



Winter Newsletter

DECEMBER 2021



Merry Christmas...

and a Happy New Year from Forgewood Housing Co-operative!

Festive holiday period closure

The information below confirms the festive closure period for the Co-operative:-

Normal service 9am – 4.30pm on the following dates -

- Monday 20 December 2021;
- Tuesday 21 December 2021;
- Wednesday 22 December 2021 and;
- Thursday 23 December 2021.

The office will be closed on Friday 24 December 2021 and will remain closed through the festive period and re-open on Thursday 6 January 2022.

Our maintenance team will be in the estates at times over the holiday season to carry out checks as well as provide a litter picking service.

Food hampers given out last Christmas to 5 lucky households who were selected at random.



For emergency and useful contact numbers, please refer to the rear cover of this newsletter.
While the Co-operative is closed staff will be alerted to any emergencies very quickly and respond as necessary.

ALSO INSIDE:

Rent Consultation **p3**

Tips & Advice for a Safe and Comfy Winter **p6**

Benefit Advice **p7-8**

Community Update **p12**

Emergency phone numbers **p20**

Service Update

Scottish Government have announced they expect a challenging winter ahead and have set out within their Strategic Framework the latest approach to managing the pandemic.

In light of this guidance the office will remain closed to the public to play our part in protecting our tenants and staff from transmission of the Covid-19 virus.

In accordance with Scottish Government guidance some of our staff are working from the office and others are continuing to work from home.

We are providing community activities (see our Community Team Update) and all our normal housing serviceswelfare advice, allocating homes, completing repairs, dealing with anti-social behaviour, rent management, estate management and putting in place plans for investment in some of our properties.

As tenants are at the heart of our service delivery we will be carrying out a survey with all tenants and would ask that you take part.

This survey will enable the Co-operative to identify the needs of tenants and help us reshape the way in which we deliver our services moving forward.

As a thank you for taking part in this survey you will automatically be entered into a prize draw for £100 Asda voucher.

In the meantime should you wish to discuss any aspect of our service you can continue to contact the Co-operative by the following means:



Telephone: **01698 263311**
(Phone lines open - Monday to Friday From 9am – 4.30pm)



Email: **enquiries@forgewoodcoop.org.uk**



Through our website: **www.forgewoodcoop.org.uk**

An appointment can be offered to tenants where an issue cannot be resolved by telephone or by other means.

As the Co-operative is following strict infection control measures we are asking tenants if attending an appointment to:-

- wear a mask (unless exempt);
- sanitise hands on entry and exit from the building;
- do not come into the office if you are feeling unwell/have been told to isolate or have been in close contact with someone with Covid-19.

These are constantly under review as restrictions are put in place or lifted and dependent on staffing levels. If we need to make any unplanned changes we will put details on our website.

Annual Assurance Statement

As part of the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Framework, all Registered Social Landlords have to submit an Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Following a recent robust self-assessment, the Management Committee considers that Forgewood Housing Co-operative is compliant with the requirements of the

Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management and has submitted an Assurance Statement to that effect.

Our Assurance Statement is available on our website www.forgewoodcoop.org.uk

We have added an amendment to the statement that the Co-operative has assured that we are working towards having appropriate systems

in place for the collection of equalities data. We are assured that we are working towards using this data to take account of equality and human rights issues in our decisions, policy making and our service delivery. The aforementioned was not part of our submitted statement due to an oversight and we hope this clarifies our intentions regarding equalities and human rights data.

Rent Consultation



We want tenants to have their say on the proposed annual rent increase that is due to take effect from April 2022.

As a tenant, your rent goes towards paying for a whole range of housing services that directly affect you and that is why your opinion is important to us.

The views expressed during the consultation will be included in a report to our Management Committee in January 2022 where approval for the rent increase is sought.

We must ensure that the rent we collect is sufficient to pay for the costs of maintaining and managing our homes. We must therefore have a sustainable long term business plan in place to meet cost such as -

- Providing quality comprehensive housing management services;
- Ongoing repairs and maintenance to homes;
- Major improvements such as new kitchens, bathrooms etc;
- Ensure our homes meet quality and energy efficiency standards.

An affordability exercise is currently being carried out in conjunction with our budgeting process to ensure any proposed increase is viable for the Co-operative.

The proposed options will be reviewed and considered by our Management Committee in December 2021 and thereafter all tenants will be consulted on the proposed rent increase.

You are Invited to have your say...

If you are interested in having your say please contact the office and provide your name, address and email address. This will allow us to forward an invite to come along to a rent consultation focus group meeting which we will be held in the near future.

We will also consult with you in various ways. We will send an information leaflet to all tenants, carry out a survey, post information on the website or if you require a chat by telephone we can arrange this.

Your feedback is important to us and will contribute towards Management Committee's final decision in January 2022.



Virtual AGM

Our second virtual AGM was held on 22 September 2021 by Zoom. The meeting attracted 14 members and the Co-operative extends a big thanks to all for taking the time to attend.

