

# PAISLEY HOUSING ASSOCIATION MARCH 2024 BULLETIN



## Welcome to our March Bulletin

Welcome to the March 2024 edition of our bulletin.

We have reviewed the schedule of our bulletin and have decided to make a slight change to this. You will still receive a bulletin every 2 months but we have delayed this bulletin by 1 month as this allows the frequency to fit better with the seasons and events. As such future bulletins will be in May, July, September, November, January and March.

## £20 Amazon Voucher Prize Draw Tell us what you think of our Bulletin

As it has now been slightly over a year since our first bulletin, we would like to get your feedback on the content, frequency and any other views about the bulletin. You can give us your feedback by completing the online survey at the link in the email issuing your bulletin, by scanning the QR code or by completing the paper survey form if you received your bulletin by post.

Win a £20 Amazon Voucher  
Bulletin Survey 2024



## Chief Executive set to retire

Kathleen McCutcheon, Chief Executive of Paisley HA is set to retire in July 2024. The Association is currently out to recruitment to find her successor. Kathleen has worked at the Association since 2006 and overseen significant changes to the operation including almost doubling the staff numbers, several new developments, and a new office in Paisley town centre.

Kathleen said it was an honour and a privilege to have worked for Paisley HA over the years. The work is never finished but I am proud of all the achievements and contribution I have made to the organisation. I've loved every minute as I've had great support from the Staff and the Board.

Watch this space for who and what next for Paisley HA.

## Easter Weekend Office Closure

Our offices will be closed from 5pm on Thursday 28th March 2024, until 9am on Tuesday 2nd April 2024. Emergency repairs can be reported by calling 0141 889 7105

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# UNIVERSAL CREDIT

## UPDATE YOUR HOUSING COSTS

The new rent and service charges costs will be applied to your rent account from 28th March 2024. If you receive Universal Credit you will need to update your rent costs on your UC Journal to make sure you don't miss out on £££ and that you get the full help with your rent that you are entitled to.

If we know that you are on Universal Credit we will be contacting you to confirm the process for this, but we have noted a short guide below too.

There are some differences depending on how you manage your claim and when your current assessment period ends.

### ONLINE CLAIM

#### If your current assessment period ends between 28th and 31st March 2024

Before the end of your assessment period, you should go to the "home" screen

You should click on "Report a Change of Circumstances" and then "Where you live and what it costs"

You should confirm your new rent (which you should have in your rent increase letter

You should confirm your new service charges as well.

**Remember to press submit to ensure that the change is applied to your claim!**

You may then have to also complete a task on your "to do list" after 1st April

### ONLINE CLAIM

#### If your current assessment period ends after 1st April 2024

On 1st April 2024 - DWP will put a task on your "to do list" asking you to confirm your housing costs.

You should complete this task confirming that your housing costs changed on 28th March 2024

You should confirm your new rent (which you should have in your rent increase letter

You should confirm your new service charges as well.

**Remember to press submit to ensure that the change is applied to your claim!**

### IF YOU MANAGE YOUR CLAIM BY TELEPHONE

Before the end of your current assessment period, you should call the Universal Credit Helpline which is open Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm on 0800 328 5644 to tell them what your new rent and service charges are.

You will need to have your rent and service charges to hand as the call handler from Universal Credit will need this.

Please remember that the Universal Credit Helpline will be closed on Friday 29th March 2024 and Monday 1st April 2024 due to the public holidays.

If you are having any trouble updating your Universal Credit claim you can contact our Advice Team by email at [adviceteam@paisleyha.org.uk](mailto:adviceteam@paisleyha.org.uk) or by phone on 0141 583 4123 and we can attempt to help you.

Please note that the line may be very busy and there may be slight delays in getting to you.

## SURVEY OUTCOMES

In the last year we have carried out several surveys and consultations with our tenants. These included our:

**Energy Survey**  
**Annual Charter Report Survey**  
**Rent and Service Charges Consultation**  
**Repairs Satisfaction Survey**

We have been really pleased with the number of tenants responding to these surveys and consultations, and are grateful for the time they have taken to complete the surveys.

We also want to be transparent with the outcomes of the surveys. Once the survey is completed we will always put a report of the outcomes on the Consultations section of our website, there can sometimes be a slight delay if it has to be presented to our board first.

You can also request a copy of any of the survey reports to be sent to you by emailing us at [admin@paisleyha.org.uk](mailto:admin@paisleyha.org.uk).

## TENANT PORTAL YOUR HELP IS NEEDED

During our tenant satisfaction survey 64% of tenants told us that they would like to access some of Paisley HA's services using an online portal. We have been working on developing this and now have a test system ready.

We are looking for help from around 20 tenants to test this portal, we are particularly keen to have some volunteers who are over 65, disabled or where English is not the first language.

