

PAISLEY HOUSING
ASSOCIATION
TENANT
HANDBOOK



WWW.PAISLEYHA.ORG.UK
ADMIN@PAISLEYHA.ORG.UK

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WELCOME

Welcome to your Tenant's Handbook.

This Handbook contains information and advice which we think you may find useful in managing your home.

If you feel that there is anything in the handbook that has not been fully explained or you want more information, please contact us and we will be happy to help you. If you require a copy of this handbook in an alternative format, such as large print, audiotape, braille or another language please contact us, we will be happy to assist.

Jeśli potrzebujesz tego podręcznika w innym języku, skontaktuj się z nami.

إذا كنت تحتاج إلى هذا الدليل بلغة أخرى، يرجى الاتصال بنا.
اگر آپ کو یہ ہینڈ بک کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہے تو براہ کرم ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

CONTACTING US

Our office is at: 2 Lawn Street, Paisley, PA1 1HA

Call into our office: Our opening hours are:

**Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm
(You can telephone us up to 5pm Monday to Thursday)**

We are generally closed the afternoon of the 2nd Tuesday and last Thursday of every month from 12.30pm

Our staff work flexibly from our office and from home, please call us prior to visiting if you are looking for a particular member of staff. We wouldn't want you to have a wasted journey.

Telephone us: Our main telephone number is 0141 889 7105 and you can select from the following options

Press 1	To Report a Repair to Heating or Hot Water
Press 2	To Report any other Repair
Press 3	If you are an Owner
Press 4	To make a Payment or Discuss your Rent Account
Press 5	To speak to our Allocations Team
Press 6	For Neighbour or Tenancy Issues
Press 7	For our Advice Team (Benefits & Energy Advice)
Press 8	To Report a Bulk Uplift
Press 0	For any other Enquiries

EMAIL US: ADMIN@PAISLEYHA.ORG.UK

WEBSITE: WWW.PAISLEYHA.ORG.UK

FACEBOOK: PAISLEY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

OUR BOARD AND STAFF

The Association is governed by a Board who meet 8 times per year.

Our staff are committed to providing professional Housing Services to our customers. We have two teams delivering front line Housing Services.

Our Housing Management Team:

Who deal with:

- Rent Enquiries
- Neighbour nuisance complaints
- Estate Management
- Allocations and Letting properties
- Benefits and Energy Advice
- Tenancy Support
- General tenancy enquiries

Our Asset Management Team

Who deal with:

- Repairs
- Cyclical and planned maintenance
- Permission for alterations
- Improvements,
- Adaptations
- Our Factoring service

CONFIDENTIALITY

We adhere to the Data Protection Act 2018 (which includes General Data Protection Regulations, GDPR). All personal information will only be used for the purpose given, dealt with securely and only retained for as long necessary. You can ask to view the information we hold on you by completing a Subject Access Request on our website www.paisleyha.org.uk

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

Paisley Housing Association is committed to providing fair and equal treatment to all of our customers. We will not discriminate against anyone on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, disability, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, civil partnerships, family circumstances, employment status or physical ability. We are committed to providing equality of opportunity to enable all sections of the community to participate fully and to ensure that the Association's policies promote social inclusion.

LIVING IN YOUR HOME

What are Your responsibilities?

Your Tenancy Agreement has more information on this, and about your rights. Ask us about anything you don't understand.

The important points!

- You live in your home
- You pay rent & service charges on time
- You report repairs as soon as you spot them
- You let us and our contractors in to do repairs, improvements and any safety work we need to carry out e.g. annual gas service
- You look after your home and any garden or common areas which are part of your tenancy
- You, your household and visitors do not cause nuisance to neighbours

The sections below provide information on specific aspects of your tenancy which we hope you will find useful. We have also included a look up table for repairs and at the end of the Handbook we have provided a list of useful contact numbers for a variety of agencies.

PAYING YOUR RENT & SERVICE CHARGES

Our Rents and Service charges are based on;

- The amount of money we need to do repairs and carry out our investment in homes e.g. new kitchens and heating
- The cost of delivering the services we provide for our tenants
- The repayment of loans and mortgages we have taken out to pay for the purchase, refurbishment and new provision of properties
- Any shortfall of income through non payment of rents and empty properties

All rents and service charges are reviewed annually in March. We will consult with you on any proposed change to your rent and service charges and will give you 28 days notice of any change in rent and service charges.

