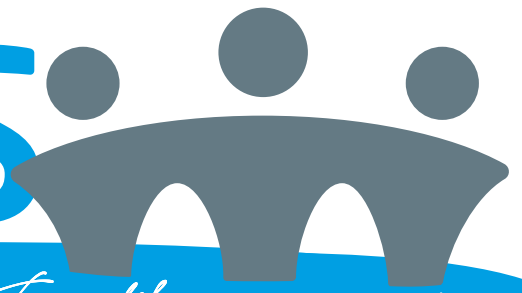


# DHANNEWS



*Together we can...*

Summer issue >> June 2023



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**DUNBRITTON**  
HOUSING ASSOCIATION  
*Together we can...*



# Supporting our Tenants

## Dunbritton Staff Set Up Common Good Fund to Help Tenants

The staff at Dunbritton have demonstrated remarkable community spirit by setting up a Common Good Fund to assist tenants who are struggling to make ends meet. The suggestion for this fund was made by some front-line staff who speak to tenants daily and had noticed the difference in some tenants being able to afford the necessities such as gas and electricity top-ups and food and felt there must be something that they could do to help.

It was decided in October 2022 to set up the Common Good Fund and staff agreed that the first step towards raising some funds could be to donate the usual Secret Santa amount to the fund in lieu of buying Secret Santa gifts that year. Many staff, along with some of our contractors, donated to the fund, and this was a great start to helping those in need. In addition staff reintroduced the Dress Down Friday's for participating staff to make a £1 voluntary donation to wear their casual attire each Friday, which also contributing towards this fund every little helps.

Our officers have identified some tenants who have been struggling. Tenants have benefited from the fund, some receiving cash to top up for their gas or electricity, others by receiving a food voucher.



## Social Housing Fuel support fund

We are pleased to inform that the Association was successful with a grant application and received £25,600 from Social Housing Fuel Support Fund. £20,400 of this grant supported 51 tenants that have electric wet and storage heating, each property received a grant of £400 paid in two instalments, January & February. The remaining £5,200 was paid to 52 tenants who needed assistance with paying their fuel.

To comply with the rules, this grant money needed to be spent by 31/03/23.

## National Lottery cost of living community anchor fund

The Association has been successful in their application bid and were awarded £15,000. £10,000 has been split between the foodbanks in Dumbarton and Helensburgh, the remaining £5,000 was spent on Farmfoods food vouchers which have been distributed to 100 tenants.

## Welcome Aboard!

The Board play an essential role in the running of the Association, overseeing all key strategic decisions. Each year, the Board carries out a review which seeks to identify areas where they can improve their knowledge and skill. Following each review, the Corporate Team are tasked with arranging training or helping to recruit new members.

We are delighted to have recently recruited two new members with the expertise that the Board is looking for: Ian Davie and Stephen Humphreys.

Ian is Head of Development and Asset Strategy for Trust Housing Association and resides locally in Dumbarton. He is a Chartered Surveyor with 15 years of experience in both the commercial and residential property markets, having worked since 2015 in development and regeneration

roles within Glasgow City Council and The Wheatley Group, prior to joining Trust in 2022.

Stephen is a retired solicitor with 38 years of experience in private practice. This included advising a wide range of commercial, corporate, and private clients in dispute resolution. He has worked extensively alongside housing associations and has a wealth of knowledge in housing law. He is a volunteer solicitor with the University of Strathclyde Pro Bono Law Clinic, which provides free legal advice to individuals who are unable to afford legal fees. His specific area of expertise is housing law.

We hope you will join us in welcoming these two new Board members to the Association and they look forward to meeting the association's Members at the AGM in September.



Ian



Stephen

# Dunbritton Continues to Support Local Communities



**We continue to play a key role in supporting local community groups and events.**

Last year, the Community Support Panel provided grants of almost £5,000 to deserving causes ranging from childrens' football teams to food banks.

This year the Panel will again be open to applications, and we are delighted to advise we have already made our first award to the local Scouts; this will help with the purchase of uniforms for children that are struggling financially.

To apply for the fund, you require to be based in our area of operation and be providing a service to the local community. To find out more contact our Corporate Services Team on **01389 761 486** or e-mail [admin@dunbritton.org.uk](mailto:admin@dunbritton.org.uk).

