



OFFICIAL OPENING CEREMONY TAKES PLACE

We previously highlighted the completion of our most recent newbuild development at Fauldhead towards the end of last year. This development includes a mix of 41 homes with 28 flats and 13 terrace houses.

To allow all the new tenants time to settle in to their new homes – and deal with the hustle and bustle that Christmas and New Year always brings – we held off from holding an official opening ceremony until now.

Staff and Committee welcomed guests, including the tenants living in the new flats and houses, at the development on 5 March. Our Chairperson, John Jamieson was delighted to mark the official opening by cutting a ceremonial ribbon!

We were extremely grateful to some of our tenants allowing access to their new homes. Mr Chorny was pleased to show some guests how he has

made his new house a home to be proud of.



Caption can go here?



Caption can go here?

Proceedings continued at Woodilee Bowling Club with some light refreshments on offer. All tenants of the new development also received a wee goodie bag to mark the occasion.



Goodie bag






Don't Forget Your Bin



Over the last few years, East Dunbartonshire Council has been encouraging us to reduce our waste and recycle as much as possible. This has meant that we all have more bins. Residents should have a grey bin for general waste, green for garden and blue/orange for recycling. Lastly, there are the small food caddies.

To ensure that your bin is emptied, please place it out for uplift no later than 7am on the collection day. The lid should be closed and please make sure that rubbish is placed in the correct bin, such as no general waste in the green bin.

Since March 2025, the collection of the grey bin for general waste has moved to 3 weekly. All of this can mean that on collection day there can be several bins on the pavement. We would ask that all residents remember to take their bin back in on the day of collection. This will help to ensure bins don't go missing and will help keep pavements clear of obstruction.

Bin	Collected in
 Food caddy	1 days Wednesday, 04 February 2026
 Green bin	36 days Wednesday, 11 March 2026
 Brown bin	1 days Wednesday, 04 February 2026
 Blue bin	1 days Wednesday, 04 February 2026
 Grey bin	14 days Tuesday, 17 February 2026

Not sure what bin goes out when, you can check the Council's website, enter your address and your bins schedule will be displayed as shown below:
<https://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/services/a-z-of-services/bins-waste-and-recycling>

Cigarette Butt Littering

It has been noticed that there is an increase in the number of cigarette butts being littered around the area, particularly in the new Fauldhead development.

Littering is a criminal offence that can carry a fine. Dropping a cigarette butt or chewing gum is classed as "littering" and dropping them is illegal. Not disposing of your cigarette butts properly and in the correct manner can affect an individual's enjoyment of their property, especially if the littering is being carried out at the entrance to a person's home.

Litter is any rubbish, no matter how small, thrown in an open or public place – and this includes dropped cigarette butts on to the ground.

Please dispose of your cigarette butt litter properly.



Cost of Living & Investment Priorities Survey



In 2023, we issued two surveys asking our tenants about their experiences with the increased cost of living and asked what their investment priorities were for Hillhead HA and the services we provide.

We issued another survey in October 2025, which blended both of the 2023 surveys together, to seek an update on our tenants' and residents' circumstances and priorities.

A full results document has now been compiled and is available on our website - <https://www.hillheadhousing.org/getting-involved/>

However, the main findings from the survey were that our tenants are still struggling with the cost of living two years on. Specifically, tenants remain worried about affording gas/electricity and food and feel worse off than they were two years ago.

Over the years we have applied for and secured funding in order to be able to issue emergency food and fuel vouchers to our tenants. This funding is becoming less available and so we can also refer tenants to the local foodbank and fuelbank in periods when we are unable to issue vouchers. Our Welfare Rights Service can also carry out a full assessment of tenants' circumstances in order to establish whether there is any way to maximise their income.

In terms of tenant's priorities for investment, survey respondents told us that their top three priorities for continued investment are:

- Continued investment in planned maintenance renewals
- A quality and responsive reactive



repairs service.

- Keeping the environment of Hillhead safe and attractive.

These are priorities which require a decent income stream projected well into the future and long-term planning. This information has been shared with our Management Committee.