Your rent and service charges are due to be paid 1 month in advance by the 28th of each month.

The Association will send you an annual statement detailing all the charges made, payments received and the balance on your account.

You can request a balance statement at any time—please just contact us

WAYS TO PAY YOUR RENT & SERVICE CHARGES:

- Direct Debit – this is our preferred method for receiving your payment. It is a quick and convenient way to pay. To set up a Direct Debit please contact us on 0141 889 7105 and select option 4
- Credit or Debit Card – You can use these by telephoning us on 0141 889 7105 and select option 4
- Recurring Card Payments— You can set up regular payments to come off your debit or credit card which you can change/or stop at any time by contacting us. This saves you having to phone each time you want to make a telephone payment. To set this up please contact us on 0141 889 7105 and select option 4
- Internet Payment – You can make your payment by debit or credit card via the internet at www.allpayments.net or go to our website www.paisleyha.org.uk and follow the link to Allpayments
- Allpay Card – You can use this at any shop that displays the PayPoint symbol. Many of these outlets accept payment by debit or credit card as well as cash
- On Line Banking – You can do this through your online banking account, just contact us on 0141 889 7105 and select option 4 for further details
- Standing Order – To set up a Standing Order please contact us on 0141 889 7105 and select option 4
- Cheque – You can send us a cheque made out to Paisley Housing Association to 2 Lawn Street, Paisley PA1 1HA. Please note your name and address on the back of the cheque

HAVING PROBLEMS PAYING YOUR RENT AND SERVICE CHARGES?

If you are struggling to pay your rent and service charges – contact us before rent arrears become an issue.

We will work with you when you are experiencing difficulty. We will carry out a benefit calculation and offer you assistance in completing benefit forms such as Housing Benefit or Universal Credit claim. We will offer you an appointment with our Advice Team and if required agree a repayment arrangement with you which you can afford.

If you fail to make payment of rent & service charges and do not make a repayment arrangement or do not maintain your agreed arrangement we will take legal action to repossess your home.

MONEY WORRIES

If it is not just your rent & service charges you are struggling to pay please contact us as we will try to help you before your money worries get out of control.

We will be able to tell you about agencies that may be able to help you and if you want we can make referrals to various agencies which give free, confidential and independent advice.

We are also aware of the support agencies that are working in your area and if you want we can make referrals to them for you. We are here to help you but if you wish to contact these agencies yourself you can find details are in our Useful Numbers Section.

UNIVERSAL CREDIT (UC)

UC replaces several benefits including Housing Benefit. If you are on a low income and under pension age, you may be able to claim UC which can provide a monthly payment to assist with your Living and Housing Costs. You can find out if you can claim UC by asking us or by going to the website www.gov.uk/universal-credit.

A useful UC checklist is available on Renfrewshire Council's web site.

Most tenants will receive their UC as a direct payment to themselves and are responsible for paying their full rent and service charges from their UC, if you prefer your payment to go direct to your rent account, please contact us and we may be able to assist in getting your rent paid directly to us.

HOUSING BENEFIT (HB)

Depending on your income you may be entitled to HB to assist you towards making payments to your rent & service charges. You can find out if you are entitled to HB by asking us or Renfrewshire Council to carry out an HB assessment. You can find out more information on Housing Benefit and if you are entitled on Renfrewshire Council's website www.renfrewshire.gov.uk. Click on the Benefits and Money option then select Housing Benefit which will give you information on who can claim HB and how to make a claim.

If you want to check how much you may be entitled to you can use a free benefit check tool at www.entitledto.co.uk

DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENT (DHP)

If you are receiving some Housing Benefit or Universal Credit but it is not covering your full rent charge and this is causing you financial hardship, you may be able to apply for DHP. DHP is a temporary top up payment which can help those in hardship, as long as you receive some HB or UC.

Common examples of people who may get an award of DHP are Tenants;

- Subject to the Benefit Cap on UC or HB
- Whose HB or UC has been reduced due to non-dependants who live with them
- Whose HB or UC has been reduced due to earned income
- Who have an extra bedroom

Our Advice Team can assist you to apply. To make an appointment with our Advice Team call us on 0141 889 7105 (select option 7) or you can find out more information at www.renfrewshire.gov.uk and click on the Benefits and Money option.

COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS, EXEMPTIONS & REDUCTIONS

There are a variety of options available to support with the costs of Council Tax at your property, some of these are based on your household type and others are based on what income you have:

Discounts and Exemptions

- Single Person Discount (25% discount)
- Student Exemption (this is a 25% discount if more than 1 adult in the property)
- Severe Mentally Impaired Exemption (this is a 25% discount if more than 1 adult in the property)
- Exemption for Care Leaver under 26 (this is a 25% discount if more than 1 adult in the property)

More information can be found at www.renfrewshire.gov.uk

Council Tax Reduction

Council Tax Reduction is a means tested benefit which reduces the cost of Council Tax for people on a low income. If you apply for Housing Benefit you will automatically be assessed for Council Tax Reduction, if you receive Universal Credit you will have to apply separately for Council Tax Reduction.

If you want to apply for Council Tax Reduction, you can find further details on www.renfrewshire.gov.uk, alternatively contact our Advice Team on 0141 889 7105 (select option 7)

WELFARE BENEFITS ADVICE

If you feel that you need advice about benefits you can use our Advice Team Service who offer free and confidential advice to make sure you're claiming all the benefits you're entitled to. Please call 0141 889 7105 & select option 7.

ENERGY ADVICE SERVICE

If you are having any issues with your gas or electricity then we may be able to help you. We can assist you with switching your supplier or tariff to save you money and can contact your supplier on your behalf to try and reduce your debt or the rate you pay it back. Please call 0141 889 7105 & select option 7.

NEIGHBOUR NUISANCE

We want you to enjoy your home without having any difficulties with your neighbours, however, if any problems arise, we hope, in the first instance, you will try to speak to them to solve the problem. If this does not work, or you think it is too serious to deal with by yourself, please contact your Housing Officer for further advice and assistance.

It is our experience that noise nuisance is the most common anti social complaint. If you are experiencing this, you can contact Renfrewshire Council Noise Enforcement Team(NET) on **07768988186** and ask them to visit your home and monitor the level of noise.

This service is available;

**Monday – Thursday 8.45am – 4.45pm & Friday 8.45am – 3.55pm
(Outwith these hours you can contact Police Scotland on 101)**

You should always contact the Police if you witness criminal activity, including breach of the peace.

If NET find the noise levels are too high they will issue a warning to your neighbour telling them to reduce the noise. If the noise does not stop after 10 minutes and you have to ask them to call out again they will take a 5 minute noise reading. Where the noise is above a certain level they can issue a fixed penalty notice of £100. These Officers also have the powers to confiscate equipment e.g. Sound systems, TVs.

When you report a neighbour complaint to us we will tell you if we will deal with it and the timescale which applies. We detail in our Neighbour Relations Policy what we consider not to be ASB.

For complaints which we do recognise as being ASB we will carry out an investigation based on the information you provide. We will seek corroboration of the incident from other neighbours and will usually interview the person complained about. We do not divulge who has made the complaint.

We work closely with Renfrewshire Council's Community Safety Partnership team to resolve incidences of anti social behaviour and depending on the circumstances we may propose mediation. Where there is evidence of a breach of tenancy we will issue the appropriate warning. In serious and persistent anti social cases we will take legal action against the perpetrator of the anti social behaviour up to and including eviction, although this is rare. We will contact you on completing our actions.

PETS

The Association has a Pet Policy which requires our tenants to seek permission for having a pet. If you do not have permission please contact us and we will send you a form.

You are responsible for the behaviour of your pet, a pet owned by someone living with you and any visiting pet. You must keep any pet under control, ensure it does not cause nuisance to neighbours or damage to property. The Association considers nuisance to be excessive barking or fouling in the close or in the back court which is not immediately removed and the area cleaned. If your pet is causing nuisance you will be asked to re home the pet. If you are a dog owner you must by law have your dog microchipped and registered and it must wear a collar and tag with your name, address and contact details on it. We will not give permission for dogs in our multi storey at Oliphant Court.

PARKING

You must make sure that you and any person living in or visiting your home parks their vehicle on your driveway, a designated parking area or on the public road. Please park responsibly so it doesn't block any other vehicle from moving onto a drive or road.

Your driveway or any designated parking area is not to be used for extensive or commercial car repairs. It is solely for parking your car(s) and should not be used to keep caravans, boats or trailers on it.

Parking for tenants living in Paisley Town Centre can be difficult due to the high number of car owners and the small amount of kerb space.