## Dolly Parton's Imagination Library



**We are delighted to announce that we have teamed up with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library to bring access to books to children of Dunbritton tenants. All children under the age of five can be registered to receive a monthly book for free!**

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a book gifting programme set up to inspire a lifelong love of reading in children. Each month, youngsters receive a high-quality, age-appropriate book in the post, free of charge. This collaboration aims to enhance educational opportunities and foster a love for reading among young children in our community.

Our Chair, Sephton MacQuire said "We have always looked to be more than a housing provider at Dunbritton, taking a key interest in the welfare and development of our tenants and their families. This venture is yet another example of the key role we are playing in helping to assist our tenants in challenging times. Dolly Parton's Imagination Library are an internationally respected charity that has already improved the lives of thousands of children and we look forward to welcoming them into our communities of Argyll and Bute and West Dunbartonshire."

If you wish to enrol your child and receive a monthly free book, or if you would like to find out more, then please contact the Corporate Services team on **01389 761 486**, selecting option 5.





# Annual Garden Competition and Good Neighbour Award 2023

YOUR CHANCE TO WIN £50!

## Garden Competition

It's that time of year again where you can get out into the fresh air and prepare to showcase your beautiful gardens and have an added bonus of winning £50.00.

We love the effort our tenants put into keeping their gardens and neighbourhoods looking their best.

We will be judging gardens throughout our developments and will be inviting and awarding prizes to the winners at our AGM in September. There will be two winners, one for West Dunbartonshire and one from Argyll & Bute, we will feature photos of your lovely gardens in our newsletter.

If you would like to nominate yourself or a neighbour for our competition, please send your details to [admin@dunbritton.org.uk](mailto:admin@dunbritton.org.uk), the only qualification for entry is that you are a tenant of Dunbritton HA.



## Good Neighbour

Is your neighbour one in a million? Do they make a difference to your life or the lives of people in your community? This is a chance for you to say 'thank you!' to a neighbour who goes out of their way to help you and others, someone who shows kindness and consideration. This might be through helping a neighbour with shopping, cutting their grass, or generally just looking out for someone less fortunate than themselves.

The winner of this award receives a £50 gift card. We would also like the winner to be featured in an article in our next newsletter with information on why they won the award.

If you would like to nominate a neighbour for our Good Neighbour Award, you can do this by contacting us by e-mail at [admin@dunbritton.org.uk](mailto:admin@dunbritton.org.uk) or by giving us a call on 01389 761486 and selecting option 2.



The winners of the Garden and Good Neighbour competitions will be presented at our Annual General Meeting in September 2023.





# New Housing Assistant – Martin Mcleod

Martin joins us with a wealth of experience from the retail and hospitality sector. With over 10 years' experience in a customer service environment, Martin most recently worked with ASDA where he managed the Replenishment Team.



Having previously lived and studied in Australia, Martin is now back home looking to settle into a career in Housing with Dunbritton.

Martin is office based as one of our Housing Services Assistants, and will be able to help customers with all Housing Services related enquiries – Welcome on board Martin!

## Welcome to the latest finance family member

We are happy to announce that Samantha Shek from the Finance Department has given birth to her new son, Jude, and has commenced her maternity leave in April.

On behalf of the entire DHA family, we extend our warmest congratulations to Sam.

## Building a safer future together

Our Asset Manager, Paul Sweeney, and Asset Officer, Jim Cannon, recently had the privilege of attending AICO's Away Day on "Building a Safer Future Together." The event focused on crucial topics of mould and fire safety, aiming to enhance our knowledge and strengthen our commitment to creating a secure living environment for all residents.

AICO, a renowned leader in home life safety, organised this event to address two critical aspects of resident well-being: mould prevention and fire safety. Paul and Jim, with their years of experience and expertise, actively participated in workshops and discussions alongside industry experts and professionals. The event provided an invaluable platform for sharing knowledge, exploring innovative solutions, and fostering collaboration among housing professionals.

The focus on mould prevention highlighted the significance of identifying and rectifying underlying issues that can lead to mould growth. By understanding the root causes and implementing effective preventive measures, we can ensure that our homes remain healthy and comfortable for all residents. Paul and Jim gained valuable insights into best practices and cutting-edge technologies, equipping them with the knowledge to address and mitigate mould-related challenges effectively.

The session on fire safety emphasized the critical role we all play in safeguarding our community against potential fire hazards. With advancements in fire safety systems and procedures, it is essential to remain informed and proactive in our approach.