The survey asked tenants a number of questions and several themes emerged from the feedback. From this, we have taken a list of actions:

- We will consider running this survey every two years to identify trends and changes and seek tenant views on such an approach.
- We used the results to inform the rent review for 2026-27, and the papers brought to our Management Committee.
- The data gathered in this exercise will be used to provide empirical

evidence in support of any bids for funding opportunities that may become available. And to target the nature of any assistance provided to tenants through such external funding.

- We will use the results to raise awareness on the additional services that we provide to tenants and the wider Hillhead community.
- We reached out to the local Health and Social Care Partnership to share the results with a view to increased partnership working to improve outcomes for the community.
- We will update our website with information on services provided by East Dunbartonshire Council and local trusted traders.

Thank you to anyone who took the time to participate in this survey.

Rent Consultation

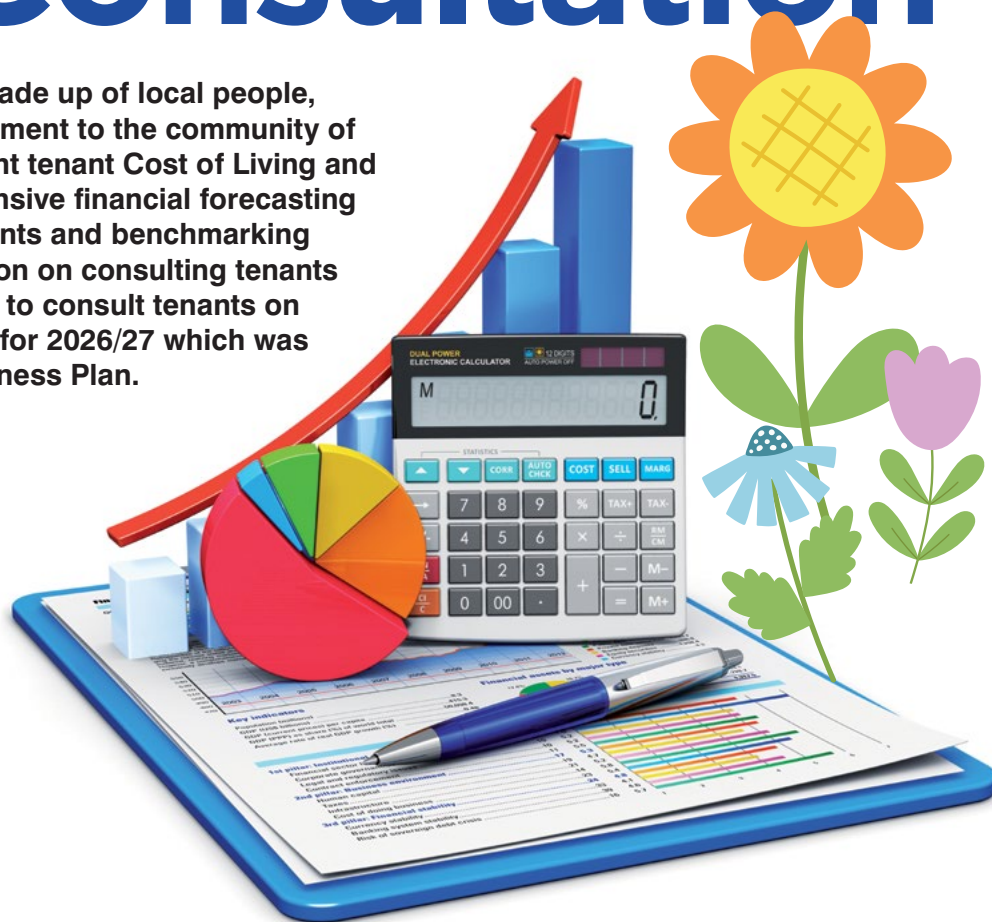
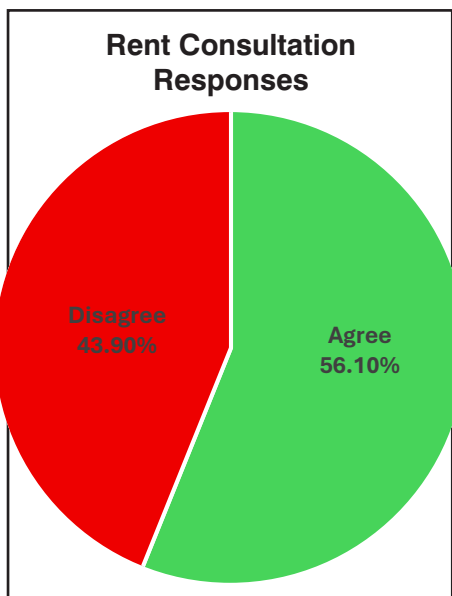
Our Management Committee is made up of local people, tenants and people with a commitment to the community of Hillhead. They reviewed the recent tenant Cost of Living and Investment Priorities survey, extensive financial forecasting scenarios, affordability assessments and benchmarking information as part of their decision on consulting tenants on the rent increase. They agreed to consult tenants on a proposed rent increase of 5.6% for 2026/27 which was October CPI +2% as per our Business Plan.

