

# talkback

AUTUMN 2019



## Performance 365

Every year we publish a wide range of performance information, along with monthly updates.



- AUGUST  
Monthly Performance
- 2019  
Annual Performance
- 2019  
Performance Summary

While our How We're Doing booklet was very popular (and won an award three years ago), we always got some negative feedback about the cost of producing such a large glossy booklet. This is something we don't take lightly – we are very keen to keep costs down, and the large increase of paper-free tenants has shown that our tenants are ready for another step into the digital future.

Everyone should have now received a leaflet about our Performance 365 microsite. Not only does Performance 365 provide information on our annual performance, the same information that used to go into our How We're Doing booklet, it also has monthly updates so you can track our progress through the year.

Want to know how many homeless families were housed last month? Or if the average time to complete repairs changes depending on the time of year? Or what projects the TIG-Panel are working on? Performance 365 tells you all that and more.

We'd also like to know if there are things you think should be added to it – there's a link from the front page to the contact form, so if you're browsing and think 'well, this is interesting, but what about...!', you can just pop that in an e-mail to us, and we'll consider adding it to the next update.

## Annual General Meeting 2019

The new streamlined format of our AGM went very well.

One of our members, Iain Atkinson, was voted onto our Management Committee. Iain lives in Haddington and has experience in construction and property in both the private and public sectors.

If you're interested in becoming a member of ELHA, and attending our next AGM, or joining our Management Committee, please get in touch. You can fill in a 'join in' form on [elha.com](http://elha.com) or in your **My Home** account, or you can request a copy of the 'Becoming a Member' leaflet and application form by e-mailing us at [enquiries@elha.com](mailto:enquiries@elha.com), or calling on **01620 825032** and selecting '3' from the phone menu. Lifetime membership only costs £1!



ELHA members and staff catching up with events at our AGM

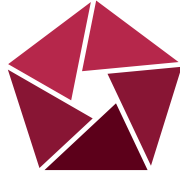
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## Landlord Reports, Assurance Statements and more!

The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) has published its reports on all Scottish Registered Social landlords (RSLs). If you'd like to see how we compare to other Scottish RSLs, the SHR has a handy comparison tool on their website: <https://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/landlord-performance>

Every year we are required to send an Assurance Statement to the SHR, confirming that we comply with our regulatory framework (or setting out any action we need to take to ensure we comply). We update our Assurance Statement whenever something significant happens in relation to our compliance with the standards we need to meet, or at least once a year if there haven't been any major changes. You can read this year's Statement by going to the Downloads section of [elha.com](http://elha.com), or calling us on **01620 825032** and requesting a copy.



# Scottish Housing Regulator

## Changes to Your Tenancy Agreement

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 has brought changes to your Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement (SST). We wrote to you in October 2018, and you can find this letter in the 'My Tenancy' section of 'My Documents' in your My Home account if you would like to read about this in detail, (if your tenancy started after 1 November 2018, you'll have received the information with your Tenancy Agreement.)

Some of the changes in the letter have already come into effect, while others come into effect on 1 November 2019.

### Changes from 1 November:

If you want to make changes to your tenancy, for example:

- Add a joint tenant to your tenancy
- Sublet your home to a member of your household
- Assign your tenancy to a member of your household
- Ensure that a member of your household is eligible to succeed to your tenancy if you pass on

... you **MUST** have informed us that they are a member of your household at least 12 months before. We will no longer accept any other proof of residence to confirm how long they have been living with you.