Parking Permits operate in 2 of our areas – Town Centre & West End. If residents wish to apply for a permit they can contact the Council and request an application form.

- **Contact: Renfrewshire Council Roads and Parking Tel:0300 300 0380**
- **Email: pt@renfrewshire.gov.uk**

If you have a disability and require to park close to your home you can apply to the Council to request a designated disabled parking bay is marked off. This parking space however would not only be for your use but is available for anyone who has a disability parking badge.

YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Common Areas

Living in a nice close is important if you live in a flat. If you live in a close you and your neighbours are jointly responsible for making sure the close is clean and the back court is maintained and clear of rubbish.

We provide close cleaning, garden maintenance and a bulk uplift service to help you. If you live in a close which doesn't have these services already you may wish to discuss this with your neighbours and ask for the service put in place. Please contact our Housing Assistants on 0141 889 7105 select option 6.

If you and your neighbour(s) do not have the service and are not looking after the close or backcourt we will:

- Issue letters to all or specific tenants depending on the circumstances
- Issue warning letters /take action for breach of tenancy
- Carry out work and recharge residents and/or introduce our service

In closes where there are private owners and our subsidiary, Paisley South Property Services Ltd (PSPS) is the appointed factor we will encourage the owners to introduce services.

We also own some areas of open spaces around where we have housing. We inspect these and carry out maintenance to ensure they do not detract from the look of your neighbourhood.

These areas can be subject to fly tipping. Please help to maintain your neighbourhood by reporting any incidents of this to Renfrewshire Council. Renfrewshire Council website address is www.renfrewshire.gov.uk

RUBBISH....MANY, MANY BINS!

You have to put all your rubbish in the correct colour bin, e.g. Domestic rubbish in the grey bin; paper and cardboard in the blue bin; cans, plastic and glass in the green bin and food waste and garden refuse in the brown bin. It is also your job to take your bins out for uplift and return them to the bin store/area after collection. Renfrewshire Council offers help for people who are unable to do this either due to their age or ability. Information about this services and bin uplift days is available on Renfrewshire Council's website www.renfrewshire.gov.uk. If any of your bins are lost or stolen you will have to buy a replacement which are available from Renfrewshire Council. We recommend that you put your house number and flat position on your bin to reduce the risk of it being misused/ stolen. We also encourage our tenants to fit locks to their bin to avoid it being filled up by others.

Your blue, green and brown bin is only for items that can be recycled . If you put domestic rubbish in these bins the Council will not empty it . This may result in bins overflowing and the risk of attracting vermin.

BULK ITEMS

If you wish to get rid of bulk items please first think if they would be suitable for recycling and offer them to a charity which will uplift them for free. If they are not suitable contact our 24hr bulk uplift line on 0141 889 7105 & select option 8 to report the items you want removed, confirm they belong to you by giving your name and place these items in the backcourt or if you live in an own door flat or house, leave the items at the front of your property. These items will be taken away within 5 working days. This service includes the removal of white goods such as fridges & freezers.

RUNNING A BUSINESS FROM YOUR HOME

Your Tenancy Agreement states that you must not run any kind of business from your home, however if you ask us we may give you permission.

If you would like to run a business you should apply in writing to the Association giving full disclosure of the business and contact the Council to check if you would need planning permission.

We will then carry out a full assessment, including its effect on your neighbours and advise you in writing of our decision. If we refuse permission, you have a right of appeal to the sheriff court.

ALTERATIONS & IMPROVEMENTS TO YOUR HOME

If you need an adaptation to your home to make it easier for you to live in, see pg. 8. But if you need something that is a very minor aid, contact us as we may be able to help.

We are happy to give advice to tenants who want to carry out alterations or improvements to their home. Some building materials need special handling, some work needs a building warrant or might cause a health and safety problem etc. Talk to us about your plans.

You will need to complete an alteration form and let us know what you are proposing to do.

We may ask you for a sketch and details about your contractor and about the type or make of what you plan to fit.

Remember that you must get our permission in writing before you start, no matter how small the work you plan to do. Our letter will set out any conditions you have to meet. This is important, because if you just go ahead, we may have to put things right and you will have to pay for that work.

It is mandatory that only professionally qualified gas engineers and electricians do any gas or electric work.

