



Investing in our homes

I am delighted to introduce the Spring Tenants' News and update you on the record levels we're investing across North Lanarkshire.



Previously agreed rent rises helped fund a 20% increase to our new five-year mainstream capital programme which will deliver £354 million of investment across housing stock by 2024/25.

It is expected that more than £35m will be spent on energy efficiency works in 2023/24, such as new windows, doors and roofs whilst we continue to invest and improve existing stock through our ongoing repairs and maintenance programme.

Every year, we spend £45 million on the repair and ongoing maintenance of our council homes.

The recent Scottish Housing Regulator's Landlord Report evidences the high standard of our repairs service with 98.5% of reactive repairs completed right first time, highly exceeding the Scottish average of 88.3%.

We are committed to ensuring our tenants live in homes that are warm, safe and in good condition. In 2021/22, 94.8% of tenants who had repairs or maintenance

carried out were satisfied with the service, again exceeding the Scottish average of 88%.

In addition, we have been awarded grants of over £2.5 million from the Net Zero Carbon Fund to invest in external wall insulation across our stock.

We are also making excellent progress towards our target to deliver 5,000 new homes by 2035 with 970 homes now completed and 421 under construction. These new homes have brought a whole host of community benefits - creating jobs and boosting the local economy helping communities to thrive.

Our plans for the demolition of Birkshaw Tower, Wishaw and High Coats, Coatbridge, have been temporarily postponed for up to three years as we welcomed families escaping conflict in Ukraine to North Lanarkshire. The towers have been repurposed to provide safe, secure residences and have offered a sense of place and community for up to two hundred families, mainly women and children.

The first phase of our Tower Strategy to demolish over 1,700 flats is going well with 1,600 of 1,750 properties now vacant. Demolition is complete at Northburn and Holehills in Airdrie as well as Burnside Court in Coatbridge. Works have also started to demolish 11 low-rise blocks at Shawhead, Coatbridge, and three high-rise tower blocks at Coursington, Motherwell.

We have successfully completed the Fire Safety Programme within towers which included the installation of emergency



lighting, fire-doors to properties, interlinked smoke detectors and improved fire-stopping measures.

All these works and more are part of our plan to make North Lanarkshire a place where people want to Live, Learn, Invest, Work and Visit.

Brian Lafferty, Chief Officer (Housing Property Services).



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LIVE HERE



Foreword

Welcome to the latest edition of the tenants' newsletter. Here you will find out how we are supporting our local communities get the help and support they need as we all face the cost of living crisis.

There's an update too on our successful new build programme as well as details on our performance across all areas of housing.

As costs continue to rise and people face mounting financial pressure we have a range of measures in place to help. From our newly launched single point of contact helpline to our fuel hardship payment which helps to ease the burden of

mounting fuel costs. Our Tackling Poverty Team is ready to help with all aspects of money worries and can check you are receiving all the benefits and support you are entitled to.

Our local housing offices too should be a first point of contact if you are worried about paying your rent. Our trained staff will work with you and offer a range of support to help you remain in your home and prevent your situation worsening. We know the impact the cost of living crisis is having on everyone and I'd urge anyone who is worried or maybe a bit behind with their rent, not to put off getting in touch.

Together with our networks and partnerships we have access to a wide range of referral routes and services to help you. Contact your local housing office

for information or support. A full list of contacts is on the back page.

I really enjoyed my recent visit to Dundivan Gardens Older Peoples' Housing and meeting many of the residents there. The complex has just undergone £1.8m worth of improvements including a new look common room, a full range of fire safety measures such as the installation of fire-doors, sprinklers and smoke detectors and external improvements.

It was lovely to hear about the positive impact this was having on residents and their families and see all the improvements for myself.

It was wonderful also to be back at our successful annual Tenants' Conference for the first time in three years, with attendees telling us it was great being part of an in-person event which lived up to its theme of 'Connecting Communities'. Over 100 people were there from across North Lanarkshire talking about the cost of living crisis, our supply of new council homes and our plans for the future.

I'd encourage everyone to get more involved and help us to work together to make real and lasting improvements to local communities.

Councillor Heather Brannan-McVey, Convener, Housing Committee

Building on new council homes progress

We're continuing to roll out our new build programme and have set an ambitious target of delivering 5,000 affordable rented homes by 2035.

To date, 970 new build houses have been completed with work underway on a further 10 sites (figures January 2023).

Over the course of the year, we've started work on sites at Berwick Street, Coatbridge; Castlehill Road, Glenacre Drive, Airdrie, Wishaw and Ravenscliff Road, Ravenscraig, and completed new housing developments at Roberts Street, Wishaw, Burnhall Place, Waterloo and Annieshill View, Plains.

Our new homes are designed and built to the highest standards and are highly energy efficient as we're embracing renewable technologies and building greener. They're designed for varying needs, meaning they adapt over time to suit tenants' needs and are secure by design.

To ensure an adequate supply of sites for our new homes, potential locations continue to be evaluated for their suitability to be added to the programme. Development proposals for inclusion, subject to the conclusion of detailed ground investigations, full title checks and relevant statutory consents, include sites in Coatbridge, Caldercruix, Bellshill, Airdrie, Motherwell and Wishaw.