The business at the meeting included a report from the current Chair, Callum Boughey and our Director, Cathy Brien and Depute Director, Paul Lennon who reported on the Co-operative's highlights and achievements during the year. A financial report from our External Auditors was also provided.

Following the Annual General Meeting, the Management Committee met to elect new office bearers for 2021/22.

The 2021/22 officer bearers are:

Chairperson	Alan Thomson
Vice Chairperson	Callum Boughey
Secretary	Jolene Martin
Treasurer	Charlie Millar

The remaining Committee Members are:

John Burton	Committee Member
David Hemmings	Committee Member
Natalie Barclay	Committee Member
Lee Murray	Committee Member
Thomas Divers	Committee Member
Melissa Barclay	Committee Member
Teresa Boyle	Committee Member
Marek Dziekan	Committee Member

Share Membership

Would you be interested in becoming a member of Forgewood Housing Co-operative?

The Co-operative is actively encouraging new members to ensure we are represented by the people and areas we serve and to encourage greater participation in our activities.

If you would like to become a member, we can send you an application form, for £1 you can become a lifetime member. Membership provides the opportunity to stand for election at the Annual General Meeting and vote for members of the Committee. You can apply for membership of the Co-operative from the age of 16.

For more information contact Paul Murphy on **01698 263311** or by emailing **paulm@forgewoodcoop.org.uk**



6 WAYS TO SAVE ON YOUR CHRISTMAS SPEND

1 Plan early for Christmas, be realistic and budget accordingly... Work out how much you are going to spend on each person – and stick to it. Manage expectations as to what you or Santa can give;

Stock up on non-perishables like canned and frozen goods a little at a time in the run-up to December – you'll spread the cost over a period of weeks or even months, avoiding a massive over-spend on your food budget;

2 Don't forget the everyday bills... Remember that rent, utility bills, food bills and other existing debts still have to be paid – and the consequences can be severe if they're not. Even though it's Christmas, best get your priorities right. It will only catch up with you in the New Year!;

5 It really is the thought that counts... if you're watching your budget, set price limits, shop around, and don't be afraid to suggest a Secret Santa to friends and family and put a limit on the spend. This means you buy one present each rather than buying for everyone– they might find it a blessed relief;

3 Buy safe to be safe... whatever the deal, whatever the temptation, don't buy from unauthorised traders and don't borrow from unauthorised lenders. The initial savings and convenience may prove to be a false economy;

6 Start planning and saving for next Christmas... once Christmas is over, it's worth looking at what you did well and what you didn't. Learn from your mistakes and start planning how you will do things differently next year. This might also be a good time to start saving for next Christmas and you could do this by setting up a credit union account in January.

4 Drop the big shop... It's easy to get caught up in the supermarket frenzy, but your wallet will thank you if you tough it out and buy only what you need.



Tips & advice for a safe and comfy winter

Heating your home

AFTAR (Advice for Tenants and Residents) Energy Advice Project via Citizens Advice Bureau can help you with free, confidential and impartial advice on energy bills, usage and can help with billing issues, Warm Home Discount, Winter Fuel Payment, Cold Weather Payment etc.

If you would like to make an appointment to discuss your energy costs, please call the office on **01698 263311** and we can make a referral to them.

————— Top Tips to keep you warm and save energy include: —————

Use Your Curtains

Let the sunlight in during the day. When it gets dark, shut your curtains – this acts as another layer of insulation and keeps warmth in your rooms. It is worth considering purchasing thermal curtains or thermal lining for your curtains. You should also make sure you don't have any leaks or gaps so that the warm air can stay in and the cold air stays out.

Move Your Sofa

If you have a chair or sofa in front of your radiator/heater this is absorbing the heat that could be warming your home. The same rule applies if you have curtains that cover your radiator/heater or you are drying clothes on them.

Wrap up Warm

Wearing a jumper or cardigan at home can save you turning up the heating too high and can save on energy bills in the long run.

Boiler Maintenance

If you feel your heating is not working properly, please contact the Co-operative and

arrange for a contractor to visit before the festive period.

Don't Pay Too Much for Your Energy Bills

It is worth checking that you are on the best tariff for your gas and electricity supply. If you require assistance with this please contact this office and we can refer you to Citizens Advice Bureau via our AFTAR project who would be more than happy to assist with this.

Although the instinct is to batten down the hatches and trap as much heat as possible in your home please make sure your rooms are properly ventilated through the use of the trickle vents on your windows, or opening windows from time to time, particularly in bedrooms while sleeping. This will help prevent a build-up of warm, moist air that can lead to condensation if left closed.

Frozen pipes

Keep the heating on, even at a low temperature, during severe cold weather to prevent pipes freezing up.

Winter Fuel Payment

The Winter Fuel Payment is a payment to help you pay your heating bills during the winter.

You'll get a Winter Fuel Payment automatically - you don't need to apply - if all of the following apply:

- you get the State Pension or another benefit - but not Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, Child Benefit or Universal Credit;

- you were born on or before 26 September 1955;
- you lived in the UK for at least 1 day during the week of 20 to 26 September 2021 – this is called the 'qualifying week'.