## What an achievement Kevin!



We are delighted to advise that Kevin Downie of our Finance Team has completed his studies in accountancy, having secured a prestigious first-class degree.



# Rubbish & Recycling

There continues to be issues within the developments with regards to rubbish and recycling, including disposing of household items and loose bin bags being left outside the bins.

It is important to keep the bin areas clean and tidy and create a pleasant living environment in which people want to live. In order to achieve this we require your assistance. We encourage you to utilise the recycling bins in order to maximise capacity in the general waste bins.

These are pictures of one of our problem bin areas taken on inspection to highlight the severity of the issue. We are disappointed to see our estates are not being kept in a clean and tidy condition or treated with any regard by a minority of residents. The health and safety of our tenants is vital, and these items will attract bugs and vermin in the estate. We will be closely monitoring this with our CCTV camera, and anyone identified to be leaving bulk household items, trolleys or loose rubbish will be recharged for any costs of removal.



Here are some handy hints to help maximise bin capacity and keep the area tidy at the same time.

## YES! ACCEPTABLE IN BLUE BIN



Aluminum cans, tin foil & pie tins



Cereal boxes, paper towel rolls, etc.



Newspapers & inserts



Tin or steel cans



Cardboard (flatten all boxes)



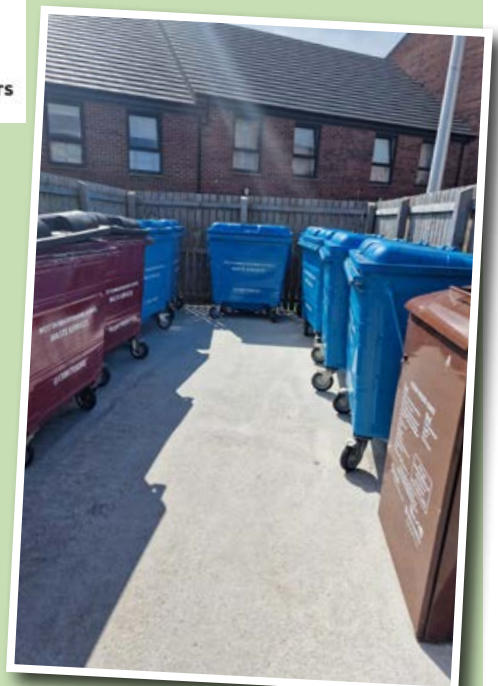
Plastic bottles & containers  
Plastics 1 & 2

- If you have your own individual bin, please put a number on this to clearly identify which property this belongs to. This will help reduce issues of people using the wrong bins.
- Ensure that all cardboard boxes are broken down and placed into the recycling bins. Putting in full boxes reduces the capacity of recycling that the bin can take.
- Please ensure that you put the correct rubbish in the correct bins, contaminated recycling or food waste bins will not be uplifted. If you are unsure of what should go into your recycling bins, please check your local council website for clarification.
- If you are in a flat and have shared use of the euro bins, please do not overfill the bins, as overfilled bins will not be collected. If other bins have capacity then please use these. If all bins are full, then please take any excess rubbish to your nearest waste disposal centre. For West Dunbartonshire area your nearest site is Dalmoak Civic Household Recycling Centre, Renton Road, Dumbarton, G82 4HQ. For Argyll & Bute area, the nearest is Blackhill Recycling Centre, Luss Road, Helensburgh.
- Any bulk items should not be disposed of in the bins and should be taken to your nearest Recycling

Centre as above or contact your local council to arrange for a special uplift. If you have arranged for a special uplift, please contact your Housing Officer to advise them.

- If any spillages occur whilst taking your bins out, please clean these up immediately.

As can be seen from the picture below, the majority of our tenants do dispose of their rubbish and recycling responsibly and take pride in keeping the area clean and tidy.



# Updating your Household Details



**It is important that we have your most up to date details. This allows us to efficiently keep in contact with you and to reduce postage costs.**

If you have changed contact number, or have a new e-mail address, please let us know by either speaking with your Housing Officer or calling the office on 01389 761486 option 2.

If your household composition changes, to ensure you do not lose any of your rights to assignation or succession, please ensure that you contact us to make us aware. If you wish

somebody to move into your property, you are required to contact us to seek permission.