There are some improvements, set out by Government, that you may get compensation for when your tenancy ends—but only if you got permission for them (and you should keep these receipts). A leaflet explaining the Government's Right to Compensation scheme is available from our office.

Below are examples of typical alteration requests that we deal with:

- Removal of Artex
- Laminate or tiling your floor
- Installing a new fireplace or fire
- Replacing doors, kitchen or bathroom fixtures or fitting an over bath shower/walk in shower
- Putting up a satellite dish—this will not be allowed if a building has over cladding, like the Rivers area, Mannering Road & Oliphant Court
- Putting in a stair lift
- Putting up fencing & walls
- Erecting a garden hut, garage or car port
- Laying slabs & putting in a driveway

We will not maintain anything that you install yourself e.g. a garden hut. This must be maintained at your own expense, and we will explain this to you when you contact us for permission.

TENANT PARTICIPATION—GETTING INVOLVED

Tenant Participation (TP) is about tenants taking part in the decision-making processes and influencing decisions about the housing services they receive. We have a Community Engagement Strategy which sets out how we deliver TP. If you would like to see a copy of this it is available on our website.

If you would like to get involved there are various ways you can do it:

- Put your name on our Your Views Network and tell us what areas of our work you have an interest in e.g. repairs and we will contact you when we are reviewing this service.
- Become a member of the Association. If you are 16 and over and a tenant of the Association or you are 18 years or over and have an interest in the Association, you can apply to become a member. Members can attend and vote at the Association's annual general meeting and can stand for election onto our Board. If you are interested, please contact us or download an application form from our website.
- Form a Tenants Group. If you would like to form a tenants group please contact our Advice & Projects Manager on 0141 889 7105 or email us via admin@paisleyha.org.uk
- Become a member of our Board which is made up of members from the Association's membership. There are 15 places on the Board. The Board meets 8 times per year to make business & policy decisions that ensure we provide high quality housing services to all of our customers. The Board delegates the responsibility for the day-to-day running of the business to the staff. If you are interested in joining our Board please contact our Corporate Services Officer on 0141 889 7105 or email us via admin@paisleyha.org.uk
- Completing detailed surveys about our services

KEEPING YOU INFORMED

We will :

- Send you our Annual Report to Tenants which tells you about our performance
- Hold an Annual General Meeting for members
- Issue a bi-monthly bulletin detailing what's happening at the Association
- Keep our Website up to date. This will include performance information and our Annual Assurance Statement which details our compliance with regulatory & legislative requirements
- Post information on our Facebook about things we know are happening

YOUR HOUSING NEEDS CHANGE

If you find that your home no longer suits your needs, we may be able to assist you. Some options which may be worth considering are:

Asking for a Transfer to another one of our properties. To find out more about this please contact us on 0141 889 7105 & select option 5 or if you want to apply for a transfer go to our website to complete a Housing Enquiry form for a Housing Options appointment.

Swapping your home with another Paisley Housing Association tenant or a Council or Housing Association tenant in Renfrewshire. To find out more please contact us or go to www.houseexchange.org.uk.

Finding out if your home can be adapted to meet your needs. If you have a physical disability or sensory impairment and are finding it difficult to manage in your home we may be able to adapt it to suit your needs (subject to obtaining funding to carry out the works) e.g. installation of handrails , ramps, over bath showers & the replacement of a bath with a walk in shower or anything else you might need. Before we can do any work we need a written referral from an Occupational Therapist (OT) who will visit you and assess what aids could be provided to make your life easier in your home.

Unfortunately PHA is not allowed to do the referral to the OT on your behalf, but we encourage anyone who is finding things difficult to contact them as follows;

Adult Service Request Team (ASeRT). Phone: 0300 300 1380 or 07483 374467
Email: adultservicesreferral.sw@renfrewshire.gov.uk

If your home is not suitable for an adaptation we will recognise your need to move to another property and will help you with this process.

If the above are not options for you and you still wish to move please don't just leave! See our section on Ending Your Tenancy Below.

ENDING YOUR TENANCY

Ending your tenancy properly could save you money in the long run. Our simple steps for ending your tenancy are:

Step 1

Contact us at least 28 days before you want to leave your home. We will send you a termination of tenancy form, arrange to visit you within the 28 day notice period to go over your rights and responsibilities when ending a tenancy and advise you of the charges which apply to you leaving your home.

Step 2

Give access on the day of the appointment.

