

Shire news

SPRING 2018

NEWSLETTER 75



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Customer Service Excellence

We are delighted to announce we retained our Customer Service Excellence Standard!

A huge Thank You to all our customers and partners who took time to share their experience of our services with the assessor from the Centre of Assessment on 6th of March 2018.

Assessment against the Standard establishes if our business continues to meet the challenging needs of customers. We are assessed against 57 elements



across 5 criteria to determine if we meet the standard.

The assessor reviewed evidence of the outcomes of our services, interviewed Staff and confidentially met with a number of our Tenants, Care and Repair Customers and some of our Partners to get a 'warts and all' view of how we measure up to the standard.

And it's... Silver!!

Investor's in People - Assessment



Great news, we achieved an overall Silver Accreditation for Investor's in People Standard. This is fantastic progression from our previous 'Standard' award. The highlights are great Leadership and our drive to improve the business with useful development points on how we support our people through change to allow our Business to continue to grow.

Jim Munro, Director, said "a huge well done to everyone. This is great recognition of the hard work, drive and unfaltering determination of both Board & Staff to make sure Shire continues to grow and change to meet the needs of our tenants and communities for many years to come.

Janet Allan, Chair of Shire Housing Association Ltd, commented: "We

are all so proud of this fantastic achievement. I would like to thank and congratulate all our Staff and Board members for demonstrating that everyone at Shire is truly committed to our purpose of Great Homes, Great People, Vibrant Communities"

The highly respected Standard sets out a clear framework to assess how businesses value and realise the potential of their people to help them successfully achieve their business goals. The assessment was carried out by an Independent Assessor on 26th February 2018.

Newsletter of Shire Housing Association Ltd,
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Partnership Working

As part of our ongoing relationship with our Repairs & Maintenance (Mitie) and Open Space contractors (ISS), you may have noticed the van logos (see below).

We recently interviewed a number of young local people for an apprenticeship with Mitie and are happy to announce that Mitie have appointed an apprentice electrician who will start with them after completing his 5th year exams. Watch this space for more information.



Empty Homes Information

Great homes, great people, vibrant communities aren't only a logo, it's our commitment to all our tenants and residents within our estates. This is achieved by our staff and partners providing the highest quality of service that we can.

However within these estates sometimes there are properties that remain empty that are not owned by the association and are showing signs of disrepair. East Ayrshire Council are able to provide a range of services to the owners of these properties to help bring the properties back

into use. The services include

- Renovation overview
- Energy Efficiency
- Private Renting
- EAC Buy Back Scheme
- plus several others.

Where an owner is interested in becoming a private landlord East Ayrshire Council can provide assistance to allow them to do this.

- Advice given includes
- Landlord Guides
- Access to the deposit Guarantee scheme

- Ongoing Assistance and advice.

Should you see an empty property or know of anyone that owns an empty property please contact

Liz King
Empty Homes Officer
Private Sector Housing Unit
Civic Centre North
John Dickie Street
Kilmarnock
KA1 1HW
01563 554583
Elizabeth.king@east-ayrshire.gov.uk

Safeguarding Your Personal Information

New General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) - what you need to know.

WHAT IS IT? - GDPR is a new set of regulations that replace the existing Data Protection Act. They come into force on the 25 May 2018. They place a greater responsibility on all organisations, including the Association, to ensure the personal data we hold on you is secure, accurate, up-to date and that we have legitimate reasons for retaining the information. We have highlighted some of the main issues below, but you can find more information at: <https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/>

ACCESS - You will have greater access to the personal data that we hold on you. You will legally be allowed to view this data through a Subject Access Request. Where information is held unnecessarily you can request that we delete it or if it's incorrect request that it is corrected.

CONSENT - All organisations must have your consent to hold personal information about you and that you know what that information will be used for. Tenants sign a consent at the start of their

tenancy, this is detailed within section 8.0 of your secure tenancy agreement with us. We are reviewing our Data Protection Policy regularly to make sure personal information we hold is lawful.

SECURITY - Organisations must ensure they take reasonable measures to guard against data theft, loss, or other breach. Clear evidence must be shown that we have taken diligent measures in regard to security software, physical security, and other aspects such as disaster recovery plans. And if there is a breach of your data we must let you, and the Information Commissioner's Office know at the earliest opportunity.

WHAT NEXT?

The Association takes the security of your personal data very seriously and we are currently reviewing all our existing policies and procedures to ensure we fully comply with the new regulations by the time they come into force in May 2018.

Planned Improvements

Over £800,000 will be spent on your homes during 2018/2019.