It is particularly important that we have your e-mail address, as future survey's will be conducted in this format. Sending e-mails allows us to save on paper and postage, which is both better for the environment and helps reduce the Association's costs.

We appreciate that your personal information is important, and we will ensure that all details collected are managed in line with our policies and the General Data Protection Regulation.



## New Housing Software

**In the coming year, we will be looking to upgrade our housing software. This is the computer program that we use for providing our key services such as maintaining tenants records and arranging repairs.**

We will be moving to a new system called Homemaster. We hope that this new system will allow us to increase the quality of the service that we provide, including looking at more efficient and environmentally friendly forms of contact, such as texting and e-mailing.

To help us do this, if you have changed details recently, such as mobile number or e-mail, please give us a call and let us know on 01389 761 486. This will help ensure that you don't miss out on any important updates from the Association.

## Cyber Security

**Our services rely on having up-to-date and accurate information on our customers and contractors, but this also puts a duty on us to ensure this information is stored in a safe and secure manner.**

With the recent increase in cyber-attacks and fraud, we have worked with the Scottish Business Resilience Centre to review our cyber security and are delighted to advise that we have received Cyber Essential Accreditation. We have also carried out testing and staff training and have developed new policies and procedures to continue to ensure that your data is kept safe.

If you would like to know more about how your data is managed, please contact our Corporate Services Team on 01389 761 486, selecting option 4.





# Electrical Upgrades Churchill Estate

Over the last 2 years Dunbritton's appointed contractor Ledgerwood - Electricians & Electrical Contractors - has completed 115 electrical upgrades to properties in Churchill. We have seven properties where access is difficult. The Asset Management Team will work with Housing Services to arrange access for the contractor to carry out the upgrade to the remaining houses.

The properties had full upgrades, including consumer units, and linked smoke detectors which meet current legislation. On completion of work, the Association is provided with an Electrical Installation Condition Report. This report confirms that the electrics within the property complies with all current legislation and is effective for a five-year period.

## Grounds Maintenance

Now we're in the summer season, grass cutting and strimming, is carried out on a fortnightly basis. If the weather allows, we continue with the grass cutting schedule in the later months.

Paving and walkways are weeded and weed killer is applied. Litter is swept and picked.

Grounds Maintenance contractors will turn over the soil and edge the shrub beds.



## Exterior Painting Works - East Montrose Street

Dunbritton Housing Association has engaged Bell Decorating Group to carry out the painting to the exterior of the building. We are expecting, weather permitting, our contractor to be on site for four to six weeks. The works will consist of washing down render, cleaning of gutters and downpipes, and painting the building with weather protective paint.

Gutters, downpipes, soffits, fascias, and timber doors will also be painted on the Pump house within the grounds.

Letters have been sent to our tenants outlining the programme and scope of the works. There will be some inconvenience with parking arrangements, but this should be minimal, and should get back to normal as soon as works are completed.



## Cook Road

The aesthetics of our areas are important to us. We want to create and maintain beautiful communities in which our tenants are happy to live.

Recently, the Association upgraded the communal area at Cook Road with new stones and edging. In addition to the new stones and edging, extra plants were introduced to the communal area, adding a splash of colour and vitality.

The decision to upgrade the communal area at Cook Road was driven by Dunbritton Housing Association's dedication to creating attractive and well-maintained spaces that foster a sense of community and enhance the overall living experience. Recognising the importance of communal areas in promoting social interaction and well-being, the association embarked on this project to breathe new life into the outdoor space.





# Tenant Participation

## Are you interested in getting involved?

Tenant participation is how you can help influence decisions made about the services you receive and the way the Association manages your home and neighbourhood. It provides an opportunity to develop partnership working between tenants and landlords to deliver excellent services.

We understand the importance of working with our tenants to improve our services, and for this reason, we have developed our Tenant Scrutiny Group and plan to introduce our "Armchair Critic Group" in the Summer. These groups will allow you to provide feedback at varying levels. You don't need any specific experience to join in, every tenant is welcome. We have added a short blurb below explaining the remit of each group.



### Tenant Scrutiny Group (TSG)

**Our Tenant Scrutiny Group (TSG) is made up of tenants who meet once every quarter at our office to discuss the services provided by the Association and give their thoughts on how the Association could make improvements.**

Our TSG was reformed after Covid and have already reviewed services such as: Association publications: tenants report, annual report, newsletters etc., the DHA reception area, and better signage externally around the office to let people know where we are.

