

Connect

with Eildon Housing *Autumn 2025*

**Fresh start for
Emily and her family**



Caring, Committed, Connected, Creative



YOUR OPINION



YOUR MONEY



YOUR HOME



YOUR COMMUNITY

www.eildon.org.uk

Welcome to our Autumn Connect

Nile Istephan, Eildon CEO



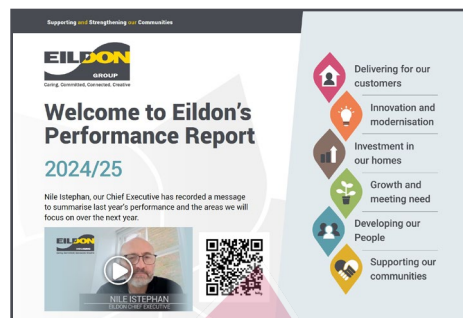
Eildon's Annual Performance Report for 2024-25

Welcome to our Autumn edition of the Connect. You'll also have received a copy of the Annual Performance Report for 2024-25.

Each year, we are required to report on our performance, and we have a well-established approach in consultation with our customers to do this. I have recorded a short video to summarise last year's performance and the areas we will focus on over the next year, scan the QR code on the front page of the Annual Performance Report to access. If you want to find out more information about our performance and others in our sector, you can find it on the

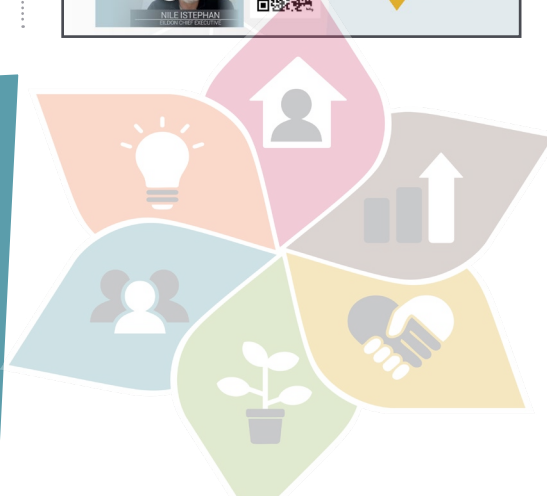
Scottish Housing Regulator's website - <https://www.housingregulator.gov.scot/>

On the whole, we are pleased with the results in this year's report, but we are keen to keep improving. One of the best ways for us to do this is to hear your feedback. Please get in touch to let us know what you think - see the back page for details.



In this issue...

- Our 52nd AGM
- Launch of the Customer Voice Strategy
- New homes in Westruther
- Supporting stronger Communities in the Borders



Introducing new board member Carolynne Penman

I am delighted to be Eildon's newest Board member from September 2025.

With over 20 years' experience in private housebuilding and a qualified Town Planner, I am keen to learn about and contribute towards this successful organisation, whilst bringing a fresh perspective. I particularly like Eildon's values and the idea of helping people get the support they need and somewhere safe, warm and affordable to call home.

One of my favourite things is spending time with my family and exploring the area around my new home near Earlston.



Our AGM 2025

We held our 52nd Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 3 September 2025 at the Weaving Shed office which was well attended by shareholders and guests. The outgoing Chair, Cathie Fancy, had previously indicated that she would retire at this AGM. The new Board met following the AGM and elected Mr Brian Frater as our new Chair along with Vice Chair, Mr Chris Highton.

Following the close of formal business, a presentation was given to our outgoing Chair Cathie Fancy. At the Board Meeting following the AGM, the Board agreed to co-opt Ms Emma Downie.



L to R: Trevor Burrows, Brian Frater, Cathie Fancy, Dave Alexander

Membership of the Board for 2025/26 was confirmed as:

Mr Ron Beardsley, Mr Brian Frater, Ms Amanda Harvie, Mr Chris Highton, Mr Ross Kilshaw, Ms Catherine Louch, Mr Allan Lundmark, Ms Jayne Pashley, Ms Hannah MacLeod, Mr Ewen Swinton, Ms Eibhlin McHugh and Ms Carolynne Penman.

Launch of Our Customer Voice Strategy

We're excited to launch Eildon's new Customer Voice Strategy, which sets out how we'll strengthen and grow meaningful involvement with our customers across all areas of our work - <https://bit.ly/cvstrategy>.

You told us that better communication and making it easier to get involved should be priorities and we have listened.