If you don't get the State Pension or another benefit, or if you live abroad, you might need to make a claim.

Find out more about the Winter Fuel Payment at <https://www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment>

Cold Weather Payments

Cold weather payments are one-off payments to help you pay for extra heating costs when it's very cold.

You'll get a payment each time the temperature drops below a specific temperature for a set period of time.

You'll only be eligible if you already get:

- Pension Credit;
- Income Support;
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance;
- Universal Credit.

Find out more about cold weather payments at <https://www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment>

Warm Home Discount Scheme

You might be able to get £140 off your electricity bill under the Warm Home Discount Scheme if you're either:

- getting the guarantee credit part of Pension Credit;
- on a low income.

Check with your supplier to see if they offer the Warm Home Discount - not all suppliers are part of the scheme.

If you've applied for the Warm Home Discount but you switch supplier before you get the payment, you have to apply again with your new supplier. Your new supplier might have different rules about who gets the discount. This doesn't affect you if you get the discount automatically, without having to apply.

Find out more about the Warm Home Discount Scheme on <https://www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme>





Social Security Scotland
Tearainteachd Shòisealta Alba

Find help to balance your budget

If you're on tax credits or certain benefits, you could be entitled to five family payments.



mygov.scot

0800 182 2222

Scottish Child Payment

A payment of £40 every 4 weeks for each eligible child under the age of 6.

Best Start Grant Pregnancy and Baby Payment

A £606 payment for a first child and £303 for other children. Plus an extra £303 if you have a multiple birth. You can apply from 24 weeks of pregnancy until your baby is 6 months old.

Best Start Grant Early Learning Payment

A £252.50 payment when a child is between the ages of 2 and 3.5 years. You can still apply if your child is not taking up a place at nursery.

Best Start Grant School Age Payment

A £252.50 payment to help eligible families with the costs of starting school. Visit mygov.scot/beststart for application dates and guidance on when to apply even if you are deferring.

Best Start Foods

Money every 4 weeks on a pre-paid card from pregnancy until your child is 3 years old.

Check if you are eligible and apply now at mygov.scot/benefits or by calling 0800 182 2222.

You may also be eligible for other benefits. Make sure you're not missing out by speaking to the Citizen's Advice Scotland Money Talk Team on 0800 085 7145.



HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

This information can be provided in alternative languages or formats by calling 0800 182 2222.

SOCIAL SECURITY SCOTLAND

Details of Other Social Security Scotland benefit entitlements:-

- **Carer's Allowance Supplement** – an automatic payment made twice a year to people who get Carer's Allowance through the DWP on certain dates each year.
- **Funeral Support Payment** – money towards the costs of a funeral for people on certain benefits who are responsible for paying for a funeral.
- **Job Start Payment** – £252.50 for 16 to 24 year olds who have been on certain benefits for six months or more to help with the costs of starting a job.
- **Young Carer Grant** – an annual payment of more than £308.15 for people 16, 17 or 18 who care for people who get a disability benefit from the DWP and provide care for an average of 16 hours a week or more.
- **Child Winter Heating Assistance** – a new £202 payment to help families heat their homes for those that have a child on the highest rate care component of Disability Living Allowance for Children.
- **Child Disability Payment** – a payment providing extra money to help with the costs of caring for a child with a disability or ill-health condition. It replaces Disability Living Allowance for children in Scotland that was previously delivered by the Department for Work and Pensions. Child Disability Payment will be available to new applications and to people who live in every Local Authority area in Scotland from 22 November 2021.

For further information on any of the above benefits and to see if you are eligible please visit mygov.scot/benefits or call 0800 182 2222.



Your Rent payment matters - even at Christmas



We appreciate that money is tight and at times it can be difficult to make ends meet, especially over the festive period. However, making sure that your rent is paid should always be your top priority.

You should always ensure that your rent is paid in full and on time and this includes during the Christmas period. There is no scope to stop paying rent at any time during the year and Christmas is no exception.

We will always allow a fair process for tenants to catch up on any delayed payments, however we are unable to facilitate non-payment to allow for the expenses of the festive season.

Any tenants failing to pay without our permission or without a justifiable payment agreement being put in place would leave us with no option but to start legal proceedings against them.

You can pay your rent by the following methods:

Easy Ways To Pay Your Rent

You can pay your rent by the following methods:-

Register online -

@ www.allpayments.net using the 19 digit number on your Allpay card. You can pay free of charge using your debit or credit card.



Virtual Payment -

Using your debit or credit card you can make a payment over the phone by calling a member of staff at the Co-operative.

Online banking -

Using your unique rent reference number and the Co-operative's bank details:

Bank of Scotland/
Sort code 80-09-15/
Account number 00357497.



Phone App -

Use Allpay payment App. Download for free with Apple & Android smart phone. For more info www.allpay.net/app.



Bank Payment -

(standing order) - You can download and complete a form at www.forgewoodcoop.org.uk or set up via your online banking using our bank details (as above).



