

*Our Office Hours over
Christmas & New Year*

Our Selkirk Office will be closed on:

26 & 27 December 2011

and

2 & 3 January 2012

During these holidays, our
Emergency Repairs Service
will operate as normal. In the event
of an emergency, please call:

0845 604 3733



**Repairs and Maintenance over the
Christmas & New Year Period**



Maintenance Contractors and their suppliers are on holiday for 2 weeks over the Christmas and New Year period, which is the most challenging time of the year for the repairs service. **The service will be restricted to urgent and emergency repairs only throughout this holiday period so that we can concentrate efforts where they are most needed.** Here are some ways in which you can assist. Please make sure that you know:

- **how to set and adjust your heating controls**
- **how to top up boiler pressure (certain boilers only)**
- **how to reset tripped circuit breakers**
- **where your mains water stop valve is and that you can get access to it to turn off your water.**

Let us know if you would like us to explain or demonstrate how these are done in your home.

Heating breakdowns, especially with gas boilers, can be a particular problem at this time if spare parts have to be sourced and suppliers are closed for holidays.

It would be helpful to have at least one alternative heater available until a repair can be carried out.

If you are planning to go away during the festive season, please do the following to avoid the danger of frozen pipes:

- **ensure that you keep your home warm and leave your heating on at a low setting**
- **arrange for water systems to be drained down if you do not heat the property whilst away.**

If you would like advice on any of the above, please contact us on **0845 604 3733** and we will be happy to help.



**Rent Review: Please find enclosed
details of our proposals for rent
charges from 1 April 2012**



Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service

Fire and Rescue Service warning as cold weather continues

As winter weather arrives firefighters in Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service are warning residents to be extra vigilant against fires in the home.

Group Commander Andrew Girrity from Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service, said:

"Cold weather brings about many different types of challenges for us but I would like to remind people to be extra vigilant to the dangers of fires in the home as we try to keep warm this winter.

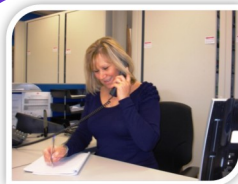
Many accidental fires in the home are caused by cooking but we also see fires caused by clothing being placed too close to open fires or heaters or sparked by electrical appliances.

In the build up to Christmas, parties will be taking place over the following weeks. We want people to enjoy themselves but remember the dangers of coming home and cooking after drinking alcohol. It impairs your ability to concentrate properly and all too often fire crews have responded to calls about a pan of food alight, sometimes with devastating consequences for the occupier.

In freezing weather be aware of the dangers of being near ice covered stretches of water and travelling on the roads. Firefighters often deal with the consequences of people falling through ice or being involved in road traffic collisions. Please take care when outside, whether it be walking the dog or driving the car."

Firefighters carry out home safety visits all year round. This is a free service for people living in our area. They will give personalised home safety advice and fit a free smoke alarm if required. If you know someone living without a smoke detector in their home, particularly someone who might be elderly or vulnerable, please let them know about the service or contact the Fire Service to discuss on:

0800 169 0320



Repairs Right First Time



We will shortly be introducing a new process to help you give us enough information when you phone to report a repair. We aim to improve our initial recording of the repair so that the contractor is more prepared when they call. This will mean getting more repairs right first time. More information on this will appear in our Spring Newsletter.

Make sure you have home contents insurance

Disasters do happen – if your home is flooded because of burst pipes or you have a house fire, how would you replace your belongings? Replacing carpets, furnishings and personal belongings can add up to thousands of pounds – have you insured your house contents?

If disaster does strike, the Association will carry out the necessary repairs to your home, but tenants are responsible for their own belongings. Home contents insurance needn't be expensive. Depending on your age you should be able to insure your contents up to the value of £9,000 for less than **£4 a month**.

There are various websites where you can check for the cheapest contents insurance eg :

www.comparethemarket.com or
www.moneysupermarket.com



We have details of two schemes :
SFHA Diamond Scheme, and **THIS Tenants Insurance**
both specially designed for Housing Association
tenants and sharing owners.

