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## Christmas Closure Times

Our offices will close on Thursday 24 December 2020 at 12 noon.

Services will start again on Tuesday 5 January 2021.

Contact details for emergency housing repairs and homeless services during the holiday period can be found on the council's website:

[www.midlothian.gov.uk](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk)



## Tenant Participation Update

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Your opinion matters to us. We encourage all our tenants and service users to get involved so they can influence the housing services we deliver.

We can help and support you in a number of ways, for example to help you set up a tenants and residents group or to get involved in tenant scrutiny which can help us improve services for tenants.

You can get involved in a way that suits you, such as:

- Through a tenants and residents group
- By getting involved in our tenant scrutiny activities
- Joining the Tenant Panel
- Estate walkabouts
- Tenants Day

For more information the Tenant Participation & Customer Engagement Strategy provides details or please email us on:

[tenant.participation@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:tenant.participation@midlothian.gov.uk)

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## Midlothian Council Tenant Participation and Customer Engagement Strategy 2020-2023

This sets out measures we plan to ensure that our tenants and service users, are able to influence and scrutinise the housing services that we deliver.

[Tenant Participation and Customer Engagement Strategy](#)

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## Scottish Housing Charter

This Charter sets out the service quality and value for money that existing and future service users can expect from us. It sets out standards for easy communication with the council and for tenant participation.

The Charter was developed in consultation with tenants, tenant organisations, social landlords, other stakeholders and the Scottish Housing Regulator.

[Housing Strategy and performance](#)

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## Regulatory Framework

Our housing management is regulated by the Scottish Housing Regulator. It revised its Regulatory Framework in February 2019. All landlords must comply with the regulator's requirements, which are published in chapter 3 of the Regulatory Framework. This framework requires publication of an Engagement Plan for each landlord which is available on the council's website. The council must also provide an Annual Assurance Statement of compliance which is available on the council's website.

## [Annual Assurance Statement](#)

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### [Landlord Performance Report](#)

The Charter requires the council to publish an annual landlord Performance Report. You can compare our performance with other social housing providers on the [Scottish Housing Regulator's website](#).

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### [Landlord Performance Report to Tenants](#)

Our key housing performance is provided in our Landlord Report to Tenants for 2019/20 which is available on the council's website.

### [Landlord Report to Tenants for 2019/20](#)

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### [Significant Performance Failures](#)

The Scottish Housing Regulator has published a leaflet for tenants who may wish to report significant performance failures. This can be accessed on the [Scottish Housing Regulator's website](#).

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If you want to find out more about our performance or would like to ask any questions you can contact us directly on 07785382170 or email [tenant.participation@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:tenant.participation@midlothian.gov.uk)

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## Feedback & Complaints Procedure

Midlothian Council is committed to providing high- quality customer services.

We value feedback or complaints and use them to help improve our services. If something goes wrong, or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us and we will do our best to put things right.

The council's feedback & complaints procedure is available on the council's website:

[Feedback & Complaints Procedure](#)

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## [Keep Food Safe This Christmas with Auntie May](#)

The Environmental Health Team recommend you check out Auntie May's Christmas Kitchen Pantomime from Food Standards Scotland bringing you a festive take on food safety.



### [Auntie May's Christmas Kitchen Pantomime](#)

If you're doing the cooking this Christmas use the food safety checklist:

- Make a food plan for Christmas dinner and the few days after to make the most of leftovers
- Clear out fridge / freezer to make room for Christmas food shop. Check that fridge is cold enough after Christmas food shop is put away (between 0-5°C)
- Take meat out freezer and defrost in fridge or a cool place – 10-12 hours of defrost time per kg
- Check safety information on food labels before preparing dinner
- Wash hands before and throughout dinner preparations
- Remember not to wash raw poultry and other meat this can cause bacteria to splash onto worktops, dishes and other foods

- Use different utensils, plates and chopping boards for raw and ready to eat / cooked food, or wash thoroughly between tasks
- Check meat is cooked – use food thermometer to check meat reaches 75°C in the thickest part. There should be no pink meat before serving because eating undercooked turkey (or other poultry) could cause food poisoning
- Cook stuffing in a separate roasting tin. Stuffing inside the turkey will add more cooking time
- Put leftovers in fridge within two hours and remember to eat within two days or freeze it. Defrost and only reheat once.
- If having a buffet, keep chilled foods out of fridge for the shortest time possible (no longer than four hours)

## Stay Safe this Christmas

The Scottish Fire & Rescue Service website provides information on staying safe this Christmas.