By Phone -

Dial **0330 041 6497** for Allpay's automated phone payment service using debit or credit card.



At the **Post Office** by using your Allpay card. You can pay by cash/debit/credit card.



Paypoint - Using your Allpay card at any PayPoint outlet.

For further details look on the "Rent" section of our website
www.forgewoodcoop.org.uk.

Useful Tip

If you are having difficulty paying your rent, please get in touch with Susan Kane, your Housing Officer by email susan@forgewoodcoop.org.uk or phone on **077769 90405**. Susan is happy to help and provide support and assistance with this matter.



AFTAR SERVICE

If you are struggling financially this Christmas period, please contact the Co-operative to make an appointment with Robert our AFTAR Project Advisor. This may help you make a good financial start to 2022!



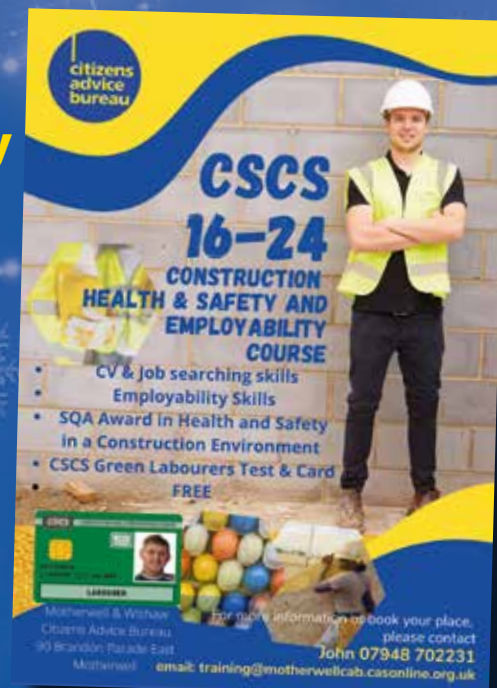
Our Advice for Tenants and Residents (AFTAR) project are operating face to face appointments again. They can provide support and advice on budgeting skills to help you maximise your income, provide money advice or assist with debt issues.

Should you wish an appointment please call **01698 263311** and your details will be passed to Maria at Citizens Advice Bureau. She in turn will carry out an assessment via their triage service and if an appointment is still required this will be made with Robert our Income/Money Advisor.

In addition they provide free impartial advice on energy bills and usage and can help with billing issues, Warm Home Discount, Winter Fuel Payment, Cold Weather Payment etc via their Energy Advice Service. Should you require any assistance with this please contact the office on **01698 263311** and we can pass your details onto an Advisor who will assist you.

CSCS Health and Safety & Employability

Citizens Advice Bureau currently offers CSCS Health and Safety & Employability courses that some of our tenants can attend for free. A CSCS card is needed by anyone wanting to work in the construction industry. Courses are free if aged between 16 – 24 years old. Others can be given help apply for funding depending on their circumstances.



Computer & Job Club Sessions

Help with Courses, Computer learning, CVs, and up keep of job centre commitment assistance is available.

- Forgewood Community Centre is open for computer learning on a Wednesday 9-11 (except last Wednesday of the month) and Friday Job club 9-11



Individual one to one, online and over the phone help is available as well.

Just call John on **07948702231**.



Forgewood
Housing Co-operative Ltd

Going on holiday over the winter period?

At this time of year due to the freezing temperatures there is a higher risk of burst pipes which may affect your property and other residents.

The Co-operative wants to ensure if this happens we are able to contact you urgently to carry out any repairs. We therefore ask all residents to update us with any new phone numbers you may have.

Additionally if you are out of the house for long periods of time please give us details of a key holder that can allow us access to your property if you are unavailable.

If we are unable to contact you or a designated key holder we may need to force access to your property to stop any leaks that may be affecting other residents and causing serious damage to your property.

Please help us avoid this by updating your contact numbers and giving us details of any people that will be able to allow access to your property.

Reporting out of hours repairs

We are seeing an increase in the amount of repairs phoned to our contractor (Rodgers and Johnston) out of hours. Some of these reports are for repairs that are not defined as an emergency but in fact, could wait until the next working day. The cost of reporting an out of hours repair is around £120 immediate callout charge, before labour and parts costs. This is ultimately paid for through your rent.

Please consider if the repair can wait until the next working day however if it is an emergency and a danger to life or individuals, you must report it. If it can wait, we appreciate your patience and we will be happy to take your call first thing on the next day.

IMPORTANT – All gas central heating faults are not included and should be reported to Saltire (open 24 hours a day).



Disposal of Bulk Household Items



To minimise the cost of this, please where you can take any bulk items to your local recycling centre located within Jubilee Way, Bellshill, ML4 1SA.

If you are unable to dispose of bulk items yourself you should call NorthLine on **0345 143 0015**.

Please note there is currently no free uplift service from North Lanarkshire Council. You can obtain details of charges etc from www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/bins-and-recycling/request-special-uplift

While we are reviewing the kerbside bulk uplift service currently provided by the Co-operative any notifications of a future bulk uplift will be sent by an email or text message to tenants. Please therefore ensure we have your up to date contact details (phone number and email address) to enable us to provide you with an update on this service.