The consultation was opened from 5th December 2025 – 14th January 2026.

Each tenant received a paper consultation booklet with a response form attached. We also text and emailed tenants where we had the correct details and they had agreed to be contacted in this way. Our team encouraged tenants to complete their response when they visited us in the office or when we were out and about on visits to tenant’s homes. Finally, we carried out a random call round of tenants to complete the survey.

We received a total of 139 responses. The majority of these were received via online survey. We held three in-person consultation drop-in days at our office but only one person attended. If you have any feedback on how we can better engage with our tenants, please contact our office and ask to speak with Paula McCann.

In the consultation survey, we asked tenants to indicate if they agreed or disagreed with a rent increase of 5.6%. The results were:



We also asked respondents if they received any assistance with their rent, either through benefits or third-party sponsorship (such as social work or a support agency). Responses were that 48% said they received some assistance with rent, 46% said they did not receive assistance and 6% preferred not to say.

In addition to these closed questions, we asked respondents why they agreed or disagreed with a rent increase and we asked if there was anything further they wished to comment on. Any individual tenancy issues were followed up with the person directly, if they had left their details. A full review of responses has been carried out and we will publish a 'results' document in the coming weeks to highlight tenant feedback and our action plan in response to these.

When asked why they agreed or disagreed, the survey feedback indicates that many customers are concerned about the rising costs of rent, particularly in light of the increasing cost of living. While some understand the necessity of rent

increases for property maintenance and services, others express difficulty in managing these costs, especially those on fixed incomes. Overall, there is a mix of appreciation for the services provided and frustration over the financial burden of rent increases.

Our Management Committee considered responses in full and understands the financial challenges many tenants are facing due to the rising cost of living. However, following a majority vote in agreement with the rent increase from the consultation, the Committee has approved a rent increase of 5.6% to support the long-term financial sustainability of the organisation and ongoing maintenance and improvement of our properties. The rent increase is effective from 28th March 2026.

We will notify tenants of their new rent charge, and what to do next depending on how your rent is paid.

If you are struggling with your rent, please contact your Housing Officer. We also have our Welfare Rights Team and Tenancy Support Officer who may be able to offer advice and support.

MAKE A DATE IN YOUR DIARY TO UPDATE YOUR RENT PAYMENTS

Everyone will now have received their rent increase letter informing them of how much rent is due to be paid from 28 March 2026.

If your rent is paid by Universal Credit, you'll need to remember to update your housing costs. It is extremely important that you update your journal with the new rent amount as soon as possible.

Please check your journal as the Department of Work & Pensions

(DWP) will set a 'To-Do' for you in your journal about your rent increase. You should receive this around 1st-6th April. It is extremely important that you update your journal with the new rent amount as soon as possible. If you don't change your rent figure, Universal Credit will continue to pay at the old rate and you will need to pay the shortfall.

Even if you have updated your rent figure you will still get a 'To-Do' on your journal. You must also complete

this to ensure that the correct rent figure is paid.

If you pay your rent by debit card, Allpay or standing order remember to pay the new amount from the 28th March 2026. If you pay by direct debit, we will amend your payment amount. Finally, if your rent is paid by Housing Benefit, you don't need to do anything we will let them know the new amount.



Property Services News



Planned Maintenance 2025/26

The second phase of the kitchen replacement programme is ongoing with works being carried out by the Association's contractor CCG (Scotland) Ltd. The programme includes renewing kitchens at various addresses in Fernlea Road, Meiklehill Ave, Highfield Crescent, Newdyke Road, Meiklehill Road, Shells Road, Waterloo Gardens, John Street and more.