- Candle Safety
- Deck the Halls
- Electrical Safety
- Alcohol & Cooking

Check [www.firescotland.gov.uk](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk) for further details on safety in the home.



# Holiday PET SAFETY TIPS



## Poisonous Plants

Many holiday plants can cause gastrointestinal upset and in worse cases: seizures, coma or even death.



MISTLETOE



HOLLY



LILIES



POINTSETTAS

Keep holiday plants out of reach, and check them for signs of chewing or missing leaves. If your pet starts vomiting, has diarrhea, abdominal pain, excessive drooling, seizures or tremors — contact your veterinarian immediately.

## Decoration Safety

Easily mistaken for toys by a curious pet, these holiday decorations can cause serious digestive problems when swallowed:



GLASS ORNAMENTS



TINSEL



WRAPPING PAPER



RIBBON



Don't leave candles unattended or within reach of your pet.



Protect electrical cords with PVC pipe or plastic casing to discourage chewing.

Chocolate is poisonous to dogs and cats, so avoid keeping gifts of chocolate candy under the tree or where your pet has access to them.



## Festive waste collections and recycling arrangements

Collections due	Will be collected
Friday 25 December	Sunday 27 December
Friday 1 January	Sunday 3 January

All other collections dates remain the same. Please put out your bins for 7am.  
Collection times may vary.



**RECYCLE**  
Your **Holidays**<sup>TM</sup>.ORG



## Recycling Centre

The Stobhill Recycling Centre will be closed on 25/26 December and 01/02 January and will close at 12 noon on 24 and 31 December. Last entry at 11.30am.

## Bulky uplifts

Kerbside collections of bulky items will stop on Friday 18 December, and restart on Monday 11 January.

## Garden waste

There will be no kerbside collections of brown bins between 12 December 2020 and 10 January 2021.

## Christmas tree recycling

Midlothian Council does not offer a separate kerbside collection of real Christmas trees.

To recycle your real tree please take it to [Stobhill Household waste and recycling centre](#).

If you have paid for the kerbside collection of your garden waste in 2020, you can put your real Christmas tree in your brown bin.

Please make sure all garden waste fits securely within the brown bin and you present it for collection with the lid closed.

Christmas trees can be collected at the kerbside as part of a bulky waste uplift.

The charge is from £26 for up to seven household items.

Email: [recycling@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:recycling@midlothian.gov.uk) or telephone 0131 561 5284.

## Fly tipping

Where possible use the recycling centre or arrange a bulky uplift. Don't engage with cold callers who offer to take away rubbish for a fee. If you need rubbish removed do your research and find a company that is registered with SEPA to carry waste. You can check online [www.sepa.org.uk](http://www.sepa.org.uk)

If you pay someone else to remove rubbish and they fly tip your waste you can be held responsible and be issued with a fixed penalty of £200.

As a minimum get the company name, contact information and a receipt for any payment you make.

## Introduction to Mindfulness

Are you interested in learning how to use Mindfulness techniques to help you lead a calmer, less stressed life?

Mindfulness is a fantastic tool, which has many health benefits and when practiced regularly can really improve your sense of wellbeing.

This course also covers breathing techniques and guided meditations, which can help you to relax and stay focused.

This **Free** online course using Zoom starts Tuesday 14 January 1-30-3pm for 8 weeks.

For more information email [cll@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:cll@midlothian.gov.uk)



## Useful Numbers

Emergency repairs 0131 663 7211

Police Scotland Non-Emergency 101

Scottish women's Aid 0800 027 1234

Age Scotland – Friendship line 0800 12 44222

Gas Emergencies 0800 111 999

Electric (power cut) 105 or 0800 31 63 105