The testing can be done from the comfort of your own home, and should take no longer than 30 minutes. We would then ask you to complete a short survey about your experience in using the test portal.

If you would like to help you can email [alan.graham@paisleyha.org.uk](mailto:alan.graham@paisleyha.org.uk)

## OFFICE OPENING HOURS CHANGING FROM 2ND APRIL 2024

We have been reviewing our office opening hours, last year we asked tenants their views on us amending the office opening hours to closing our reception desk from 4pm. We had 141 responses which is 10.9% of our tenants. Of those who responded 51% said that they agreed with this change. 43% had no opinion and 6% disagreed with the change.

**As such our board has agreed to implement this change from Tuesday 2nd April 2024**

What does this mean:

1. Our office reception will now be open Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm for dropping in.
2. If you need to attend our office after 4pm, this can be done by appointment.
3. Our office phone lines will be open from 9am to 5pm Monday to Thursday and 4pm on a Friday.

Do you agree with us changing our reception opening time to 4pm



## WHY WE HAVE OUR BULK UPLIFT SERVICE

During our rent consultation there were a number of queries raised about our bulk uplift services and we wanted to use this bulletin to explain why we have this service.

Our Bulk Uplift service was first introduced 12 years ago. When it was introduced this was because there were frequently issues with waste items being left in the back courts or our flats and in front of houses, often because tenants would have to pay for uplifts from Renfrewshire Council, but were unable or unwilling to do so.

This caused a lot of issues in terms of the overall appearance for the area, an increase in rechargeable works, additionally in tenements if we were unable to identify the person who had left the item we had to recharge the whole block to remedy the issue often creating issues between neighbours.

As such, after consultation with tenants at the time, we introduced our Bulk Uplift service for all tenants. This meant that for a modest cost, tenants were able to arrange a Bulk Uplift at any time they required this. It also meant that our Housing Management and Asset staff could arrange a Bulk Uplift when an issue was identified without having to arrange for uplifts to be recharged to tenants.

The service is also covered by Universal Credit and Housing Benefit, for tenants that receive this. A recharge for clearance would not be covered by HB and UC and would mean an additional cost for our most vulnerable tenants.

We think that overall the service remains value for money, although we appreciate some tenants may disagree. We are eager to keep costs as low as possible, tenants can help with this by trying to recycle where possible, for example we are charged an individual fee of £65 to £100 for a mattress or white good uplift, depending on weight.

## ANNUAL GARDEN COMPETITION

As we move into Spring, we move into planting season for all our gardeners. We will be judging our annual garden competition In August 2024. As part of the competition we have 3 categories:

**Individual Garden**

**Tenement Garden**

**Balcony**

With a 1st, 2nd and 3rd place in each category.

Our annual Garden Competition returned in August last year. This was judged for us by Paisley Landscaping Services, you can see below examples of some of the gardens which our tenants had clearly worked hard on and the judges were very impressed by the quality and individual characteristics of each of the gardens.

### HOW TO ENTER:

We check all our stock to identify gardens for our judges to visit, but if you specifically want your garden to participate you can let us know by emailing [admin@paisleyha.org.uk](mailto:admin@paisleyha.org.uk) or telling your Housing Officer and we will ensure that the judge visits your garden.



## PAISLEY'S SPRING FARMYARD TRAIL 2024 29TH MARCH TO 15TH APRIL 2024

Ten animals have left their farmyard to graze in Paisley town centre. The farmer wants them back, can you help find them all?

Pick up a free trail leaflet from the leaflet racks in either the Piazza Shopping Centre or The Paisley Shopping Centre.

Collect your free crème egg when you arrive at the last participating business, Kettle Black, 3 County Place, just beside County Square (open 10am – 4pm Sunday to Friday, 10am – 5pm on Saturdays)

Don't forget, once you have collected your free crème egg, just post your entry form in one of the special Farmyard post boxes located in either of the shopping centres to be entered into a prize draw.



## GARDEN SERVICE - MAKE SURE YOUR GARDEN IS READY!

Our new Garden Maintenance contractor **M Squared** will be commencing grass cutting on our communal and individual gardens from the week commencing 8th April 2024.

We would like to remind you that you may want to tidy your garden in the coming weeks to prepare for this, moving any equipment, toys and trampolines etc. that may be in the way of the grass cutters. Especially given some of the stormy weather in recent months.

Please also note that gardens with dog fouling will not be cut therefore any fouling in the garden areas should stop now and cleaned up, or the contractor may leave without cutting this.

Due to the interruptions to the garden service last year Paisley HA has credited all rent accounts of tenants who receive the service with a goodwill payment equivalent to 50% of the Garden Maintenance charges made last year. If your rent account is in credit you can ask for this to be refunded to you.