To date this year, 114 kitchens have been replaced with a further 49 kitchens to be completed. Tenants were offered the choice of colours of kitchen unit door fronts, worktops and door handles. A detailed tenant satisfaction survey will be completed when all kitchens are installed.

A further kitchen replacement programme is scheduled for the coming financial year - more information will be provided in due course.



Electrical Safety Checks



It is a legal requirement for every property to have an electrical safety check carried out every 5 years. This check is carried out within your property and seeks to identify any faults that may be present. These faults are rectified to ensure the property is safe.

BR Electrical Maintenance Ltd are working with us to ensure we are 100% compliant throughout all our properties. If you have received a missed call, text, or have been carded at your property, please contact the Property Services Team on 0141 729 9666 to arrange an appointment. We operate a flexible appointment system.

Landscape Maintenance Contract

The landscape maintenance contract will commence at the beginning of April 2025. Our contractor DS McG Ltd will cut the grass every 2 weeks at the open spaces and private gardens.



When the contractor is working in private gardens, please ensure that all areas are free from dog fouling, garden furniture, toys etc and that access to the garden is available.



GARDENING

If you have a garden or have a section of a shared garden, please remember that it is your responsibility to keep this area clean and tidy. Weeds, grass and hedges can very quickly become overgrown and therefore more difficult to manage. Overgrown hedges can block pathways and make it difficult for people to walk safely around the neighbourhood.

We understand that you may be busy, but it is important to take some time to maintain your garden.

Here are a few simple tips to help you get started:

- Cut your grass regularly
- Weed all areas of your garden and driveway (if you have one)
- Trim your hedges
- Pick up any litter
- Rake leaves

If you are unable to maintain your garden yourself, you can hire a gardener to help you.

Please note that East Dunbartonshire Council no longer provide the Care of Gardens scheme.

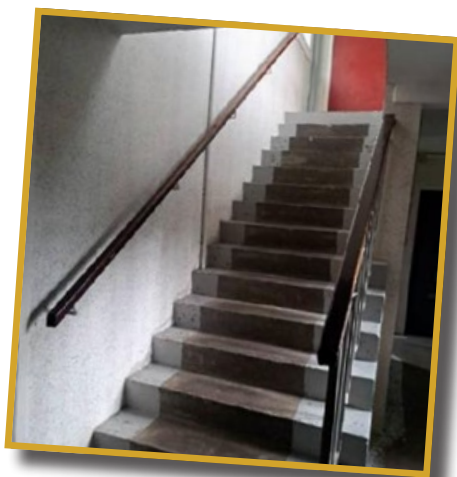


Page 11 Crossword Answers

Across: 1 Tourist, 5 Concoct, 10 Rent-free, 11 Throw, 12 Ball, 13 Aggression, 14 Heavy metal, 16 Shh, 17 Slur, 18 Third party, 20 Psychiatry, 22 Hack, 24 Pebble, 25 Noon tide, 26 Rewards, 27 Ugliest.
Down: 2 Opera, 3 Retriever, 4 Sarcasm, 6 Oatmeal, 7 Curbs, 8 Cowboy hat, 9 Weightlifting, 15 Ellesmere, 16 Spaghetti, 18 Tall end, 19 Daylong, 21 Cobra, 23 Codes.

CLOSES AND CELLARS

We want to ensure that all stairwells are clean, secure and safe. As part of this, we would like to remind residents and owners that all areas of the close should be completely clear and not treated like they are an extension of your property. If you are getting rid of items from your home, please place them out with the close in a safe place to prevent trip and fire hazards to yourself and anyone visiting the properties.



A stairwell obstructed by items stored in the close may prevent safe exit from stairwells in case of an emergency, become the source of a fire (especially items such as prams or other combustible items) and hinder the work of firefighters in your property. Scottish Fire Brigade flyers are placed in closes for your information and safety.

If you have access to a cellar door within your close, please ensure it is

fitted with a lock and always locked. This will reduce the risk of theft and fire. Any items stored within the close are done so at the owner's risk.