Through this new strategy, customer involvement opportunities will be better integrated across Eildon. With our Customer Engagement Officer coordinating across teams, we aim to improve communication and make participation easier and more accessible.

At the heart of the strategy is our Customer Opinion Group, now with over 90 members. This group plays a vital role in shaping our services, reviewing policies, and contributing to service improvements. Thank you to everyone who has already joined. Your feedback helps us deliver services that reflect the needs and priorities of our communities.

Get Involved

We'd love to hear from you.

We're always looking for more voices. If you'd like to join the Customer Opinion Group or explore other ways to take part, please contact Lita, our Customer Engagement Officer via our contact details on the back page.



03000 200 217



housing@eildon.org.uk

Customer
Voice

Have Your Say – Your Voice Matters!

Customer Feedback and Surveys Shaping the Future of Service at Eildon.

At Eildon, our commitment to delivering exceptional customer service is at the heart of everything we do. We understand that the key to continuous improvement lies in carefully listening to the people who matter most: our customers. Your feedback is not just valuable, it is essential.

To ensure we are consistently capturing the voice of our customers, we conduct two types of surveys: our Monthly Transactional Satisfaction Surveys and our Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey which we issue each Autumn and which we are currently undertaking. Each plays a distinct and important role in helping us evaluate and enhance our services. We believe that every customer voice deserves to be heard. Whether your experience has been positive, challenging, or somewhere in between, your feedback helps us grow. It gives us the opportunity to celebrate success, learn from mistakes, and make meaningful changes that benefit everyone.

Surveys are more than just a tool; they are a conversation, and we value your input.

They are a way for us to stay connected with you, understand your needs, and build a relationship based on trust and transparency. We want you to feel confident that your feedback is valued and that it leads to action. We want you to see Eildon not just as a service provider, but as a partner in your journey with us, one that listens, responds and is caring, committed, connected and creative. **So please take part when you are invited to provide feedback.**





Delivering for Our Customers

Customer Service Standards and Customer Charter

Our new Customer Service Standards and Customer Charter outline the organisation's unwavering commitment to delivering high-quality housing, care and support services. It sets out clear, person-centred service promises that reflect Eildon's core values, Caring, Committed, Connected, and Creative.

The Customer Charter includes a range of service commitments ensuring we are respectful and compassionate in our interactions with customers, timely in our response and seeks to provide transparent communication and accountability in our service delivery. It also encourages constructive engagement from customers, fostering mutual respect and collaboration to achieve the best outcomes. Importantly, it aims to be inclusive and accessible, with provisions for example to offer translation services and alternative formats to meet diverse needs.

Supporting the Customer Charter are detailed Customer Service Standards, which provide a structured framework for consistent service delivery and continuous improvement.

Our Customer Charter

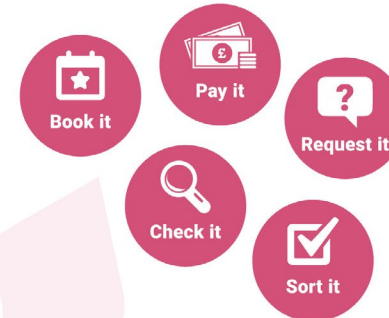
- Be responsive and more accessible to you
- Manage complaints effectively
- Continual improvement on our repair processes
- Safety and wellbeing is a priority
- Safer communities
- Continue to improve our communications
- Listening to customers

Your home

My Eildon



Our customer portal
Easier, quicker, available 24/7



www.bit.ly/MyEildon



Delivering for Our Customers

Early Alerts with Rent Payment problems

We are automating some of the tasks we use to help us reach you if you are in rent arrears. We hope this will give our Housing Officers more time to focus their efforts engaging with you and giving you the support you need.

So, if your rent payment is late, you may receive a text from us with a payment link, or you may receive an automated call from us allowing you to be connected to your Housing Officer.

We hope these improvements help us to connect with you earlier and resolve any payment issues you have.



New Homes in Westruther

We were delighted to host an Open Day on 12 September to showcase our new development in Westruther. Consisting of 10 properties with a mix of 3 bed 5 person and 2 bed 4 person homes, this development had been extremely challenging to complete as the previous building contractor went into administration a couple of years ago. Working with our new contractors, Cruden, they completed the development creating 'green' homes built to a high specification in terms of airtightness and with the latest mechanical ventilation and heat recovery systems offering excellent insulation. These new homes are more economic to run and kinder to the environment as they generally need 90% less energy for heating and hot water than standard buildings. We had a local lettings policy in place for this development giving preference to people with a local connection.