Exemptions to what can be uplifted are: garden rubble, asbestos, car parts, gas bottles and any other hazardous or special waste, fridge & fridge freezers. **In addition they do not uplift food stuffs or general household waste.**

COMMUNITY TEAM UPDATE

Activities and groups are continuing to return to Forgewood Community Centre with new activities and taster sessions planned for the coming weeks and months.

Sadly in November our Community Development Assistant, Isla Dundas moved on to another role. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Isla for her hard work during the time she spent with the Co-operative and wish her well.

The past few months have been busy starting with our lottery funded project at Forgewood which commenced in September 2021.

Richard Bolton, Community Development Officer

Our weekly lunch club continues to provide an opportunity for a warm meal and a blether. Coming soon we have carpet bowling, community cinema and the return of our tea dances.

A separate community team newsletter will be sent in the near future.

Have a lovely Christmas and I look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

Poppies on the fence



A big thank you to the 'Chaingang' knitting and crocheting group (who use Forgewood Community Centre) for the lovely display of knitted poppies they created for Remembrance Day.

By selling the knitted poppies they kindly donated £412.50 to Garrion People's Housing Co-operative, Veterans Group in Gowkthrapple. This will support the group with activities such as trips away etc.

FIRPARK SECONDARY PRESENTS...

ALL STARS COMMUNITY CAFE

 <p>HOMEMADE SOUP SERVED WITH BREAD/ROLL</p> <p>SEE SPECIALS BOARD £1.50</p>	<p>FILLINGS</p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>Cheese</td><td>£ 1.00</td></tr> <tr><td>Egg Mayonnaise</td><td>£ 1.00</td></tr> <tr><td>Ham</td><td>£ 1.00</td></tr> <tr><td>Tuna Mayo</td><td>£ 1.00</td></tr> </table>	Cheese	£ 1.00	Egg Mayonnaise	£ 1.00	Ham	£ 1.00	Tuna Mayo	£ 1.00	<p>ROLL</p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>£ 1.00</td></tr> <tr><td>£ 1.00</td></tr> <tr><td>£ 1.00</td></tr> <tr><td>£ 1.00</td></tr> </table>	£ 1.00	£ 1.00	£ 1.00	£ 1.00	<p>SANDWICH/TOASTIE</p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>£1.50</td></tr> <tr><td>£1.50</td></tr> <tr><td>£1.50</td></tr> <tr><td>£1.50</td></tr> </table>	£1.50	£1.50	£1.50	£1.50	<p>PANINI</p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>£2.00</td></tr> <tr><td>£2.00</td></tr> <tr><td>£2.00</td></tr> <tr><td>£2.00</td></tr> </table>	£2.00	£2.00	£2.00	£2.00	 <p>DRINKS</p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>Tea</td><td>50p</td></tr> <tr><td>Filter Coffee</td><td>50p</td></tr> <tr><td>Speciality Coffee</td><td>£1.00</td></tr> <tr><td>Cans of Juice</td><td>50p</td></tr> <tr><td>Bottle of Water</td><td>50p</td></tr> </table>	Tea	50p	Filter Coffee	50p	Speciality Coffee	£1.00	Cans of Juice	50p	Bottle of Water	50p
Cheese	£ 1.00																																		
Egg Mayonnaise	£ 1.00																																		
Ham	£ 1.00																																		
Tuna Mayo	£ 1.00																																		
£ 1.00																																			
£ 1.00																																			
£ 1.00																																			
£ 1.00																																			
£1.50																																			
£1.50																																			
£1.50																																			
£1.50																																			
£2.00																																			
£2.00																																			
£2.00																																			
£2.00																																			
Tea	50p																																		
Filter Coffee	50p																																		
Speciality Coffee	£1.00																																		
Cans of Juice	50p																																		
Bottle of Water	50p																																		

Extra fillings available - cheese, onion, tomato, pickle lettuce, peppers, cucumber and sweetcorn.

OUR MEAL DEALS

Soup and Sandwich	£2.00
Soup and Toastie	£2.00
Soup and Panini	£2.50

In partnership with





Sponsored by



CAKES

Small Cake	50p
Large Cake	£1.00

Every Thursday from 11.00am-2.00pm
FORGEWOOD COMMUNITY CENTRE, MOTHERWELL ML1 3TT

We are delighted that All Stars Community Cafe have returned to Forgewood every Thursday during term time.