Close lighting – the Association ensures that closes/stairwells have adequate lighting. Proper lighting is crucial for quick evacuation during an emergency. Please contact this office if any close lighting repairs are required.

The common stair is your only means of escape in the event of a fire.

Have you ever thought what you would do if fire were to break out in your stair? It may not necessarily be in your flat! A fire started in a common stair could kill you and your family. Even a small bag of rubbish can create enough smoke to fill a whole stair. Items left in a common stair are often deliberately set on fire.

Keep it clear

- Get rubbish, old furniture, etc out of the building
- Make sure storage areas are kept locked
- For advice on uplifting items contact your local Council

If fire does start

- Keep doors closed to prevent smoke filling your house
- Dial 999 and ask for the Fire and Rescue Service, giving as much information as you can

For free home fire safety advice
CALL 0800 0731 999
 or visit our website at
www.firescotland.gov.uk

**SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**
Working together for a safer Scotland

LITTERPICKING AND ESTATE WALKABOUTS

Diane, Tom and Claire litter picked recently around Highfield Road and around the grass area. If anyone is interested in finding out more about joining in community litter picks and estate walkabouts to improve the local area and community, please contact Diane.



TOGETHER WE DID IT!

PLAYPARK UPGRADE AT HIGHFIELD ROAD

We are delighted to have been successful in our funding application with EB Scotland and FCC Communities which now enables us to upgrade the playpark.

The safety surfacing will be renewed along with some of the play equipment making the area more inclusive, fun and welcoming for local families to enjoy.

This work would not have been possible without suggestions and ideas from local residents, children and local primary schools and we would like to thank them for their input. Our appointed contractor Kompan will be on site this month to carry out this work and we look forward to the park being open this Spring!



(NB photo is for illustration only)

BE A WINNER – IT COULD BE YOU!

You might already be aware of the prize draws we run from time to time as a thank you for taking the time to take part in consultations and to give us valuable feedback on our activities.

We also hold more regular prize draws for the following:

TENANT LOYALTY SCHEME

This draw takes place every 2 months and includes all tenants who have maintained a clear rent account for a minimum of 6 months and who have had no anti-social or estate management complaints against them in that period.



In October, Ms McGregor from Redbrae Road won the tenant loyalty scheme and chose a £100 Tesco shopping voucher for her prize. Ms Dickie from Highfield Crescent won the December draw and chose a £100 Sainsbury's voucher.

REPAIRS SATISFACTION SURVEYS

When any repair you report has been completed, a satisfaction survey will be sent to you via text or email. Once you complete this survey you will be entered into a prize draw.

These prize draws take place on a quarterly basis. In January 2026, Ms Chalmers of Meiklehill Road was the lucky prize winner and she chose a £100 Asda shopping voucher for her prize. The next draw will take place at the end of April.



PRIZE DRAW WINNER

Mrs McPherson won a £50 Gift Card of her choice after being selected at random following her response to our Rent Consultation Survey.



★★★★★ PRIZES ★★★★★

If you are lucky to have your name drawn for one of the above you could win:

- An air fryer
- A slow cooker
- Large George Foreman grill
- £100 shopping voucher for the grocery store of your choice

These prizes may change over the course of the year but there will always be a good selection to choose from!

Remember – it is important to keep us updated with your contact details – the repair texts won't get through if we have an old mobile number in our records. **YOU'VE GOT TO BE IN IT TO WIN IT!**

Encouraging Tenant Involvement in Our Newsletter

Our quarterly newsletter is an important way for us to share information, celebrate our community, and keep everyone connected. Recently, we held a meeting to discuss future newsletter articles. We were delighted that our tenants Mrs Taylor, Mr Gray, Mrs Casey and Ms McKillop could attend and share their ideas about what they would like to see included.

The feedback we received was thoughtful, practical, and valuable. Tenants suggested a range of content, from local news and community updates to practical information, resident stories, and highlights of events and activities. These contributions help ensure the newsletter reflects what matters most to the people who live here, not just what we think is important to share.

Tenant involvement makes a real difference. When residents contribute ideas, stories, or updates, the

newsletter becomes more relevant, engaging, and representative of our community. It also helps strengthen connections between neighbours and encourages a sense of shared ownership and pride in where we live.