This includes;

- Rewire programme of approximately 240 homes - Logan, Craigns, Cumnock, Auchinleck, Catrine & Mauchline.
- Bathroom programme of approximately 45 homes - Craigns
- External wall insulation to meet our EESSH commitments approximately 19 homes - Mauchline

Although we have indicated geographical areas of planned improvement works, if any tenant out with these areas wishes to have their home rewired before redecorating, please do not hesitate to contact us to see if we can accommodate you.

Annual Gas Heating Services - It's that time again!

A Huge Thank You to those of you who kept your appointments to have your gas heating system serviced. This helps us to deliver this important safety inspection on time and within budget every year.



And we're off again!

Servicing started at the beginning of March and we're aiming to get it completed within a 3 month period or earlier if possible!! We really appreciate your support in allowing access to your home to ensure the continuing safety of your heating system. So, if you've had our letter or a card from Saltire, please get in touch with Dawn or Carol at the office to arrange your appointment.

20th Anniversary Celebrations

Shire Housing Association turned 20 on 15th March 2017.

During the past year we have celebrated our anniversary in various ways. At our AGM in September we selected 20 of our residents who have been with us since 1997 and each received a £20.00 voucher. We created a timeline photo board which included photos provided by some of our tenants. We had a 20th Anniversary balloon release with the help of Netherthird Primary School Children and also donated £200 towards Kidd Kindness for the Children's Hospital Charity.

We would like to thank all of our tenants for making our first 20 years very happy and successful and look forward to our next 20 years.



Interested in Becoming a Tenant Board Member?

We would love to hear from you!

Would you like to get more involved in helping to shape how we look after your interests, develop the services you tell us you want or how we invest your rent to ensure we have great social housing for the next generation? Are you interested in housing or just want your communities to be great places to live? If so, this could be a fantastic opportunity for you.

You would have access to great support from our Staff, Board and training to help you get into the swing of what we do. It's a great

opportunity to help build confidence, learn new skills and help make a difference to people. If you have a few hours a month to spare please get in touch for an informal chat with Lynn Miller on 01290 421130, we

would love to hear from you.

Alternatively, email info@shirehousing.com or write to us at Netherthird House, Netherthird, Cumnock, KA18 3DB.



Universal Credit

Are you in receipt of Universal Credit? Did you make your claim on or after 25/10/17?

If so, it is your responsibility to inform Universal Credit of your new rent charge on 29/3/18, but don't worry, we are here to help. There will be a drop-in surgery on Thursday 29/3/18 at Shire Office, where staff will be happy to help you update your journal with your new rent charge. If you can't make it to the office, give us a call on 01290 421130 and we will be happy to help you. This needs to be done on 29/3/18 to ensure that UC pay the correct amount of rent.



Universal Credit Changes

If you have to make a new claim for Universal Credit from 11/4/18 onwards, you could qualify for two weeks Housing Benefit to cover your rent at the start of your claim. For further information about this or any other aspect of UC, please contact us on 01290 421130.



Our recently launched rebranding

We are pleased to announce that we have rebranded.

You may have noticed we have erected new signs indicating where our office is located.

We are proud of these new signs as they are bright, vibrant and in line with the image which we wish to promote.



Rent Consultation 2018

We would like to thank our tenants for taking the time to respond to the annual rent increase proposals and to let you know how your response helped our Board to decide which option to approve.

The Board met on 31st January 2018 to review the responses from tenants. The majority of tenants, 59.18% preferred Option 1, to increase rents by 2.5% with 24.48% preferring Option 2 - 3.0% and 16.25% either had no opinion or suggested no increase.

The Board reviewed all your comments and decided to approve the lower increase of 2.5% to both minimise the impact on tenants and deliver the home improvement programme.

We really value your contribution which helps influence and shape our decisions and would like to hear from you if you would be interested in becoming more involved with us.

Please contact Ann Black on 01290 421130 for an informal chat for further information on our Tenant Panel or become an Armchair Critic from the comfort of your home.

