



Winter Newsletter 2020



Helping you Keep Safe and Well

As we all continue to live under the current restrictions, Harrogate Housing Association continues to work hard on providing safe and comfortable homes for all our customers.



You will all be aware of the servicing of your boilers every year and the electrical checks every 5 years which help maintain a safe home for everyone. The regular testing of smoke and fire alarms within your home is also important. Whilst contractors carry out testing at the gas service (every year) we would encourage you to carry out your own testing, as recommended by the Fire Service, once a week, by pressing the test button on the alarms. This not only keeps you and your family safe but could identify if there is a problem. If you do encounter a problem with them give the office a ring and someone will deal with this for you.

Supporting customers in Lockdown - during restrictions our staff have helped to support customers by:

- Carrying out well being checks to our more vulnerable customers.
- Working with customers affected by furlough to make a claim for benefit/grants.
- Provided donations to the local foodbank that have directly supported some customers.
- Worked in conjunction with other agencies to provide holistic packages of support.

If you feel that you would benefit from our support or help get in touch with the office.

Following COVID guidelines - Please make sure that you, your family and visitors follow the government guidelines for the Christmas period and the relevant Tier restrictions. Unfortunately during the Summer lockdown some customers broke the restrictions and received a fine from the Police but also subsequent action by us in respect of their tenancy and action, in respect of any form of Anti-Social Behaviour, can still be accelerated through the Courts. To view our Anti-Social behaviour Policy please go to www.hhal.org.uk. Please make sure you follow the rules and safeguard your home.

Time to Have Your Say !

The Customer Satisfaction Survey will be on its way to you shortly. This gives you an opportunity to tell us how you think we have delivered services to you. Don't forget you can provide your feedback to Acuity (they are conducting the survey for us) completely anonymously.

Please complete the survey, which you can do on line or via the post so that we know what is most important to you and can focus on it.

Oh and all returned surveys get entered into a free Prize draw for the chance to win one of 2 £50 vouchers - that's got to be worth it ??

Christmas is coming



Whilst the office has had to remain closed due to Covid restrictions, staff have continued to work at home and in the office, carrying out visits to our schemes and making essential visits to customers where safe to do so. Just to let you know that staff will not be in the office from -

Thursday 24 December @ 5pm

until

Monday 4 January @ 9am

During the festive break the office will be operating an **emergency only service**.

Please note that any repairs reported will only involve a "make safe" arrangement and any further works required to your repair will be completed in the New Year.

Keep Your Gas Contact number handy



With the Newsletter this year we have included a small magnet that you can put on your Boiler or Fridge that has the number for Sure should you have an issue with your central heating and hot water.

The magnet will stop you searching for the number when you need it and ringing them direct rather than coming through the office number will speed up a response and allows you to book a convenient appointment.



Celebrating VE Day in style



Back in May, residents on Globe Street got (socially distanced) together to celebrate VE Day. The event was organised by Debbie Glover, resident of Globe street who rallied her neighbours to get involved. A reliable source advises us that there was a delicious BBQ with the beer and wine flowing. A great time was had by all !!!



Residents at Globe Street enjoying socially distanced VE Day celebrations

The Residents at Applegarth Homes also held a similar celebration on the front garden of the scheme, where we aware a tea time feast was held for all residents to attend. Everyone had a great time.

You Said, We Did!



Frances and Ifrah recently conducted a snapshot perception survey on our older properties in Starbeck to ask them what their key priorities are. Here is what was said and done!!

YOU SAID

66% of responses said they felt unsafe in their neighbourhoods

50% wanted a Housing Officer to attend on a Saturday night to see what residents face.

40% of responses said they felt unsafe due to crime in the area

WE DID

We increased estate walkabouts by the Housing Officers to weekly in the most affected areas. The Police and Harrogate Borough Council have also joined us on a regular basis.

Frances attended on Saturday 14 November with the Police and a Public Safety Officer. More joint visits are planned in the near future.

We have been contacting customers and encouraging them to report incidents to ourselves or the police. We have worked with police to help pass on reports of any upcoming issues or people we believe to be adding to the level of crime in the area.

It is a light bulb moment !



Here at the office we have a limited supply of energy efficient light bulbs that customers can have for their home on a first come first serve basis. Due to the limited supply we are able to provide 2 packs of bulbs per household. Please contact the office and arrange to call to the office to collect them.

Getting Energy Efficient

The government recently announced an initiative to landlords and homeowners to help them make homes more energy efficient. We are taking advantage of this initiative and will be working to provide increased insulation in the dormer rooms in our terraced properties. The vouchers provide 2/3 of the cost and we are covering the rest. The vouchers haven't been released yet so we can't get moving on this, but we do have a contractor lined up and who is ready to go. Hopefully this work will be carried out in the New Year. We will of course be in touch with those customers affected before the work starts.

Did you know....?

The Association has, despite the obvious challenges had a busy year and these are some highlights;-

- Swiftly provided the technology to assist staff working from home to maintain the service to you and keep people safe.
- Started recruiting a new Housing Management Apprentice. Interested in applying? please contact the office.
- Introduced MOT style servicing of Gas and Oil Boilers which will help maintain 100% of properties covered.
- During the lockdown we achieved 100% of properties with an in date LGSR. Thank you for allowing us access into your homes to do this.
- Delivery of our planned maintenance programme including a painting programme in Starbeck.

Finally....Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

All staff and Board members would like to wish our customers a happy and peaceful Christmas time and wish you all the very best for the New Year. **Stay Safe and Well !!**