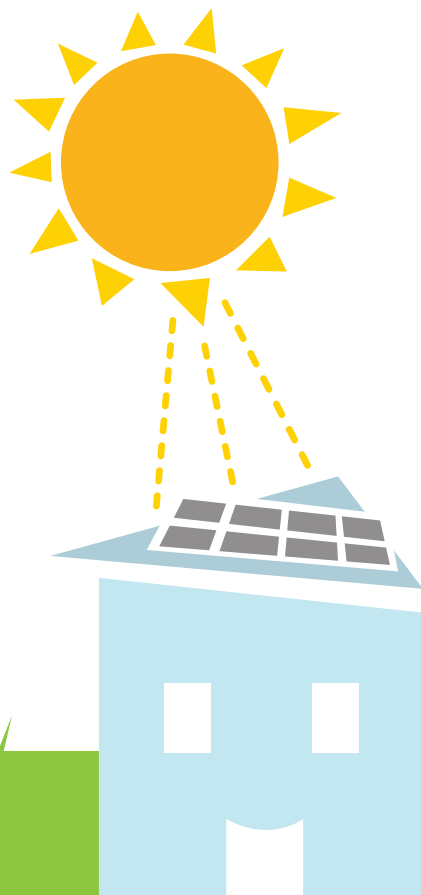
To add or remove a member of your household, you can either update your household details in your **My Home** account, or call us on **01620 825032**.

## Are your PV Panels really saving you money?

The short answer is yes, the long answer takes a bit more time to explain.

If you've not seen a decrease in your electricity bill since you had PV panels installed, or even if you've seen a slight increase, then your PV Panels are definitely saving you money. The cost of electricity has fluctuated a lot over the last few years.

For example, in January 2018, the average wholesale cost for a Megawatt Hour (MWh) of electricity was £50.84, but in January 2019, the average cost was £62.55 – that's an increase of over 20%, and that increase is passed on to the consumer.



Feedback we got from a tenant, after we had provided details on just how much power she was using from her PV panels:

*"After seeing how much electricity was generated last month by my PV panels, I also downloaded a chart of my electricity usage from SSE. I have used 33% less electricity than in the same quarter last year. So it does seem that I am benefiting from a saving by having the PV panels. Thanks to ELHA for installing the PV panels!"*

## A Cornucopia of Consultations!

There's a lot of opportunities to get involved over the next few months.

Representatives from Research Resource will be out and about over the autumn, asking your opinions on a whole range of topics. [See page 4 for more details.](#)

Our Allocations Policy will be up for review, and we want to know what you think about how we award priority for rehousing, and the procedures we follow. Keep your eyes peeled for letters and e-mails on this very important topic.

And our Tenant Participation Strategy review is still open – you can find the strategy on [elha.com](http://elha.com), we'd love to hear your opinions.



## Scottish Housing Day

Housing Officer, Brian Parkin, and Customer Information Officer, Mary Hargreaves took part in the Scottish Housing Day coffee morning at Bleachingfields in Dunbar. The event, organised by East Lothian Council was well attended, and had information stalls on a wide range of housing topics, tenant participation, new social housing developments, housing for older people and more.

## Keep Stairs Clear!

If you live in a flat with a communal stair you've probably had a letter from us at some point about dumped household items and rubbish in the stair and around bin stores.

Leaving belongings or rubbish in the communal stair is a big issue, it can cause a fire risk, especially if the items left are flammable. It can also block the way if emergency services need to get in and out of the stair quickly, and stop our stair cleaners doing their work properly.

You can help to keep communal stairs safe by never leaving anything in the stair. You should also make sure that all rubbish is disposed of properly in the bin stores. We would advise you to plan ahead. If you are planning on buying any new furniture, it's always a good idea to make sure that you have a plan to dispose of the item you are replacing\*.

We have a zero tolerance 'clear stair' policy to tackle this serious problem. We will remove items from communal stairs and store them for a short period before disposing of them. The cost of uplifting, storing and disposing of items will be passed on to the tenant who has left the items in communal areas if we know who they are. If we cannot find out whose items they are, the cost of clearing them will be spread over everyone in the stair.

In order to help us keep your area safe, please tell us if anyone you know has left items in stairs or not disposed of rubbish properly in bin stores. We WILL take action to keep our tenants safe and to stop those who continue to cause these problems from doing so.