Another way we increase our new housing supply is by purchasing properties 'off the shelf' and we are progressing potential purchases of over 200 new homes in various locations, including Cumbernauld, Moodiesburn, Gartcosh and Coatbridge.

Our new council house building programme also delivers a range of community benefits. Last year our programme secured 10 new entrants to our new build projects through targeted recruitment and

employment; 15 apprentices; 10 work experience opportunities; 25 careers events and delivered site visits and school mentoring programmes to support young people into the construction industry.

Improving the lives of our residents and transforming local communities are at the heart of our housing plans.



Connecting Communities a big success

It was a successful return for our annual Tenants' Conference in November 2022, with tenants telling us it was great being part of an in-person event again which lived up to its theme of 'Connecting Communities'.

Over 100 attendees from across North Lanarkshire gathered to discuss key topics, including the cost of living crisis, our supply of new council homes and home energy. There were also conversation cafes where everyone had a chance to give their views and for the first time awards were handed out to local volunteers and groups as part of the Making a Difference awards.

Jim Leonard, Chair of North Lanarkshire Federation, added: "What a fabulous event to take part in, particularly the



Making a Difference Awards. People and projects like that really show how much good work goes on in local communities and they deserve to be celebrated."

There are lots of ways you can get involved in housing services, just visit [tenant participation activities at: northlanarkshire.gov.uk/housing/get-involved](http://northlanarkshire.gov.uk/housing/get-involved) to find out about all the opportunities available. Or contact the Tenant Participation Team on 01698 302565.



Keeping tenants safe in their homes

We are continuing electrical safety testing within our homes, and tenants whose properties are due their tests, will now receive appointment letters.

These vital checks allow us to examine the condition of wiring against safety

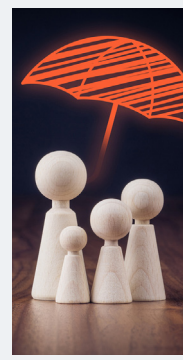
standards, as the wiring can deteriorate or become damaged over time, with the result of electric shock, fire and burns. We have a legal duty to carry out inspections and tenants must provide access.

Raymond Boyd, Project Delivery Manager, said: "These checks are extremely important for keeping our tenants, residents and communities safe. This type of testing takes place every five years and is carried out with the minimal disruption to tenants.

As a last resort the council does have legal powers to enforce access if all attempts of co-operation are exhausted."



HOME CONTENTS KEEP YOU COVERED



Home contents insurance helps to protect the possessions which are valuable to you. No matter how careful you are, there's always a risk that your belongings could be broken, damaged or stolen.

Home contents insurance can help provide you with peace of mind and as a council tenant you are entitled to join our home contents insurance scheme.

By paying as little as 66p per week along with your rent you can have peace of mind that your belongings are protected.

For more information visit your nearest First Stop Shop or contact your local housing office.

Alternatively, you can visit: northlanarkshire.gov.uk/home-contents



Help is available

As the cost of living crisis continues to bite, everyone is feeling the effects from rising energy costs to keeping your home warm. For the first time tenants and residents may be facing extreme financial pressures which they have never experienced before.

We are here to help with information, advice and practical guidance.

Your local housing office can offer information and support and if you're struggling we're asking you to contact us as soon as possible to discuss issues with your rent, your home or energy advice. Early intervention is crucial to ensure support is in place to stop tenants and their families from being at risk of losing their tenancy and becoming homeless.

Cost of Living event

Tenants and residents gathered in January to attend North Lanarkshire Federations' first open meeting of the year focussing on the cost of living crisis. The cost of living crisis and high energy bills are affecting everyone and the event offered help and advice on a range of topics; preventing condensation, keeping your home warm and how to stay on top of rising costs.



The session included presentations from Home Energy Scotland and our Tackling Poverty Team. Feedback from the event was excellent and more events are planned soon. One participant in particular was very pleased she had attended as following advice she received from Home Energy Scotland she quickly applied and qualified for the warm Home Discount.

Details of all upcoming events are on:
www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/tenant-participation-events

Rent Assistance Fund

Help for households that have fallen behind with their rent payments during the cost of living crisis is being expanded.

The £852,00 rent assistance fund will help council tenants on low-incomes and universal credit who don't currently qualify for any other UK or Scottish Government financial support.

A recent report highlighted that over 10,000 tenants, 70% of whom are on universal credit, are experiencing rent arrears. The rent assistance fund will seek to ensure tenancy levels are maintained despite the challenges faced by cost of living rises.

Heather Brannan-McVey, Convener of Housing explained: "Our priority is to support people through the cost of living crisis and reduce the impact of increased living costs wherever we can.

"Many on low incomes and universal credit may be facing financial hardship for the first time, but their income threshold means they don't get any cost of living assistance

other than the £400 energy bill discount."

Stephen Llewellyn, Chief Officer (Housing Management) added: "If you are concerned about keeping up with your rent payments, you may be eligible for financial assistance and



you should contact us as soon as possible to find out how we can help."

Contact your local housing office or call 01698 524811.