The future topics the group are looking at are: New tenant sign-up pack, Kitchens to be installed in future upgrade programmes, our website to name but a few....

We plan to publish the outcomes from this group in our future newsletters to keep tenants informed of any improvements made, this will also be reported directly to our Board.

If you are interested in participating in the TSG, please contact either Robert or Lyndsey on **01389 761486** to find out more!

### Armchair Critics Group (ACG)

We understand that not everyone can dedicate their time to joining our Tenants Scrutiny Group meetings but would still like to participate. For this reason, we are introducing our Armchair Critics Group to comment on our new and reviewed policies.

Firstly, you do not need to leave the comfort of your own home to take part in this. We will provide you with a policy which is either new or being reviewed periodically for your views. We can send the surveys by email or post - whatever you prefer!

If you are interested in participating in the ACG, please contact either Robert or Lyndsey on **01389 761486** to find out more!



# Near Me at Dunbritton

**We are still using Near Me at Dunbritton, Near Me is a free video appointment service originally created by the NHS. Near Me allows us to communicate with our tenants remotely using devices such as: laptops, mobile phones, tablets, iPads and computers with a webcam.**

Due to our location, it takes up a lot of time to travel to and from appointments, the Near Me service alleviates this and allows for longer appointments to resolve any issues. Near Me could be used for any appointment from assistance completing your application form to an allocation visit, we have even used the Near Me service to complete a mutual exchange in London!

If you wish to arrange a Near Me appointment, please contact us on **01389 761486** or email [admin.dunbritton.org.uk](mailto:admin.dunbritton.org.uk) and a staff member will arrange an appointment.



# NEW ENERGY ADVICE SERVICE

Contact Emma Kelman on 07957 626497

Our tenants can now access a free Energy Advice Service. Community Links Scotland have secured funding to employ an Energy Advisor to target vulnerable households across West Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute who are struggling with their fuel bills.



The Energy Advice Service will support households to prevent fuel poverty, tackle fuel debt and reduce household energy consumption through better energy usage. The Service will provide advice, advocacy and support, focusing on small practical changes to reduce energy usage in the long-term.

As well as dealing with emergency fuel issues, the service will focus on addressing fuel poverty issues, promote resilience against fuel poverty, and developing your skills and confidence to take control of your energy use and bills.

The service also offers basic benefit checks to ensure you are receiving all of the benefits that you are entitled to.

The new Energy Advisor, Emma Kelman, will be working closely with the partner Housing Associations across West Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute.

The service will undertake home energy advice visits as well as drop-in energy surgeries in local venues across West Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute. To access this service contact Emma on 07957626497 or by email [energy@comlinks.org.uk](mailto:energy@comlinks.org.uk) to book an appointment alternatively contact your housing officer and they can make a referral on your behalf.

# Clydeview Meet and Greet

In mid-April, Lyndsey McGillion, Housing Officer, hosted a meet and greet with the residents of Clydeview, East Montrose Street. The afternoon was well attended with 17 residents coming along to talk about the community of Clydeview. Here they were able to share ideas and suggestions on what changes can make Clydeview an even better place to stay!

With the success of the meet and greet Lyndsey will be holding an open afternoon at Clydeview every second month.

Residents should look out for updates on the noticeboard and our website for information on future meetings.



Lyndsey will also be in contact with our other communities across Helensburgh to arrange other meet-and-greet sessions.

## HARM REDUCTION MOBILE UNIT

- BBV TESTING/TREATMENT
- NALOXONE PROVISION
- NEEDLE EXCHANGE
- WOUND CARE
- SEXUAL HEALTH
- SANITARY PRODUCTS
- SAFER INJECTING ADVICE
- OVERDOSE PREVENTION
- ADDICTION REFERRALS



### WEDNESDAY NIGHTS

DRUMRY TRAIN STATION AREA	6:00-6:45PM
DALMUIR TRAIN STATION AREA	7:00-8:15PM

### THURSDAY NIGHTS

BONHILL (LADYTON SHOPS) CARPARK	5:30-6:15PM
CORDALE HOUSING CARPARK - RENTON	6:30-7:15PM
DUMBARTON JOINT HOSPITAL	7:45-8:45PM