**\* If you have any bulky items that you need to dispose of and you aren't able to dispose of them yourself, you can contact East Lothian Council on 01875 824 305. They will arrange with you a date to come and pick up your item.**

**Please be aware however that you must keep the items stored in your home until they are due to be picked up. Also, if you are having furniture delivered, you may be able to arrange for the delivery company to take away your old furniture.**







## Bins, Recycling Boxes - And Their Lids

Please please make sure you close the lid on your bin, and use the waterproof covers on your recycling boxes. If the covers have lost their elasticity, you can get new ones, at no cost, from your local Council office, library or recycling centre.

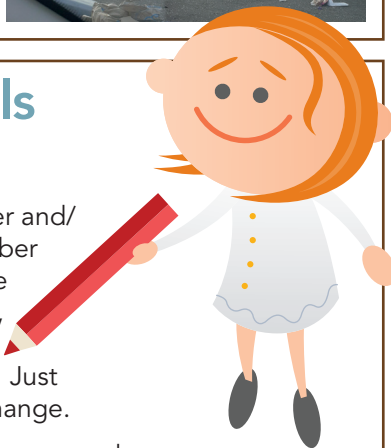
If you don't cover your bins and recycling boxes, the wind can catch your rubbish and blow it about your neighbourhood. If we have to arrange extra cleaning to clear a messy communal area, this can result in increased service charges.



## Keep Your Details Up to Date!

If you change your phone number and/or e-mail address, please remember to update them in your My Home account. It only takes a moment, and means you won't miss any important phone calls or e-mails. Just click the pencil icon to make a change.

(If you change your e-mail address, remember to use your new e-mail the next time you log in)



### Contact Details

Email address: [wonderland@elha.com](mailto:wonderland@elha.com)



Phone numbers:



Home 09876543210

Work

Mobile

Other



## Customer Service Charter



Though we didn't get any feedback from tenants during the recent Customer Care Policy review, we made a few very minor changes to the policy. The changes include more clarity around home visits following a complaint received from a tenant.

Our Customer Service Charter can be downloaded from [elha.com](http://elha.com), and a printed copy is available from Reception.

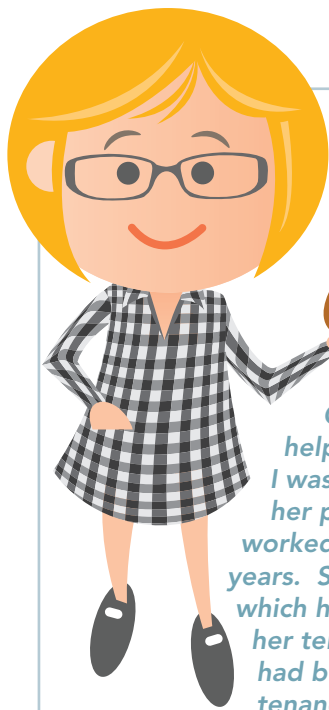
The Charter leaflet includes a handy table giving our target timescales for responding to you.

## Large Scale Tenant Satisfaction Survey

Every three years we bring in an independent research organisation to survey our tenants.

Representatives from Research Resource will be out and about over the autumn, asking your opinions on a wide range of topics. Surveys should take around 20 minutes. If you are visited, please take the time to give your honest answers. All responses will be anonymous, (unless you ask the interviewer to pass any specific information to us on your behalf). The answers you give will form part of our report to the Scottish Housing Regulator for the next three years, and will help us develop action plans for improving our services.





## Anne to the Rescue!

As well as helping tenants apply for benefits and arrange for energy efficiency checks, our Money Adviser, Anne, is an expert at helping tenants access grants and funding.