Contact the Community Team:
 Richard Bolton, Community Development Officer
Richard@forgewoodcoop.org.uk
 01698 263311 • 07495 549 065



Forgewood
 Housing Co-operative Ltd

UNIVERSAL CREDIT PAYMENTS OVER THE FESTIVE PERIOD

The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) have announced when Universal Credit (UC) and benefits claimants will be paid over Christmas and New Year. Some tenants might receive their payments on a different day because of the festive season. Tenants who usually receive payments on the following dates will receive their money on the new dates below:

When your payment is due	When Universal Credit will be paid	When other benefits will be paid (not Universal Credit)
Monday 27 December 2021	Friday 24 December 2021	Friday 24 December 2021
Tuesday 28 December 2021	Friday 24 December 2021	Friday 24 December 2021
Wednesday 29 December 2021	Wednesday 29 December 2021	Friday 24 December 2021
Monday 3 January 2022	Friday 31 December 2021	Friday 31 December 2021
Tuesday 4 January 2022	Tuesday 4 January 2022	Friday 31 December 2021

At the time of printing Jobcentre opening times over the festive period were not published.

Useful phone numbers for DWP departments:

Universal Credit: 0800 328 5644	JSA, Income Support, Incapacity Benefit and ESA: 0800 169 0310	DLA, Attendance Allowance and PIP: 0800 121 4433
Carer's Allowance: 0800 731 0297	State Pension/Pension Credit: 0800 731 0469	Tax Credits: 0345 300 3900

Changes to payments to Post Office card accounts

Benefit payments to Post Office card accounts will stop on 30 November 2021.

If your benefits are paid to into a Post Office card account, you must arrange for your payments to be transferred to your bank, building society or credit union account as soon as possible. Please call the Department for Work and Pensions on 0800 085 7133 Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm to arrange for the payments to be transferred or where you need assistance or advice on opening a bank account.

Performance Reporting

We regularly provide performance information to our tenants to assure them that we are performing well as a landlord and to highlight areas for improvement.

We are required to submit a quarterly return to the Scottish Housing Regulator to enable them to monitor the impact of Covid-19 on the social housing sector in Scotland. This return contains information on

where the Co-operative is at with staffing, housing management and financial management.

We are pleased to confirm we remain strong in all areas and a snapshot is provided below for your information. This shows our performance up to the period 30 September 2021 and we have also shown some other areas of our performance.

EMPTY HOMES (VOID) & ALLOCATION INFORMATION		Scottish Average	1 April to 30 September 2020 (same period last year)	1 April to 30 September 2021 (current performance)
Number of terminations			1 + 1 Mutual Exchange	3
Rental loss for year as a percentage of annual income		1.37%	0.00%	0.05%
Number of re-lets			1 + 1 Mutual Exchange	3
Average number of calendar days void for relets		56.30 days	4 days	14 days
RENT INFORMATION				
Total rent due (annual)			£845,900	£858,871
Gross rent arrears in £			£18,370	£20,628
Gross rent arrears as a %		6.14%	2.17%	2.40%
COMPLAINTS		Scottish Average	1 April to 30 September 2020 (same period last year)	1 April to 30 September 2021 (current performance)
No of 1st stage complaints responded to in full Stage 1 - (Front line 5 Working Days)		N/A	1	11
% of 1st stage complaints responded to in full Stage 1 - (Front line 5 Working Days)		96.95%	100%	100%
No of 2nd stage complaints responded to in full Stage 2 - (20 Working Days)		N/A	0	0
% of 2nd stage complaints responded to in full Stage 2 - (20 Working Days)		92.59%	N/A	N/A
SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS				
Resolved		N/A	N/A	3
Upheld		N/A	N/A	6
Some Upheld (Partially)		N/A	N/A	2
Not Upheld		N/A	N/A	0
Withdrawn		N/A	N/A	0
REPAIRS		Scottish Average	2nd quarter to 30 September 2020 (same period last year)	2nd quarter to 30 September 2021 (current performance)
% of gas services done before anniversary date		N/A	100%	100%
No of emergency repairs reported in period		N/A	73	40
Average time taken (in hours) to complete emergency repairs		4.2 hrs	3.4 hrs	3.0 hrs
No of jobs failed (not completed in timescale target)		N/A	1	0
No of non-emergency repairs reported in period		N/A	81	118
Average time taken (in days) to complete non-emergency repairs		6.7 days	2.7 days	3.0 days
No of jobs failed (not completed in timescale target)		N/A	0	1

FAILURE OF POWER



The utility companies in Scotland have well tested plans in place to deal with all kinds of events, but services can be cut off from time to time.

There are steps you can take now that will help you cope with any loss of utilities over the winter months:

- A battery powered radio will help you stay in touch with the news following a power failure;
- Keep mobile phones and laptop computers fully charged;
- Make a list of all the telephone numbers you might need and keep them handy;
- Keep a torch in a known place;
- Keep a supply of battery operated candles.

See rear page for some useful contact numbers. Further advice on preparing for winter can be found on the Scottish Government website: www.readyscotland.org

Snowy and Icy Paths



As a tenant it is your responsibility to clear snow or ice from the paths and roadways around your house. If you have an elderly neighbour or know someone who could use some help why not offer to clear their paths too?

Being a good neighbour and clearing paths of ice and snow is the kind of practical step that most of us can take during cold weather. A helping hand with this can make all the difference for people who may be unable to clear their own paths, or who need to use local paths to access services.

