



Temporary Times

The newsletter for all Midlothian Council temporary accommodation tenants

Issue 3

Spring 2015

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How to contact your temporary accommodation team

Your temporary accommodation team is committed to providing you with a high quality housing allocation and management service which is easily accessible.

The team can be contacted

- Via phone—call 0131 271 3397
- Via regular home visits—you can arrange these by phone if you'd prefer
- Face to face at Buccleuch House, 1-7 White Hart Street, Dalkeith



Need tenancy support? Ask your housing officer to refer you to 'Places for People'

Places for People (PFP) Care and Support provides a Midlothian wide tenancy support service to people who are 16+. Their staff are trained and experienced in delivering support in a wide range of circumstances and are committed to supporting each individual.

They will help you with:

- Managing your money
- Dealing with any debts or rent arrears

- Getting you used to living alone
- Accessing other services
- Handling any difficult situations.

Referrals to this service are made by Midlothian Council's Homeless and Social Work Services.

How temporary accommodation works in Midlothian

Midlothian Council provides several types of temporary accommodation to homeless households.

- Bed and Breakfast – This is emergency accommodation for those households who are roofless. This may be anywhere in Midlothian.
- Supported Hostel Accommodation – There is an emphasis on supporting households to move into independent accommodation and demonstrate the skills needed to sustain a tenancy. It is expected that all persons in Bed and Breakfast accommodation will move into these hostels for approximately three months before moving on. Support is provided around a variety of issues, depending on the need of the household.
- Midlothian Council Temporary Accommodation properties – flats and houses managed by Midlothian Council Temporary Accommodation staff.
- Orchard and Shipman – this company manages properties on behalf of Midlothian Council. These are treated in the same way as Midlothian Council owned Temporary Accommodation.

It is possible that households may stay for a while in Temporary Accommodation, either with Midlothian Council or Orchard and Shipman, due to the high demand for and limited supply of Council Housing in their areas of choice.

Clients will move on to:



Ready to rent - right now?

With over 4,000 households on the Council's Housing waiting lists and roughly 400 properties becoming available each year, demand outweighs supply. You might want to think about our **Ready to Rent** homes which are available for a number of reasons. Ready to rent properties are advertised for a limited period, with only those applicants who bid for the property being considered for the tenancy.

If you would like to be informed by text as Ready to Rent properties become available phone 0131 271 3580 and you will be added to the list.

Since the Ready to Rent scheme started we have let 47 properties in this way and we have almost 70 households who receive the regular text messages.

You can have a look at the list of homes available in Buccleuch House reception or on our website:

www.midlothian.gov.uk

when on the website search for ready to rent homes).

Universal Credit comes to Midlothian

From 27th April 2015, Midlothian Council will be implementing the new Universal Credit benefit payments to those new applicants who qualify for it.

For those applicants in Temporary Accommodation with Midlothian Council, there may be an impact.

All Housing Benefit for the following accommodation will be paid to the landlord, not to the claimant:

- Hostels and Shared Accommodation
- Properties Managed by Housing Associations and Charities – this includes those properties managed by Orchard and Shipman through the PSL scheme.
- Refuges

Applicants in all of these properties may be subject to the Benefit cap: £500 for a family or £350 for a single person. For those tenants in temporary

accommodation **owned and managed by Midlothian Council**, the rent is likely to be paid to the client. These properties will also not be exempt from the Benefit Cap and the Under Occupancy Charge.

Temporary Accommodation will continue to be allocated on need, but will need to take the above points into consideration.

For further information regarding Universal Credit, please phone the Universal Credit helpline on 0345 600 0723



Discretionary Housing Payment

Discretionary housing payment (DHP) is a fund administered by the Revenues Services of Midlothian Council. To qualify for DHP you must be in receipt of housing benefit. DHP can apply a top up of money to cover a little or the entire shortfall in the reduction of housing benefit due to the benefit cap, removal of the spare room subsidy (bedroom tax), local housing allowance restrictions and non

dependant deduction.