We would love to build on this momentum and encourage more tenants to get involved in future editions. There are lots of ways you can contribute, including:

- Suggesting topics you'd like us to cover
- Sharing news about local events or groups
- Writing a short piece about a hobby, interest, or community project
- Putting forward questions or issues you'd like more information on

You don't need to be a confident writer to take part – we're happy to help shape ideas into articles, and short contributions are just as welcome as longer ones.

If you're interested in contributing to the next newsletter or have ideas



you'd like to share, please get in touch with us using the contact details provided on the back page. Your voice matters, and together we can make the newsletter something that truly reflects our community.

We'd like to thank everyone who attended the recent meeting and took the time to share their views. We look forward to working with more tenants in the future and continuing to develop the newsletter together.

Chair's Fund

You may recall us setting up this fund some years ago. This allows us to support and develop young local people by providing financial support to take part in educational, vocational and character-forming activities. Examples include, but are not limited to, such things as the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, overseas scout camps, trips with cadet forces, sporting activities and many other forms of personal development activities.

In addition to this, if a young person is struggling to afford the costs associated with an educational, vocational or personal development opportunity (such as having to buy equipment to attend, travel costs, etc) the association may be able to help.

In the past few months we have covered the cost of two children to attend a school trip.

If you would like further information on this, please contact our office.

In Memory – Margaret Morier



Towards the end of last year we were saddened to learn that one of our former tenants, Margaret Morier, had passed away. Margaret was also one of our early Management Committee members and served over 9 years. Our thoughts remain with her family.



Royal Honour for Local Hero

It's not every day that one of our own receives a royal honour, and here at Hillhead Housing Association, we couldn't be prouder.

We are absolutely thrilled to share the news that Hillhead tenant Robert Smith has been formally presented with the British Empire Medal (BEM). Robert has been a part of our housing community for almost 14 years, and seeing his hard work and heart-led leadership recognised at the highest level is a moment of celebration for all of us. Robert has also served on our Management Committee for 12 years.

A Local Hero with a Heart for the Community

Robert received this prestigious award on Thursday, November 20th, following his inclusion in His Majesty the King's Birthday Honours 2025. The medal was presented by Jill Young, MBE, Lord-Lieutenant of East Dunbartonshire, in recognition of Robert's "hands-on" service to the community.

While many know Robert as a friendly face in our neighbourhood, he is also the visionary founder and CEO of GRACE (Group Recovery Aftercare Community Enterprise).

From Hillhead to a Life-Saving Legacy

The story of GRACE began right here in Hillhead. What started as local sessions has grown over the last 13 years into a vital lifeline for people across East Dunbartonshire. Robert's mission was simple but profound: to help those facing mental health challenges, addiction, and isolation by providing a safe space to learn new skills and find friendship.

Under Robert's leadership, GRACE has achieved incredible things:

- **Diverse Support:** Offering everything from yoga and creative arts to digital learning and physical healthy activities.
- **Pandemic Response:** During COVID-19, Robert worked tirelessly to set up WhatsApp support groups and deliver essential parcels to the vulnerable.
- **The Help Yourself Hub:** Providing food and clothing to those hit hardest by the cost-of-living crisis.
- **Breaking Stigma:** Working with NHS Greater Glasgow to fight social inequality and the stigma surrounding recovery.

Why This Matters to Us

Robert's journey is a testament to the power of "lived experience." He turned his own path into a resource that transforms lives every single day. The British Empire Medal is specifically designed to honour those who have made a sustained, real impact in their local area—and anyone who knows Robert knows that is exactly what he has done.



A Heartfelt Congratulations

As your housing provider, we see more than just the bricks and mortar; we see the incredible people who make our community a home. Robert, you are an inspiration to your neighbours and a credit to Hillhead.

Do you have a good news story you would like to share with others? Perhaps you or a member of your household has won a competition or prize for something? Please let us know and you could feature in our next newsletter!