Local caterers provided refreshments and school children from the village school enjoyed a 'Construction in a box' session learning all about how homes are built and the different jobs and careers in the construction industry.



Fresh start for Emily and her family

Emily manages the local pub in Westruther and was so delighted to hear she was going to be moving into one of the homes.

'I've been living in the flat above the pub all my life and it's a small space for a growing family with no separate kitchen. Now married with three children, I can't tell you how delighted I am to be moving into a new home, with my own kitchen and lots of space. I'll still be continuing to run the pub but now I can close the door at the end of the night and head back to my lovely new house. It's going to make such a difference to our lives.'

Preparing your Home for Colder Months

As we approach winter, the changing weather can cause damage to your home. Easy steps you can do to help you prepare:-

If you have gas central heating - bleed your radiators. If you haven't used your radiators in a while, you may find they are cold at the top and hot at the bottom. To get the most out of your heating (and money), bleed your radiators regularly. Before starting, have an old cloth and a bleed key ready and make sure the heating is off.

We can supply a bleed key if you need one. (Get in touch using the contact information on the back page). There should be a valve on the radiator, usually at the top, and you need to turn this until you hear a hissing sound. Use the cloth to catch any liquid that comes out of the radiator. As soon as the hissing stops and only water comes out, turn the valve key again to tighten.



Burst Pipes

Find your stopcock. It's important to know where your stopcock is so you can stop water flowing into your home in the event of a burst pipe. Your stopcock is usually under your kitchen sink, but it may also be near the boiler, under the stairs, or on an outside wall. You should be able to turn it to shut the water supply on or off. If you are unsure, please contact us.

Keep your heating on a timer - If you're planning to be away and the weather temperature is set to fall, set your heating to come on with a timer setting.

This could prevent the water in your pipes freezing if it gets really cold, which could lead to burst pipes or flooding.

How to deal with a frozen water pipe

- Turn your water supply off at your stopcock
- Turn all your cold taps on to drain the system and leave them on
- Do not open hot taps, as you may damage the hot water cylinder

To deal with hot water:

- Turn off the central heating boiler and immersion heater, if you have one
- Then open the hot water taps, collecting the water in the bath for washing and flushing the toilet

Radio Teleswitch Service (RTS)

The Radio Teleswitch Service (RTS), which controls certain electricity meters, is being phased out. Energy suppliers began this process at the end of June, focusing first on areas with a high number of RTS meters to manage resources effectively.

If your home uses night storage heating, it's essential to contact your electricity supplier as soon as possible. There is now a significant waiting list for meter upgrades, and early action will help avoid disruption to your heating schedule.

For more information, please call your supplier, or visit their website to arrange an appointment.

<https://bit.ly/RTSEnergyAdvice>



Planning a trip away?

If you are planning on going away throughout the year, when you return please remember to run your hot and cold taps for a couple of minutes to reduce the risk of bacteria built up.

This is also important for any showers you have in your home.

Get Connected

With rising costs of everyday essentials, such as food, fuel and heating, more of us are struggling to afford bills like mobile and broadband, leading to increased digital exclusion.

Citizens Advice are launching 'Get Connected', a local campaign for CABs, aiming to raise awareness about affordable internet and mobile options for those who need it most.

If you are receiving some types of benefits, you might be able to get a cheaper internet or mobile deal called a social tariff.

www.choose.co.uk/broadband/guide/social-tariffs

www.cas.org.uk/get-connected



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housing@eildon.org.uk



Helping Customers Get Connected

Thanks to funding from Connecting Scotland, Eildon's Digital Lending Library is helping tenants across the Scottish Borders get online and stay connected - from Hawick to Peebles and Duns. Over the past nine months, 20 digital devices and MiFi connectors have been borrowed for up to six months, providing access to the internet. Our Community Engagement Officer, Lita, has been supporting customers to get the most from their time online. Lita explained, 'Some customers already have digital skills and just want to try out a device to see what works for them. Others have never accessed platforms like YouTube. I've been able to demonstrate a wide range of ways to use the internet depending on each person's interests, and yes, that's included watching Common Riding videos and listening to pipe band tunes!'

We're proud to be working with The General Store Selkirk, who securely wipe all data from returned devices at the end of the loan period, ensuring they're clean and ready for the next user. This project is helping to tackle digital exclusion, build confidence with technology, and offer guidance on affordable ways to stay connected after the lending period ends.