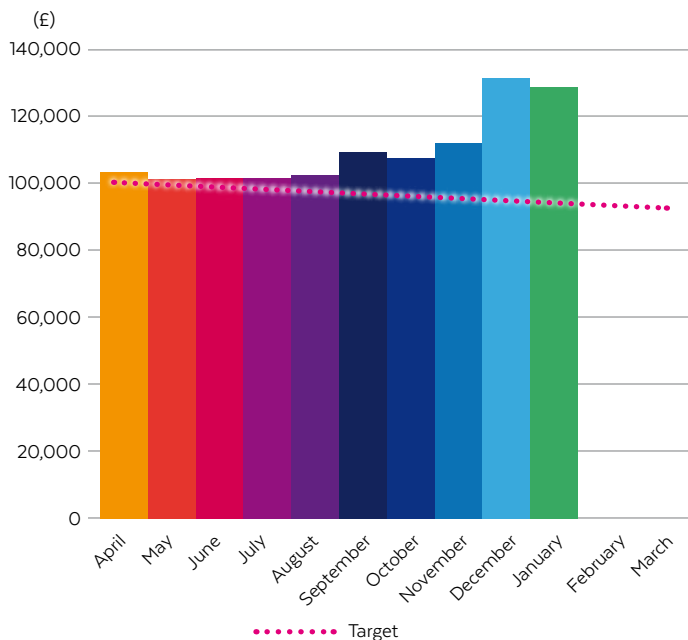
Our Performance - Up to January 2018

We regularly publish our performance to let you know how well we're performing against our targets. Why not check out the Scottish Housing Regulator's landlord comparison tool to see how well we perform against other housing associations or councils - www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/find-and-compare-landlords

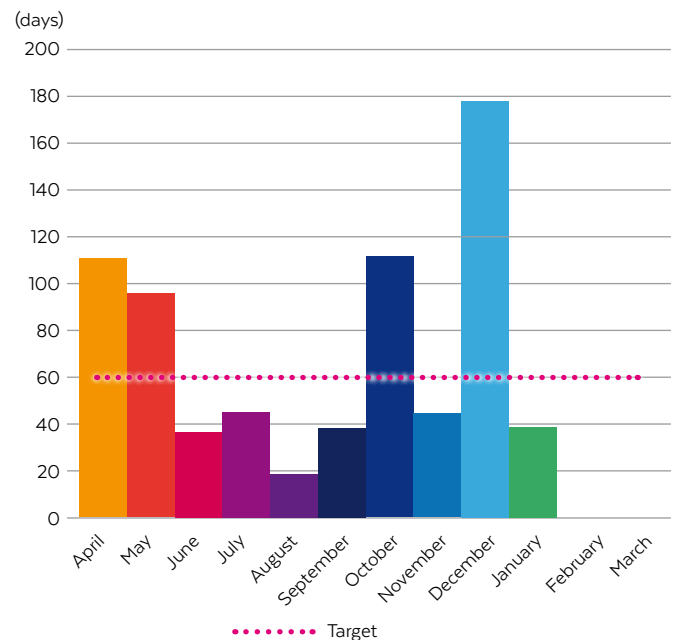
The following charts show our performance from April 2017-January 2018. If you have any questions about how we're performing, please give us a call or get in touch.

Performance Graphs April - January 2018

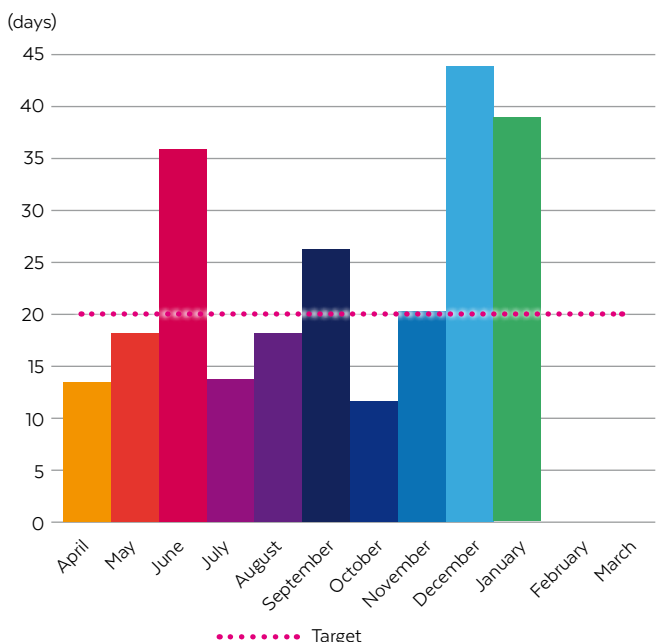
Current Tenant Rent Arrears



Time taken to Relet - Including Difficult to Let



Time taken to Relet - Excluding Difficult to Let



Repairs

All Contractors	Emergency	Non Emergency
Repairs Completed	186	2153
Ave Number working hours/days	2:03	5.1 Days
Target	3hrs	5.0 Days
Ave number repairs per property	0.19	2.2
% Repairs complete Right 1st Time	n/a	87.40%
% Tenants satisfied with Service	n/a	97.60%