Spring PUZZLE PAGE

CROSSWORD



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26								27					

Across

- 1 Traveller (7)
- 5 Fabricate (7)
- 10 Chopped up tree fern is complimentary, property-wise (4-4)
- 11 Unhorsed (6)
- 12 Indonesian resort island (4)
- 13 Belligerence (10)
- 14 Aggressive, amplified rock music (5,5)
- 16 "Be quiet!" (4)
- 17 Disparaging remark (4)
- 18 Neither you nor me but the other guy (5,5)
- 20 Mental analysis (10)
- 22 Lousy writer (4)
- 24 Small stone (6)
- 25 Midday (8)
- 26 Fruits of one's labour (7)
- 27 Least fair (7)

Down

- 2 Musical drama (5)
- 3 Gun dog (9)
- 4 The lowest form of wit, so it is said (7)
- 6 Breakfast dish (7)
- 7 Scrub around controls (5)
- 8 Texan topper? (6,3)
- 9 Bodybuilders' practice (13)
- 15 Northern Canadian island (9)
- 16 Stringy pasta (9)
- 18 Charlie in a Lancaster, for example (4,3)
- 19 Dawn till dusk (7)
- 21 Hooded reptile (5)
- 23 Cryptographers make and break them (5)

Answers on page 6

Please contact our office if you require the soduko and/or wordsearch answers

SUDOKU

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		5						
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7								5

WORDSEARCH

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P	A	B	I	G	X	X	Z	G	D	O	A	H	N
N	B	A	W	B	U	N	N	Y	N	L	S	O	D
Q	N	C	G	B	P	X	M	K	M	I	K	C	L
D	C	G	R	A	S	S	E	J	O	D	E	O	J
V	H	S	P	R	I	N	G	V	B	A	T	L	H
Y	I	K	Q	E	A	S	T	E	R	Y	P	A	A
J	C	Z	V	Z	X	S	U	N	D	A	Y	T	O
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S	S	B	L	I	L	Y	Z	U	R	W	A	E	Q
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- EASTER
- APRIL
- CHOCOLATE EGG
- CHICKS
- SPRING
- BASKET
- EGG HUNT
- BUNNY
- GRASS
- SUNDAY
- HOLIDAY

Useful Telephone Numbers

Below is a list of contact telephone numbers that we hope you will find useful

Advice and Response EDC
0141 775 1311

Emergency Housing EDC
0141 578 2133 / 0141 578 8000

Kirkintilloch Integrated Care Centre
0141 232 8200 /
0141 304 7400 / 0141 355 2200

EDC – The Hub
0800 901 057

Housing Benefit
0800 901057

Caledonia Housing, Kirkintilloch
0141 578 0260

Police Station, Kirkintilloch
0141 532 4400 or 101

Special Uplift
0300 1234514

Cleansing and Recycling
0300 1234514

**Environmental Protection
(including dog fouling, dog
barking, antisocial noise)**
0300 1234510

Fire Station
0141 776 6263

**National Grid (formerly Transco)
Gas Emergency**
0800 111 999

DWP (Cumbernauld)
01236 786500

Katrina Murray
Katrina.murray.mp@parliament.uk
01236 800123

Local MSP, Rona Mackay
0141 776 1561

Citizens Advice Bureau
0141 775 3223

Crimestoppers Scotland
0800 555111

How to contact us:

Hillhead Housing Association,
2 Meiklehill Road, Hillhead, Kirkintilloch, G66 2LA

Email: admin@hillheadhousing.org
Web: www.hillheadhousing.org

Free Phone Number: 0800 0523 188
Tel: 0141 578 0200 • Fax: 0141 578 4817
Text Number: 07491 163429

Our phone lines are open between 9.00AM
and 12.30PM and from 1.30PM to 5PM.

OUT OF HOURS EMERGENCY REPAIRS CONTACT NUMBERS:

(Gas Heating repairs–James Frew Ltd)
01294 468 113

(all other repairs–Rodgers & Johnston)
0800 999 2520

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS - OFFICE HOURS

Our office will be closed on the following dates:

Easter
Friday 3 April 2026
Monday 6 April 2026
May Day
Monday 4 May 2026

Spring Holiday
Friday 22 May 2026
Monday 25 May 2026
Scottish World Cup
Monday 15 June 2026

**KEEP
US UP
TO DATE!**

Please remember to let us know of any changes in your circumstances, for example change of name, change of number in household etc.



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Please let us know if you require any information within this newsletter in larger print, Braille or in another language.



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