To find out more or to apply contact:

Midlothian Council Revenues,

Buccleuch House,

1 White Hart Street,

Dalkeith or phone 0131 271 3201.

Help from Changeworks Affordable Warmth Team

The Affordable Warmth team is here to help you. Its friendly, experienced energy advisors can help you reduce energy and food bills and stay affordably warm, whether you are in temporary accommodation or moving on to longer term accommodation.

The service offers you:

- A free home visit to provide expert, tailored advice on getting the best use from your heating system and tips on home energy efficiency
- Support on preparing household budgets

- Help applying for grants, discounts and assistance available from the Scottish Government and energy companies
- Advocacy support to help with fuel debt and billing issues
- Information on reducing food waste

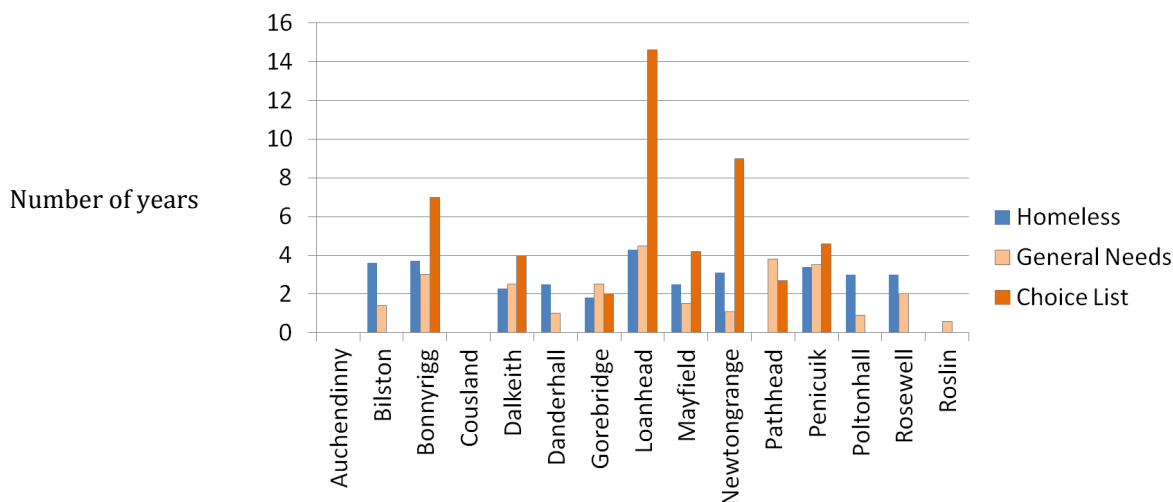
To find out how Changeworks' advisors could help, call 0131 555 4010 and ask for the Affordable Warmth team or email:

warmth@changeworks.org.uk



Housing Need and Demand in Midlothian

Midlothian has seen a steady increase in the number of housing applicants, with over 4,300 on our current waiting lists. With such high demand there are inevitably lengthy waiting times for property allocation, particularly as we are also experiencing a low turnover of properties. The table below highlights the average waiting time, in years, for an allocation across Midlothian:



One bedroom properties are our highest in demand and also our lowest turnover. During 2013/2014 only 25 one bedroom properties were allocated to homeless households, of which there are over 500 waiting for a one bedroom property. To avoid a lengthy wait, a look at available housing options may be the quickest way of resolving housing issues and Midlothian Council are committed to helping anyone in housing need by providing information, advice and support.

**The Tenants and Prospective Tenants Action Group
presents.....**

The Tenants Spring Afternoon Tea Party 2015

Wednesday 15th April

Royal British Legion, Dalkeith

(opposite library)

12-2:30pm

**All Midlothian Council temporary accommodation tenants are invited
to our Annual General Meeting for:**

Free tea party with scones and sandwiches

Free prize bingo

The chance to join our group

Housing question and answer session with Midlothian Council staff

Book your place: 0131 271 3611

Food banks in Midlothian

If someone has no money to buy food and they do not meet the criteria for a crisis grant from the Scottish Welfare Fund, they may be eligible to get a referral for a food parcel. Referrals are made by a number of organisations including Midlothian Council and Citizen's Advice.