If you, or an Eildon customer you know, might benefit, Lita is happy to help you find out more. Contact Lita on **03000 200 217**.

Family Support Directory

Scottish Borders Council have launched their new Family Support Directory, a comprehensive and easy-to-navigate resource designed to connect families and professionals with vital support services across the Scottish Borders.

This directory brings together over 280 entries covering a wide range of services tailored to meet the diverse needs of families—from pre-birth through to young adulthood (up to 24 years) and beyond.

www.scotborders.gov.uk/familysupportdirectory



Supporting Stronger Communities

At Eildon, we believe in building more than just homes — we're committed to supporting the communities around them. Through our Community Benefits Fund, which is made possible by contributions from our contractors, we're able to invest in local projects that make a real difference.



David Kowbel Eildon Maintenance Officer with Steven Horseman, Spar Store in Langlee.

Recently, we were proud to support two fantastic initiatives: We donated £500 towards the installation of a 24-hour accessible defibrillator outside the SPAR store on Marigold Bank, Galashiels. This lifesaving device is now available to the public day and night and is registered with ambulance control and the British Heart Foundation's national network.

The project was led by SPAR store manager Gary Kowbel, who spotted a gap in emergency coverage and rallied the community to help. Thanks to generous donations — and support from Eildon, including time donated by one of our own maintenance officers to install the unit — the defibrillator was up and running far sooner than expected. Fundraising is still going strong for a second device to serve the lower end of Langlee, and plans are underway for free first aid training.

Community Benefits in Action

In Selkirk, we also supported the Selkirk Triathlon, helping fund prizes and contribute to the success of this brilliant local event that brings people together and promotes health and wellbeing.

These are just two examples of how our Community Benefits Fund is helping to strengthen communities across the Borders. Whether it's supporting health, safety, or local events, we're proud to play a part in making our neighbourhoods even better places to live.

Get in Touch

If you know of a local initiative that could benefit from support, we'd love to hear from you!



Open Day and Art Exhibition at Poynder Apartments

We hosted our first community event at Poynder Apartments in September in celebration of the first two years of our extra care service in Kelso. There was a great turnout from local neighbours, community groups, family and friends, with live music from guitarist and singer John Craig (grandson of one of the Poynder tenants).

Julie Houghton from OPAL was on hand to share information about all the social events on offer as well as showcase them in action with games and activities.



We showcased our first art exhibition displaying some of the work that was created by the tenants during their 'Art in Healthcare' workshops earlier this year. There were paintings by the late Tom Kennedy, a tenant from Station Avenue (our combined Care at Home and Housing Support service for people with learning disabilities) who during his lifetime had been a prolific and talented painter. It was a great opportunity to show off all their incredible talent and was really well received.



New Eildon-Led Project Opens Doors to Employment

We are excited to share news that we secured funding from Allia to launch a new initiative that will help people in the Scottish Borders take their next steps into work—particularly in the fast-growing warehousing, logistics, and agriculture sectors. Over the next year, the project will support ten Eildon tenants with tailored training, mentoring, and accredited qualifications. Six participants will also have the opportunity to gain RTITB-accredited forklift certification, delivered in-house at the Cyrenians' FareShare depot in Seafield, Edinburgh—enhancing access to better-paid, long-term employment.

Recognising that transport is a major barrier for many, the project will cover travel costs to ensure participants can attend training without financial strain. Eildon is leading the project and coordinating all delivery, with support from a network of local partners. In addition to the core training and mentoring offer, participants will also have access to 'Cyrenians' job club—providing regular sessions focused on job search skills, confidence-building, and progression planning.

Nile Istephan, Chief Executive of Eildon Housing said: "This is about creating real, lasting change for people in our communities. We're proud to lead a project that not only builds skills but also removes the practical barriers that hold people back. Working with Cyrenians, and thanks to the support from Allia, we're making sure participants have the help they need every step of the way."

If you are interested in taking part in the project, please email enquiries@eildon.org.uk and we'll be in touch to discuss.



Christmas Opening Hours

We'd like to wish all of our tenants a peaceful time over Christmas and the New Year.

We'll be closed for the festive period from 2pm on Wednesday 24 December 2025, and will reopen at 8:45am on Monday 5 January 2026.

If you have an emergency you can contact us on:
03000 200 217.



How to Contact Us

We welcome your feedback – there are many ways to let us know what you think.



The Weaving Shed, Ettrick Mill,
Dunsdale Road, Selkirk TD7 5EB



Customer Service: 03000 200 217



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www.eildon.org.uk



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