Step 3

Pay any charges due on or before the last day of your tenancy. Undertake or make payment for any repairs which we have agreed with you as being your responsibility.

Step 4

Return your keys to our office. The property should be clear of any items and left in a ready to let condition. We will advise you of any additional charges that will be made for any new works required.

Need to change your leaving date?

No problem. You only have to advise us and we will tell you how this will impact on any charges due and rearrange the date for you returning your keys to us.

Change your mind and want to stay?

If you change your mind about leaving please tell us as soon as possible within the 28 day termination period as we may have applied to get your gas and electric supplier changed. This process once started cannot be reversed. You can however change it again. We will give you more information when you contact us.

REPAIRS TO YOUR HOME

TELL US IMMEDIATELY IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM

The Association carries out most repairs that are due to wear and tear. These can be to the inside or the outside of your home.

'Right to Repair' work is where your health, safety or security may be affected. We will tell you if you report one of these as special rules apply.

But we don't do all work to your home, some repairs are your responsibility. In addition, if you cause damage to the property, or don't allow our contractors access to carry out servicing or repairs, you may be recharged for the cost of the repair or contractors wasted visit.

Although we carry out most repairs, if you, your family, or a visitor causes damage through neglect or carelessness, we do not have to fix it (e.g. losing your keys) even if it is a repair that we are normally responsible for.

Other work is done in a planned way.

- Cyclical repairs are repairs which are carried out on a regular basis to make sure your home is maintained to a good standard. Examples are close painting and gutter cleaning.
- Planned maintenance is where we invest in large works like kitchen and boiler replacement.

You can use our table on pages 20-67 to check if you have to do a particular repair or if it is something that we will do for you. We have targets for how long after you contact us you can expect the work to be finished or, for Emergencies, to be "made safe".

HELP for Out of Hours Emergency Repairs

So we can get to you quickly when the office is closed PHONE 0141 889 7105.

NB When we are closed, don't report an emergency to us by email or via our website/facebook as these are not checked when we are closed.

Upon calling, select the option for the trade you need and your call will be forwarded automatically to the contractor on call.

WHO DOES THE REPAIR

Paisley Housing Association is responsible for most repairs in your property, our tenants are also responsible for some repairs in the property.

We also have four categories of repairs Emergency, Routine, Qualifying Repair, Right to Repair some other repairs be dealt with under Planned or Cyclical Maintenance. Below we highlight some examples of each type of repair and where the tenant is responsible, Full details of what repairs Paisley HA is responsible and how we categorise them can be found in our Repairs and Maintenance Policy which can be found on our website or by clicking this link, www.paisleyha.org.uk.

Emergency Repair - Attendance within 4 hours

These are faults that create a health and safety hazard or where extensive damage to property could arise and primarily relate to this making safe. Examples of this include where there is no lighting or power, unsafe electrical fittings, loss or partial loss of gas supply, burst pipes or flooding, no heating or hot water or insecure external door, amongst others.

Urgent Repair - Complete within 3 working days

These are faults that primarily cause inconvenience and are unlikely to result in damage to the property

Routine Repair - Complete within 8 working days

These are faults that only cause minor inconvenience and do not interfere with the daily occupation of the property. Examples include: partial loss of power or water, toilet not flushing, door entry repairs or repairs to TV aerials

Right to Repair

All tenants of Registered Social Landlords have a statutory "Right to Repair" The Scheme covers certain repairs up to the value of £350. These repairs are known as qualifying repairs and if they are not completed within the prescribed period, the tenant has the right to compensation.

Rechargeable repairs

The Association will recover the cost of repair work, where the cause of a repair is due to the failure or actions of individual tenants. This is important as the overall cost of repairs impacts upon the level of rent charged by the Association. Circumstances where this may arise include:

- Where damage has resulted from vandalism, neglect or carelessness on the part of the tenant, a member of the tenant's household or visitors to their home
- Where forced access is required due to lost keys – discretion may be used by staff where unforeseen incidents have resulted in a tenant being locked out and this can be evidenced
- To make good unauthorised alterations or works which have not been completed to an acceptable standard, such as, light fittings or showers
- Inappropriate use of the out of hours service, resulting in unnecessary costs to the Association • Failure to remedy damage or reinstate nonstandard fittings and fixtures when terminating a tenancy as identified at the pre-termination inspection
- Failure to provide reasonable access for annual gas safety check, resulting in additional costs to the organisation