There are a number of outlets which provide food parcels:

- Gorebridge parish church (for single people and families)
- Penicuik North Kirk (for families)
- Churches in Dalkeith and Newbattle (for families)

If transport is an issue it is also sometimes possible to collect a food parcel from another location.

If you want more information on food parcel referrals then contact the Temporary Accommodation Team on 0131 271 3397.

Save money by going online

Do you know people who want to go online but are a bit put off?

You can save over £1,000 a year if you're online through the use of price comparison sites, and you can save more than £3,500 on travel costs if your employer lets you work at home.

Look out for drop in technology events at your local library, where PCs are provided free of charge, or if you've got your own tablet, smartphone, laptop, internet-enabled games console or PC, there's some great tips on staying safe online at <http://scotland.learnmyway.com/>



Your local council offers a wide range of housing advice. This advice is available to everyone.

Housing advice is aimed at helping people to find housing that is right for them, or to keep the house they already have.

You can get housing advice on a range of topics including:

- Finding a private let
- Dealing with rent or mortgage arrears
- Buying a house - including low cost home ownership
- Repairs and maintenance
- Eviction
- Potential or actual homelessness
- Moving into or out of the area
- Getting a Council or Housing Association house in your area

The East of Scotland Housing Hub supports councils in six areas (East, Mid and West Lothian, Edinburgh, Falkirk and the Scottish Borders) to provide advice.

Telephone contact details for each council are below or you can check out our website, the 'East of Scotland Housing Hub' pages at: www.eastscotlandhousingoptions.co.uk

If you are looking for a private let, the Hub runs a website advertising lets across most of East-Central Scotland: www.easthubhomechoice.co.uk/Housing

East Lothian: 01620 827827

Midlothian: 0131 270 7500

Falkirk: 01324 503600/590797 (opt. 2)

West Lothian: 01506 280000

Edinburgh: 0131 529 7036

Scottish Borders: 01896 661 385



www.eastscotlandhousingoptions.co.uk



Useful numbers.....

Emergency Homelessness: 0131 663 7211

Dalkeith Citizens Advice Bureau: 0131 660 1636

Penicuik Citizens Advice Bureau: 01968 675259

Revenues and Benefits: 0131 271 3201

Midlothian Women's Aid: 0131 315 8111

Repairs: 0131 663 7211

Welfare Rights Officers 0131 271 3781

COMMUNICATING CLEARLY

We are happy to translate on request and provide information and publications in other formats, including Braille, tape or large print.

如有需要我們樂意提供翻譯本，和其他版本的資訊與刊物，包括盲人點字、錄音帶或大字體。

Zapewnimy tłumaczenie na żądanie oraz dostarczymy informacje i publikacje w innych formatach, w tym Braillem, na kasecie magnetofonowej lub dużym drukiem.

ਅਸੀਂ ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਤੇ ਸੁਰੱਖਿਅਤ ਅਤੇ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੇ ਉਹ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਪੁਸ਼ਟਕ ਪ੍ਰਦਾਨ ਕਰਾਂਗੇ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਬਰੈਲ, ਟੇਪ ਜਾਂ ਵੱਡੀ ਛਪਾਈ ਸਮੱਗਰੀ।

Körler için kahartma yazılar, kaset ve büyük nüshalar da dahil olmak üzere, istenilen bilgileri sağlamak ve tercüme etmekten memnuniyet duyuyoruz.

اگر آپ چاہیں تو ہم خوشی سے آپ کو ترجمہ فراہم کر سکتے ہیں اور معلومات اور دستاویز اسے دیگر شکلوں میں مثلاً بریل (ناچھانقرہ) کے لیے انگریزی اور اردو کی کتابیں (میں) میں بھیج دیتے ہیں۔ درخواست کی کتابیں میں فراہم کر سکتے ہیں۔

Contact 0131 270 7500 or email: enquiries@midlothian.gov.uk