The advantages of these schemes are:

- You don't need a bank account – you can get a swipe card
- You can pay fortnightly, monthly or annually
- There is **NO** excess to pay if you make a claim

More information is available on our website:
www.eildon.org.uk

Alternatively please contact your
Housing Officer on 0845 604 3733



0845 604 3733



Galashiels in Bloom Best Sheltered Housing Garden 2011

Tenants and staff of Oakwood Park recently received an award from Galashiels in Bloom for the best sheltered housing garden. Well done to all who contributed to making the garden at Oakwood such a lovely space for all tenants to enjoy.



Annual "Walkabouts"

During the summer, our Housing Officers carried out "walkabouts", with tenants, in each of our developments. Many thanks to the 82 tenants who took part in these and gave us their views. In a number of areas tenants expressed concern about the grounds maintenance carried out, and we hope that our new specifications will help to address some of these concerns. As well as picking up some repairs which had not been reported, the walkabouts also helped us to make improvements in some areas e.g. better signage, additional paving etc.



Grounds Maintenance

Some tenants who responded to our recent Customer Satisfaction Survey said that they were not always happy with the landscape/grounds maintenance service we provide. We listened to this, and have now drafted specifications which describe more clearly what work is required at each development.

We would welcome your comments on the draft specification for your area. If you would like to receive a copy and give us your feedback please contact Irene Wielbo on 0845 604 3733 or email enquiries@eildon.org.uk.

We will review your comments and make any necessary amendments to the specifications before the grounds maintenance contracts go out to tender in February.

Hints for your winter waste and recycling

Here are some tips from Scottish Borders Council's Waste Services team to help you through the winter when bad weather can disrupt the frequency of some collections:



Recycling

- Recycle as much as you can. Festive wrapping paper and cards can go in your kerbside recycling. Recycle all aerosols and plastic bottles. Take glass bottles to Recycling Points if you can.
- Make good use of the space in your bins or bags by squashing things.
- Large cardboard boxes can be flattened and presented for recycling on their own (put them out as near to your collection day as possible to keep them dry).
- Rinse off food and drink residues from items being recycled.
- If you use recycling bags, try to present and store all recycling together in the same place(s) and keep access to general waste bins clear.
- Do not contaminate recycling by "dumping" bags of general waste beside recycling.

General waste

- Make sure bin lids are closed properly.
- Keep access to bins clear. Do not leave your bags of waste outside bins, they could be a hazard for other people and could attract vermin.
- Make best use of the space in bins by making regular trips with small amounts of waste.

Check the local press and radio for changes to collection days over the holiday period.



Merry Christmas



and a Happy New Year!



Good Neighbour Award

Congratulations go to Mr Ronald McLaughlin from St Abbs who was selected as our Good Neighbour in the autumn award. Mr McLaughlin's neighbour told us "At any time of the day or night you can depend on him to help. My wife is disabled and he is a great help. Also with heavy jobs that take two people, he assists willingly and cheerfully". Mr McLaughlin will soon receive a £50 shopping voucher along with our congratulations.

Thank you to ALL entrants. Choosing a winner was very difficult. Should you wish to nominate a good neighbour of yours for the next award then please contact Irene Wielbo on 0845 604 3733.

*Find the festive words
and you may win a
hamper!*



Please send your entries by
6 January 2012 to:

Irene Wielbo
Eildon Housing Association
The Weaving Shed,
Ettrick Mill, Dunsdale Road
Selkirk TD7 5EB

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CANDY HOLLY PRESENTS RED SANTA CLAUS
SLEIGH SNOW STAR STOCKING TREE

Name & Address: _____

Настоящий документ по отдельному запросу можно получить в переводе на другие языки, напечатанным крупным шрифтом или на аудиокассете.

Dokument ten jest na życzenie udostępniany także w innych wersjach językowych, w dużym druku lub w formacie audio.

Tento dokument je na vyzádaní k dispozici také v jiných jazycích, ve velkém tištěném formátu a zvukovém formátu.

Este documento encontra-se também disponível noutros idiomas, em tipo de imprensa grande e em formato áudio, a pedido.

This Newsletter is available
in large print on request

or can be downloaded from our website:

www.eildon.org.uk