### Case Study:

*o "A recent case I worked on involved the grocery charity, Grocery Aid. I applied to them for help with rent arrears for a tenant I was working with. She lived with her partner and children and had worked in a supermarket for 10 years. She had very high rent arrears, which had accrued from the start of her tenancy. Repossession action had been taken, which meant her tenancy was at risk.*

*"I made an application on her behalf, and the charity awarded a grant which cleared all the rent arrears, bringing her rent account up to date.*

*"This was a very positive outcome for both the tenant and ELHA."*

If you are struggling with your finances, even if you're not in rent arrears, Anne can help. To meet with Anne, you can either ask your Housing Officer to refer you, or fill out the self-referral form on [elha.com](http://elha.com) or **My Home**.

## Anne to the Rescue (again)

Do you feel your gas/electricity bills are high?  
Have you ever had to consider turning off your heating because you're worried about the cost?

Did you know that our Money Adviser, Anne, can help you with your gas and electricity costs? She can arrange for you to have an energy efficiency specialist visit your home and advise you on the best tariffs for your needs, how to get your heating on the most efficient settings, and more.

To ask for an energy efficiency visit, just pop into your **My Home** account, and click on the Money Advice button. If you don't have a My Home account yet, you can ask your Housing Officer to refer you, or visit [elha.com](http://elha.com) and fill out the self-referral form in the Services Tenancy Support section.

## Update – Improvements in your area?

Planned Maintenance coming up in the next couple of months:

Area	Type of Work	Estimated start time*
Davidson Terrace, Haddington	Installing hard-wired smoke, heat, and carbon monoxide detectors	November 2019
Musselburgh	Bathroom Replacement	November 2019
Wallyford	Roof Replacement	November 2019
Windsor Park, Musselburgh	External Door Replacement	January 2019

\*All work is subject to a pre-contract survey





Please remember that if you are in an upper flat, you must not put down laminate flooring in your home. Walking across a hard floor may not seem very noisy to you, but the sound can echo loudly into any space below. If we visit you, or receive a noise complaint about you, and find that you have installed laminate flooring, we will ask you to remove it and put down carpet.

Also, please remember that if we need to do work in your home, it is your responsibility to make sure the area is clear before work takes place, including taking up any floor coverings. We cannot take responsibility for any damage to floor coverings if you have chosen to leave them in place during a repair.

## TIG in Action!

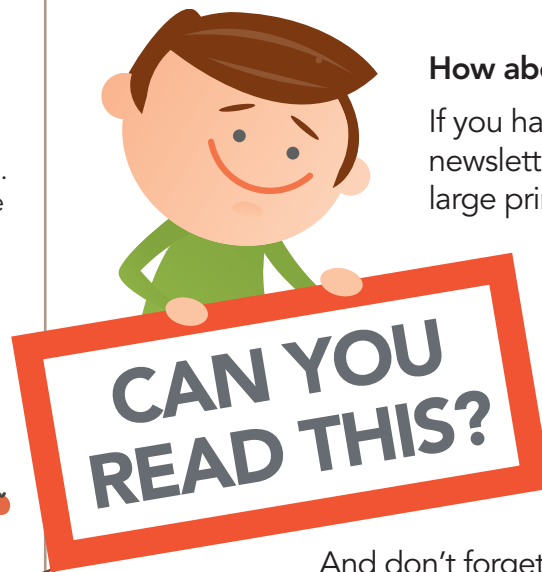
The TIG-Panel have been busy over the summer, receiving far more than their usual amount of paperwork. We had three very strong candidates for the large scale Tenant Satisfaction Survey which we carry out every 3 years, and the TIG-Panel have chosen Research Resource. The Panel were very impressed by their tenant-focused approach, and range of information leaflets.

The Scrutiny Group are looking at out of target repairs, and this is shaping up to be the most challenging scrutiny project our tenants have taken on. Watch this space for more information.



### How about this?

If you have problems reading our newsletter, we can provide it in large print, or on CD.



And don't forget – if you're paper-free you will receive the newsletter as a PDF, and PDFs can be resized so the text will be as large as you'd like.