Repairs that are the tenant's responsibility

Some repairs are the responsibility of the tenant. The tenant is usually responsible where the repair is about internal or external items which the tenant has installed such as:

- Carpets, flooring, decoration or internal appliances such as white goods
- Garden fences, decking or buildings

Or where something has been installed or is the responsibility of another organisation, such as:

- Bins
- Electricity meters or smart meter display units
- Gas meters or smart meter display units

YOUR HOME SAFETY IS A PRIORITY FOR US

To help ensure that your home is safe and that we meet our statutory requirements, we carry out a range of check and inspections, including:

- Annual gas safety check where you have a gas appliance within your home
- Annual inspection and test of detectors within your home e.g. smoke detectors, heat detectors and carbon monoxide detectors
- 5 yearly inspection and testing of the electrical installations
- Fire safety inspections of common areas and enforce rules to ensure that egress routes are clear in the event of fire, and nothing flammable is stored within common areas or cellars

It is important that our contractors are provided access to carry these out essential safety checks and all efforts will be made to arrange suitable appointments with you. However, as these are statutory requirements, if access is not provided, we will be required to force access, to ensure that your home is safe.

If you live in our multi storey block for safety reasons you will only have wet electric heating, never gas. You must ensure nothing blocks your fire door in the hall out to the fire balcony.

External Wall insulation (EWI) is fitted to a number of flats, including our multi. Its safety has been independently confirmed. You must not fix anything to the outside of these buildings as this will puncture the EWI and may lead to its deterioration through water ingress.

FIRE AWARENESS

Strathclyde Fire & Rescue offer a free home fire safety visit to everyone in the area. You can arrange this by phoning them on **0800 0731 999**, or visit www.firescotland.gov.uk.

GAS ESCAPE

If you smell gas:

- **Do** turn off the gas supply at the meter
- **Do** open doors & windows to get rid of the gas
- **Do not** turn electric switches on or off
- **Do not** smoke or use a naked flame
- **Phone National Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999**

SAFETY IN YOUR HOME

BURST PIPES/FLOODING

The pipes in your home will be insulated but in very cold spells of weather they can still freeze and burst. To prevent burst pipes you should keep your home warm and remember to leave the thermostat for your heating at frost control if you are going to be away from your home for a while.

If you do have a burst pipe or any signs of flooding:

- Turn off the water at the stopcocks
- Turn on all the taps as quickly as possible to drain the system
- Switch off the electricity supply at the consumer unit if water comes into contact with any electrical fittings
- Contact the Association
- Warn neighbours who may be affected

LEGIONELLA

Remember that if you have been away for a while, before using, you must flush your water system by running all taps and shower for at least 2 mins , also flush the w.c. before use. Do not stay in the room while you do this.

WINDOWS

Windows, especially those on or above the first floor, can be a source of danger. There is a real risk of infants and small children falling out of open or unlocked windows and suffering serious injuries. Help prevent accidents by, wherever possible, not putting beds or furniture below windows as this provides a climbing platform for a child. You should regularly check that the safety catches fitted to your windows are working. If in doubt contact us.

HOME CONTENTS INSURANCE

We strongly recommend that all of our tenants take out home contents insurance with a reputable insurer to give you protection against loss or damage of your belongings caused through floods, fire and break-ins.

One low cost home insurance scheme which we are aware of for tenants is operated by Thistle Tenants Risks. If you would like any further information you can contact us or you can contact them directly via;

Tel. 0345 450 7286 Email: tenantscontents@thistleinsurance.co.uk

The Association has a Buildings Insurance Policy for the structure of your home. This policy does not cover your household contents, personal belongings or the internal decoration of your home.

COMPLAINTS

We consider a complaint to be any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action or about the standard of service provided by us or by another party acting on our behalf. We are continuously improving our service and we encourage tenants to tell us if they have concerns about how we are performing. This helps us to improve our service.

Some examples of complaints include:

- The time it takes us to respond to your enquiries or requests for our services
- Failure to provide a service
- The quality of our service
- The Association not following its policies & procedures
- Inappropriate action of staff or by another party acting on our behalf

Some examples of what are not complaints:

- A routine first-time request for a service, e.g. reporting a repair or initial action on anti-social behaviour
- Requests for compensation
- An appeal against a policy and procedure decision e.g. you are dissatisfied with the level of priority you have been given when applying for a transfer to another house
- Issues that are in court or have already been heard by a court or a tribunal, an attempt to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given our final decision following a stage 2 investigation.