The Council will give priority to clear all "A"

and "B" roads, main distributor roads and roads around schools; major bus routes; town centres; and access to hospitals, ambulance depots and key police and fire stations. They have a similar system for treating footpaths.

Trunk roads and motorways are the responsibility of the Scottish Government.

The Co-operative can sometimes assist in the provision of salt but our resources and supplies can be limited.

You can pick up small quantities of salt using your own container to treat streets and paths from any local grit bins or at the Council's local recycling centre.

Anti-Social Behaviour over Festive Period



We understand that at this time of the year, with Christmas fast approaching, people will be having family and friends at their home to celebrate.

We certainly do not want to spoil this and would simply ask that you take into consideration your neighbours. We will not tolerate anti-social behaviour and will do everything we reasonably can to tackle it, whether the problems are caused by one of our tenants, their visitor or someone else.

The Co-operative believes that everyone has the right to peaceful enjoyment of their home, free from disturbance, intimidation and noise nuisance.

Your tenancy could be put at risk if you commit anti-social behaviour.

We would ask that you be respectful of your neighbour so all our tenants and residents within the community enjoy their home and have a happy and safe Christmas and New Year.

Should you experience any anti-social behaviour over the festive season you can contact:

Police Scotland

Telephone 101, or visit www.scotland.police.uk/contact-us or call **999** if the incident is severe or life threatening.

Crime stoppers

To report crime information anonymously you can contact Crimestoppers by telephoning **0800 555 111** or going online www.crimestoppers-uk.org

Crimestoppers DO NOT ask for your name or address. Please report to your Housing Officer when the Co-operative re-opens after the festive period.

Anti-Social Response Team

How to make a complaint

During working hours you should contact your Housing Officer and they will give advice, investigate the complaint, speak to the person who is causing the problem and take the appropriate action.

Should the anti-social behaviour occur when the Co-operative's offices are closed you can contact North Lanarkshire Council's Anti-social Response Team on **0300 123 1382**.

During specific days of the week the service has a Night Time Response Team available and they will be available to help residents who are experiencing anti-social behaviour.

If necessary they can provide a witnessing service and take the required action.

The details of the call will then be passed to the Co-operative by means of a report. This report will enable your Housing Officer to follow up the complaint and take the necessary action against the perpetrator.

Please remember, if there is an immediate danger or you think that a crime is being committed you should always call the police in the first instance on **999** emergencies and **101** for non emergencies.

Why is it important to have Home Insurance?

Your home is one of your most valuable possessions. It contains all your belongings, memories and comforts.

One of the most important things you can do is ensure that you have peace of mind knowing that in the event of Fire, Flood, Theft and accidental damage the contents of your home are covered from the impact of such events.

The Co-operative insures the structure of your home not your belongings inside your home.

These things can impact people's

lives in more ways than one and in order to get peace of mind we recommend you get home insurance to cover your personal and household belongings.

Did you know you can be covered for as little as £1.60 every fortnightly to give you assurance that your valuables are protected.

If you are interested and would like more information please contact the office or visit www.thistletenants-scotland.co.uk



Keeping Yourself Safe in Home This Winter


At all times of the year but particularly in winter it is vitally important that you keep yourself safe in your home. The Co-operative will carry out all the major checks that are required but there are also things that you can do to protect yourself and your family.



SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is urging families to stay safe this festive period

This winter SFRRS will work closely with local communities and partner agencies to keep Scotland safe from fire and other emergencies - but as always, we need the public's help to reduce the amount of preventable fires we might see in the coming months. We want people to join Scotland's fight against fire and use our six winter safety tips.



Most fatal fires are caused by smoker's materials. Don't smoke in your chair if you've been drinking or you're feeling tired. If you do feel tired smoke outside or stand up and smoke at a window or outside door.



Check your smoke, heat and Carbon Monoxide alarms are working. Replace batteries if necessary.

Keep portable heaters away from curtains and furniture and never use them for drying clothes, switching them off before you go to bed.

Never leave an electric blanket switched on when you're in bed unless it's marked 'suitable for all night use'. Check your electric blanket, plug and flex regularly for damage. If you're in any doubt, don't use it.



Unplug fairy lights or other electrical Christmas decorations and blow out candles when you leave the house or go to bed.

Leaving cookers unattended or being distracted while cooking is the most frequent cause of fire in the home. Never cook hot food while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.



Fire Safety



The Co-operative takes its responsibility seriously as a landlord to ensure tenant safety and as you will be aware has undertaken a programme of upgrading the smoke alarms in your homes as part of this.

It is important that as tenants you work in partnership with the Co-operative to ensure the safety of yourself, your family and your neighbours. For those tenants that have gas central heating when your annual gas service takes place, the Co-operative will ensure that your detectors are tested.

However, a vital part of ensuring continued fire and carbon monoxide detection is for residents to perform a regular test.

Alarms should be tested monthly to ensure everything is working correctly.

To Test the Alarm

Many of our properties now have more than one smoke detector and also carbon monoxide and heat detectors. This test should be carried out on each individual alarm. If your alarms are interlinked hold the Test button on the main alarm, this will set off the sound loudly all on alarms so that you know that they are all functioning correctly.

