may be at risk.

In Scotland, scams should be reported to Advice Direct Scotland on 0808 164 6000 or by visiting www.consumeradvice.scot.

You can also forward suspicious emails to report@phishing.gov.uk and suspicious texts to 7726 (a free service).

Do you have an RTS meter in your home?

Radio Teleswitch Service (RTS) meters will be switched off on 30 June 2025. This will impact the heating of around 250,000 Scottish households.

Q: What is the RTS? Why is it shutting down?

A: The RTS is one way that energy suppliers can switch tariff rates on electricity meters. This means their customers can access cheaper rates of electricity at certain times of day. These types of tariffs are important for people who rely on all electric heating and hot water. The RTS uses longwave radio which is becoming obsolete. As a result, the RTS won't work properly anymore and is being shut down.

Q: How can I check if I have an RTS meter?

A: There are a few ways to check:

- There may be a separate switch box near your meter with a radio teleswitch label on it
- Your home is heated using electricity or storage heaters
- There is no gas supply to your house
- Your energy is cheaper at different times
- Your tariff might be Economy 7, Economy 10 or Total Heat Total Control.

If you're still unsure, contact your electricity supplier, who should be able to confirm whether you have an RTS meter.

Q: What will happen after 30 June?

A: If you have an RTS meter, once the service is switched off your meter is likely to stop functioning properly. You could see:

- Your heating and hot water remain continually on or off or charging up at the wrong time of day. The RTS can control when your storage heaters and hot water warm up. It turns these on when the rates are cheaper and switches them off when it's more expensive.
- Your supplier incorrectly charging you. Without the RTS, your supplier might not be able to tell when you used your electricity, meaning it could bill you incorrectly for off-peak and peak usage.
- You have a more limited choice of tariffs. As the service is being switched off, you'll find fewer (or no) tariffs being offered for those with an RTS meter.

To stop this happening, you'll need to get your current meter replaced. Most of the major UK energy suppliers, including British Gas, Eon Next, EDF, Octopus, and Ovo have stated that you'll stay on the same or a very similar tariff when your RTS meter is replaced.

To find out more, visit www.ofgem.gov.uk.

PET FOOD BANKS



Did you know you can donate or find items such as food, jackets, collars, leads, bowls and bedding at a Pet Food Bank?

Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home set up their Pet Food Bank in 2019 saying on their website “We don’t think a change in financial circumstances should mean you can’t keep a pet. In fact, in these situations, pets are often a much-needed source of comfort, stability and security.”

There are donation stations across the region which you can find by visiting edch.org.uk/community/pet-food-bank.

WIN!

We loved seeing your pet photos from the September issue of The Wave! We’re pleased to share this winning picture of Ivar with his copy of the magazine, submitted by Lorna.

If you’d like to share a photo of your pet and be in with a chance of winning a £25 shopping voucher, please send us your photo by 31 July 2025. 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!



Looking for a different format?

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

Please recycle me when you are finished reading.