### SATURDAYS

DALMUIR TRAIN STATION AREA	11:00-12:30PM
BONHILL (LADYTON SHOPS CAR PARK)	1:00-1:45PM

### SCAN ME



West Dunbartonshire Health & Social Care Partnership



# Support at your fingertips

**These are challenging financial times for everyone and we at Dunbritton are here to help!**

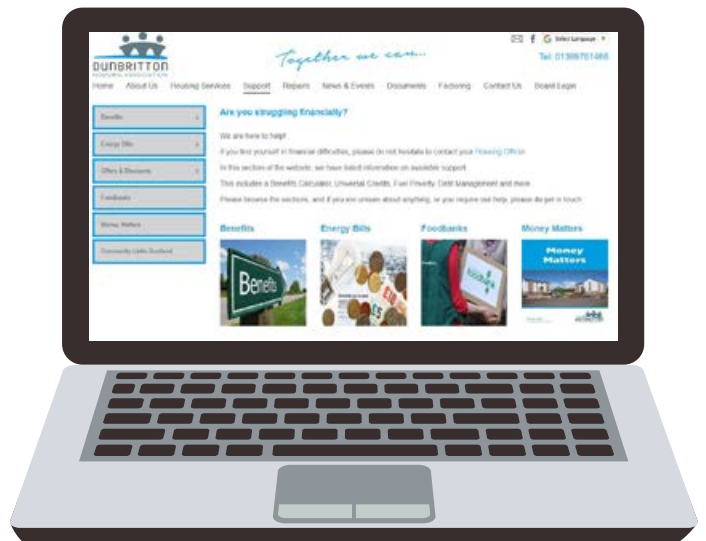
We have introduced a new support section to our website. This should help provide all our tenants with key links to benefits and financial assistance.

If you are unsure if you are entitled to any benefits, follow the links to the benefits calculator – you may be missing out on assistance that you are entitled to!

The support section also provides information on assistance and grants to help with energy bills, Social Security and Universal Credit, information on the local food banks and more.

Did you for example know, that if you are in receipt of Universal Credit, you are entitled to a discounted broadband service?

If you need further advice or assistance with getting online, please speak to your Housing Officer or give us a call on 01389 761 486.



## Dumbarton Harbour Residents Group

### Harbour Estate Walkabout – April 2023

As part of our ongoing commitment to Tenant Participation we have introduced a Harbour Residents Group at our new development within Dumbarton Harbour. So far, this group have carried out evening meetings and two estate walkabouts. The walkabouts have helped to identify local issues, such as bin misuse, dog fouling and landscaping.

If you are interested in becoming part of the Harbour Residents Group, please feel free to contact any member of the Housing Services Team on 01389 761 486 (option2).

We have found these meetings to be beneficial as it has given our tenants a platform to raise any issues/concerns they may have

and feel included in the decision-making process on how to deal with issues raised, either at the meetings or on the walkabout.

A further Walkabout will be carried out at the end of July 2023.





# Playparks

**Dunbritton Housing Association is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of 10 Playparks; 4 within Argyll and Bute, and 6 in West Dunbartonshire.**

Some of the playparks are now starting to show their age and are in generally poor condition. Several parks have been closed due to the condition of the play equipment or the ground covering.

We will now be conducting a full inspection of the parks to assess the cost of repairs or replacement of equipment and surfaces. The cost of play equipment can be very expensive.

Five of the playparks are fully owned by Dunbritton Housing Association and 5 are

in areas of mixed tenure and are owned by the Association and other owners within the area. In areas where there are other owners, depending on the costs, we may have to consult with them before instructing remedial works.

The Association has been in contact with the relevant Local Authorities to discuss planning issues. We have also engaged Community Links, who will conduct a feasibility study of the parks, and, when possible, apply for grant funding to improve and make better use of the existing playparks.

Hopefully over the coming months we can see the playparks in full use again.



Having difficulty reading this? Our newsletter can be made available on talking book or as a text only large print version. Please contact us if you would like to be added to our list for either of these, for this and all future newsletters.



Dunbritton Housing Association Ltd, 1 Hatters Lane, Dumbarton, G82 1AW  
Serving the Communities of Helensburgh & Lomond, Dumbarton and Vale of Leven since 1992  
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**Opening Hours:** Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday: 9am – 5pm  
Wednesday: 9am – 12.30pm (closed in the afternoon for staff training)