For those properties with one alarm please press the test button and check it is operational. It is also vital that you contact the Co-operative to arrange for the fitting of the new interlinked alarms in your home.

Electrical Safety



The Co-operative carry out periodic (5 yearly) electrical inspections in your home but what can you do to keep yourself safe?

- Check that sockets, switches and light fittings are in good condition with no signs of damage such as cracking or burn marks;
- Report any electrical repairs to the Co-operative as soon as you become aware of them. Under no circumstances should you attempt the repair yourself;
- Do not overload your electrical sockets and never be tempted to plug an extension cable into an extension cable;
- Check that leads (flexible cables) on appliances aren't damaged or frayed. If they are do not use them!;
- Do not charge your mobile overnight while you are sleeping. These can overheat and cause a fire;
- Remember to unplug appliances when you are finished using them e.g. hairdryers, straighteners and, at this time of year, Christmas fairy lights;
- Never touch an electrical appliance with wet hands;
- Do not take electrical appliances into the bathroom.

Working together we can have a healthy, safe and very Merry Christmas

Condensation

At this time of year there is often an increase in the number of calls we receive from tenants concerned about condensation in their homes.

Do your windows steam up when the heating is on? Do you notice wet spots on your walls when you're cooking? If so, it is likely to be condensation.

Condensation happens when moist air touches a cool surface. It forms water droplets and moisture on the surface. If this continues over a period of time and does not dry out, it encourages mould growth.

It can also happen when large pieces of furniture, for example wardrobes and beds, are placed against an outside wall.

Preventing condensation in the home is your responsibility. But the good news is there are steps you can take to stop it happening.

There are many ways to reduce the risk of condensation in your home which are listed below.

You can treat little spots of mould quickly and easily. Use three parts warm water and one part bleach. Make sure you dry the wall after cleaning it. If this doesn't work, speak to the Co-operative.

Do:

- ✓ keep a window open when drying clothes indoors;
- ✓ keep the internal kitchen door closed when cooking;
- ✓ keep lids on pots and pans when cooking;
- ✓ use an extractor fan in the kitchen and bathroom;
- ✓ open the window after a bath or shower and open the door;
- ✓ try to keep a good level of background heating throughout the property;
- ✓ try to dry clothes outside where possible.

Don't:

- ✗ dry clothes over warm radiators;
- ✗ block off any ventilation around the house such as air bricks or trickle vents on windows;
- ✗ use tumble driers unless they are self-condensing or vented with a hose outside;
- ✗ overfill cupboards and wardrobes;
- ✗ keep furniture and beds hard against walls;
- ✗ Keep the door open when cooking or bathing.

Goodbye and good luck to Isla

Isla Dundas worked as Community Development Assistant with the Co-operative from March 2020. You may have met with Isla while she was delivering many of our community activities within Forgewood.

Isla has now decided to venture into a new career and we thank Isla for her time with the Co-operative and wish her the very best for the future. The Co-operative will keep tenants updated on any changes that take place with our staffing set up.

Would you like to receive future newsletters by email?

If you would like to receive future copies of the newsletter to your email address rather than by post then please forward your name and address to enquiries@forgewoodcoop.org.uk and we will arrange this.

Useful Numbers (Including Emergency Contacts)

- » **Saltire Facilities Management Ltd**
Emergency Repair Number **0845 606 1555**
(all gas central heating faults 24 hours)
 - » **Saltire Facilities Management Ltd** Servicing
Number **01698 743647**
 - » **Rodgers and Johnston** (all other out of hour
EMERGENCY REPAIRS) **0844 247 2120**
(New Freephone number **0800 999 2520**)
 - » **North Lanarkshire Council** (housing benefits
and council tax) **01698 403210**
 - » **North Line** – North Lanarkshire's **0345 143 0015 (New Number)** contact centre dealing
with Bulk uplift, bins, roads and lighting,
abandoned vehicles, Dog fouling, dog
nuisance, gritting
 - » **TRANSCO (National Grid)** (smell of gas)
0800 111 999
 - » **POLICE SCOTLAND 101 (999 EMERGENCY)**
 - » **FIRE BRIGADE (999 EMERGENCY)** or text
"FIRE" to **80800** from your mobile phone
 - » **SCOTTISH WATER 0800 077 8778**
 - » **ELECTRICAL DAMAGE** to electrical supply
or network equipment Call **105** or your own
electrical supplier
 - » **CRIMESTOPPERS 0800 555 111**
- Please take a note of this free phone number!

Hope you enjoyed the Winter Edition Newsletter and we wish you a lovely Christmas and healthy prosperous New Year.

CONTACT US



FORGEWOOD HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE LTD

Forgewood Community Centre, 49 Dinmont Crescent,
Motherwell, ML1 3TT



01698 263311



enquiries@forgewoodcoop.org.uk



www.forgewoodcoop.org.uk



supporting
social
employers



tenant
participation
advisory service

