



Midlothian Council Tenants' Newsletter

Summer 2022

Welcome to your latest tenant newsletter: just one of the ways we keep in touch with you. This issue explains how our housing services operate and how you can contact us.

Midlothian Good Neighbour Award

Communities across Midlothian have come together over the last few years to make sure our neighbours, friends and family were kept safe and secure through the most difficult of times.

So, we're asking residents of Midlothian to nominate a "Good Neighbour" – someone who has gone that extra mile to help people in their community and made a positive difference to people's lives. If you would like to put someone forward please tell us briefly why you think they deserve an award.

A judging panel made up from our Tenant Panel and Housing Service staff will pick two winners who will each receive a £50 supermarket shopping voucher and a certificate.

Please email details to tenantparticipation@midlothian.gov.uk or call **077853 82170** for further details.

Nominations close on 31 October 2022 and winner's will be announced in our Christmas Tenant Newsletter.

Considering a move?

Is your council home too large for you? Have you considered moving to a smaller property/downsizing?

How we can help

Midlothian Council offers grants to council tenants who wish to move to a smaller property that might suit their needs better. This could lead to cheaper rent and council tax bills in the long-term. This payment aims to encourage tenants who are living in properties that are too large for their needs to move in order to free up family sized accommodation for those who need it.

For further information please contact our Housing Officers by email housingenquiries@midlothian.gov.uk or telephone **0131 271 3394** or visit the Midlothian Council website.

Security for households in flats

With the warmer weather it is tempting to keep your home cool by leaving your door open. However we would kindly request everyone particularly in flats to ensure that doors are not left or jammed open. By leaving the doors open you are leaving yourself and neighbours open to theft, vandalism or more serious a fire risk.



Energy saving tips

www.changeworks.org.uk/resources/advice-sheet-top-ten-energy-saving-tips

We know it's a challenging and worrying time, with bills going up and uncertainty over the future. We're here to help and try to put your mind at ease. Get in touch for help with any issue related to your fuel bills and we can help keep you warm.

Request a call back or find out more at: www.changeworks.org.uk/referral
warmth@changeworks.org.uk

Freephone **0800 870 8800** Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm



Have your say on housing

- The Midlothian Tenant Panel is made up of Midlothian Council tenants who have volunteered to help improve our housing service.
- The panel is perfect for people who want to be kept informed about housing service activities but don't feel comfortable attending public meetings. All panel activities can be carried out in a tenant's own home via phone or email.
- For further details or to join please email the Tenant Participation Officer:
tenantparticipation@midlothian.gov.uk or call **077853 82170**

Support for Ukrainians

Scotland welcomes Ukraine nationals and their family. For details on the help on offer please visit our website:
www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/396/emergencies_safety_and_crime/727/how_to_help_people_in_the_ukraine

Tenant Satisfaction Survey



Our comprehensive tenant satisfaction survey will be taking place later this year. We do this every 3 years to find out how we're performing and identify areas that you'd like us to focus on.

The team from the Knowledge Partnership will carry out this survey on our behalf and will send out a covering letter to participants before it starts. The survey will be carried out face-to-face or by telephone following all current guidelines. If you're able, please take 10 minutes or so to answer the questions and help us improve our service for you.

Results from this survey will be published on social media and in our newsletter later this year.

The Knowledge Partnership will be contacting around 750 tenants. If you don't want to be contacted, please let us know. To opt out email tenantparticipation@midlothian.gov.uk with your address details or call **077853 82170**

Please pay your rent on time

Rent is the Housing Service's only source of income.

Without rent we cannot provide services and maintain your home.

Your rent is used in four main ways:

- To repair and maintain your home
- Larger repairs and improvements
- Management and maintenance of the area
- Repay money borrowed to build or improve your home (e.g. kitchen, bathroom and central heating replacements)



If you are in arrears we need you to pay your rent now. If you cannot pay, please contact the Arrears team on **0131 271 3499** or email **arrears@midlothian.gov.uk**

As Midlothian Council tenant you are responsible for paying your rent and managing any arrears you may have. We can help if you are struggling but you need to talk to us - don't struggle alone.

Scottish Child Payment

The Scottish Child Payment is for parents or carers on a low income who have a child under six years old. It's a payment of £20 a week for each child under six. It's paid every four weeks by Social Security Scotland. It is planned to be fully rolled out to eligible children under the age of 16 by the end of 2022, helping families on low incomes who are struggling in these challenging times.

For a full list of help available visit: **socialsecurity.gov.scot** or call **0800 182 2222**.



Ageing Well-activities for over 50s

Health walks for the 50+

Would you like to join Be-Active, Midlothian's Ageing Well Project in a range of local walking programmes taking place throughout Midlothian? The walks are designed for older people of all abilities.

All walks are free of charge.

Each walk is guided around a variety of landmarks and areas of interest in Midlothian by a Community Health Volunteer. Volunteers are trained by the National Paths for All programme.

If you want to check other activities on offer through the project such as Walking Netball and Walking Rugby, to name only a few of the sports on offer, please visit our website and check out Ageing Well. This page also has a link for their Facebook page for updates and pictures.

Functional Fitness Checks



Functional Fitness Checks are offered to Ageing Well participants in Midlothian at various locations throughout the year. Checks include grip strength, blood pressure and six other short tests, as well as optical checks and physiotherapy advice.



For more information contact our Ageing Well Coordinator on **0131 561 6506** **www.midlothian.gov.uk/ageing-well**

At the heart of your community

Volunteer led community councils make a positive impact

How much do you know about your community council and the positive impact its work has on your area? Perhaps you're a resident who would like to get more involved in your local community and to learn more about it?

There are 16 community councils in Midlothian. Meetings are generally held monthly and last for approximately two hours. Led by volunteers, they aim to engage with and bring local people and groups together to discuss matters, such as planning & licensing applications, promoting the well-being of their communities and supporting local galas and festivals. They also work closely with Midlothian Council to raise local issues, advise, and influence the council on behalf of the communities we represent. During the recent Covid Pandemic, community councils worked hard to support their local communities by collecting and delivering medicines and shopping and providing a wide range of support.

Locals are encouraged find out more, especially if they have a particular skill or interest – whether it is as a treasurer, planning expert, environmental campaigner or local organiser. We are also aware that young people have a lot to contribute so we want to encourage more of them to get involved. Anyone from the age of 16 upwards is eligible to join.

Contact information for your local community council can be found on the following web link: **www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/200284/your_community/534/community_councils**



Or email: **cll@midlothian.gov.uk**, leave your contact details and we can provide further information.

Do you provide unpaid help and support to a family member, child, partner, relative or friend, who could not manage without you?



This could be due to: age, a long term condition, disability, physical or mental health problem or addiction. VOCAL could assist you.

VOCAL supports and empowers unpaid carers/family members to ensure they are resilient, have choices, care with confidence, manage their own well-being and have a life of their own. VOCAL offers 1:1 counselling, benefits advice, health checks, Power of Attorney surgeries and support to access Short Breaks Funds. They also have training and social opportunities which give carers the chance to meet others in similar situations.

The Vocal Carer Centre is based in Midlothian. To find out more call **0131 663 6869** or email **midlothian@vocal.org.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 3163105**
- **LGBT Helpline Scotland 0300 123 2523**
- **Samaritans 116 123**