Anyone who uses our services can make a complaint. You can complain in person at our office, by phone, in writing, email or by using our online complaints form on our website www.paisleyha.org.uk or via Facebook.

OUR COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE HAS 2 STAGES

Stage 1- Front line resolution

Where we have made a mistake we will apologise to you, explain what has gone wrong and immediately act to resolve the problem.

We will give you our decision at stage one in five working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances. If we can't resolve your complaint at this stage, we will explain why.

If you are still dissatisfied you can ask for your complaint to be investigated further through stage two. When you decide to do this is up to you.

Stage 2 - deals with complaints that have not been resolved at stage 1 and those that are complex and require detailed investigation.

For these complaints we will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days, discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied and what outcome you are looking for and give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and within twenty working days.

If you remain dissatisfied with our decision, after we have investigated it, or in the way we have dealt with it, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to look into it. Information is also available on their website at www.spsso.org.uk

REPORTING A SIGNIFICANT PERFORMANCE FAILURE

Our Complaints Procedure has 2 stages The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) can consider issues raised with them about "significant performance failures"

A significant performance failure is defined by SHR as something that a landlord does or fails to do that puts the interest of its tenants at risk, and which the landlord has not resolved. This is something that is a systematic problem that does, or could, affect all of a landlord's tenants.

If you are affected by a problem like this, you should first report it to us. If you have told us about it but we have not resolved it, you can report it to the SHR.

Significant performance failures are not dealt with through our Complaints Handling Procedure. For SHR contact details please see our useful contacts section.

USEFUL NUMBERS

Advice Works		0300 300 1238
Age Scotland UK	helpline@agescotland.org.uk	0800 124 4222
Care & Repair Renfrewshire	www.carerepairrenfrewshire.org.uk	0141 812 4111
Citizens Advice Bureau	www.citizensadvice.org.uk	0141 889 2121
Credit Union (Renfrewshire)	www.rwcu.co.uk	0141 889 7442
Department of Works & Pensions	www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions	0800 169 0190
Domestic Abuse (Women) 24hr service	www.womensaid.org.uk	0808 200 0247
Domestic Abuse (Men)	support@amis.org.uk	0330 094 9395
Energy Saving Trust Scotland	www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/scotland	0808 808 2282
Fire Safety Check (Fire Brigade)	www.strathclydefire.org	0800 073 1999
First Advocacy	www.advocacyfirst.org.uk	0141 849 1229
Home Contents Insurance (Thistle Insurance)	tenantscontents@thistleinsurance.co.uk	0345 450 7286
Police	www.scotland.police.uk	101 when it is less urgent. 999 for emergencies
RAMH (Recovery Across Mental Health)	www.ramh.org	0141 847 8900 Crisis Helpline 0800 221 8929
Renfrewshire Council	www.renfrewshire.gov.uk	0300 300 0300 see contact guide below
Scottish Gas/British Gas	www.britishgas.co.uk	0800 111 999
Scottish Public Services Ombudsman	www.spso.org.uk	0800 377 7330
Women's Aid	www.scottishwomensaid.org.uk	0141 561 7030

RENFREWESHIRE COUNCIL CONTACT GUIDE

Most council services can be accessed online at www.renfrewshire.gov.uk. If you cannot access the service you need online, you can use the guide below to reach the correct department.

Bin Uplift Assistance/ Request for New Bins	0300 300 0300
Social Care Services Option 1 for children Option 2 for addiction Option for criminal justice Option 4 adults and elderly	0300 300 1199
Community Safety Partnership	0300 300 0300
Council Tax	0300 300 0300
Dog Warden	0300 300 0380
Environmental Services (Missed Bin Uplift)	0300 300 0300
Fly tipping (reporting)	0300 300 0300
Housing Advice & Homelessness	0300 300 0300
Housing Benefit and Scottish Welfare Fund	0300 300 0204
Mediation Services	0300 300 0300
Noise Enforcement Team	07768 988 186
Pest Control	0300 300 0300
Social Work Department Paisley Area Office (General Enquiries also be used to ask about adaptations)	0300 300 1199
Street Lighting	0300 300 0300
Wardens	0300 300 0300