Cost of Living helpline



A dedicated helpline devoted to supporting North Lanarkshire residents impacted by the cost of living crisis is now up and running and has helped thousands of callers already. The helpline, run by our Tackling Poverty

Team, is already being expanded to include debt advisors, income maximisers, clerical support and a welfare rights advisor to the team.

This will increase the helpline capacity as well as help provide more community support such as outreach surgeries and offer wider support to community planning partners.

Calling the helpline can lead to vital referrals to other agencies, help with DWP claims and completing forms as well as practical advice on debt and income maximisation.

People can call now on: 01698 332551 or email: TPTeam@northlan.gov.uk

Why not drop in for a warm welcome?

North Lanarkshire residents are benefitting from more than 120 community drop-in points open across the area for residents to meet others in a warm and welcoming place during the cost of living crisis.

We've invested £450,000 with community groups, churches and other organisations that have been providing warm, welcoming places for people to use to meet friends or just get out of the house for a while. This is in addition to council venues such as libraries and community centres who are also offering a warm welcome. Thousands of people have been benefitting from the centres since they opened in November last year, with the majority offering free coffee and tea, while some offer food.



Users say "The centre has made such a difference to my life, it's a real highlight of my week and I look forward to going and meeting my friends. The volunteers are amazing and make us feel so welcome - I can't thank them enough."

A map is available online of all the drop-in points, their opening hours and facilities at: northlanarkshire.gov.uk/benefits-and-money/cost-living/community-drop-points



Find your Credit Union

Credit Unions can help you save regularly, borrow responsibly, and keep on top of your finances.

They offer affordable, low interest loans and mortgages and may be able to help if you have been refused credit elsewhere.

If you would like to know more about the benefits of joining one, find your local credit union here: findyourcreditunion.co.uk

Help reduce condensation in your home



Most households experience condensation from time to time as everyday activities like cooking, bathing and drying clothes all generate excess moisture. Keeping

your home as warm as you can helps avoid cold spots and little changes in household behaviour can help produce less moisture;

- dry laundry outside or in a well-ventilated room
- cover pans while cooking
- use extractor fans
- open windows when cooking or bathing
- open trickle vents
- adjust heating timer to suit household

Make sure you clear your windows of condensation regularly, so it does not cause long term damage or develop into mould.

There's more information and advice on how to manage condensation on our website: northlanarkshire.gov.uk/avoiding-condensation

Making quick, easy and healthy meals is easy peasy



Visit our easy peasy cook page for tasty recipe cards you can use to make delicious, healthy and economical meals. Easy Peasy Cook features a selection of cook and no-cook recipes for all meals, all under £5 (serving 4).

You'll find lots of tips on batch cooking, the most economical way to cook, slow cooker recipes and there's even a section on school meal favourites.

northlanarkshire.gov.uk/benefits-and-money/cost-living/easy-peasy-cook



Renovations bring sense of community to Dundyvan Gardens

Residents at Dundyvan Gardens are enjoying their new modern and homely environment thanks to £1.8m of renovations work which has transformed their living space.



Work at Dundyvan Gardens Older Peoples Housing, Coatbridge, included a full range of fire safety measures such as the installation of fire-doors, sprinklers and smoke detectors and environmental improvements including a new, welcoming common room, external landscaping and an area for tenants to charge their mobility scooters.

Residents were involved in choosing the furnishings and fabrics and have said how much they love the brighter common room and living areas thanks to the large windows which allow the sun to stream in natural daylight.

Councillor Heather Brannan-McVey, Housing Convener, visited Dundyvan Gardens to



take a look at the improvements and hear from the staff and residents. She said: “From the innovative safety features, new common room and hairdressing salon to the improvement of the outdoor space, it makes the environment welcoming, homely and one which I know residents are already enjoying.

“The results of this significant renovation project are fantastic and are already having a positive impact on the lives of our tenants.”



Housing policy aims to tackle domestic abuse

Our new Housing Domestic Abuse Policy, developed with the Violence Against Women (VAW) Partnership, and shaped by people with lived experience of domestic abuse, puts victims and survivors at the heart of our service.

Our policy enhances how we respond to and support the needs of victims and survivors and anyone approaching our team for help in relation to domestic abuse will be fully supported.

We've developed housing specific domestic abuse procedures and made sure staff know guidance and resources are easily available to help them deliver confidential and sensitive support.

We want to make sure we deliver a sensitive, priority and trauma-informed service to anyone experiencing or at risk of domestic abuse.



If you or anyone you know is experiencing domestic abuse then please contact

AURA
01698 757667
aura@sacro.org.uk

MONKLANDS WOMEN'S AID
01236 432061
info@monklandswomensaid.org.uk

MOTHERWELL AND DISTRICT WOMEN'S AID
01698 321000
info@mdwa.org.uk

NORTH LANARKSHIRE WOMEN'S AID
01236 730992
nlwaid@aol.com

When generations come together

Pupils from Thornlie Primary School, Wishaw have buddied up with tenants at Drummond Drive Retirement Complex in a new intergenerational project to help improve digital skills.

With support from the Scottish Government's Connecting Scotland programme, the council received 200 iPads and MiFi boxes which have been distributed to tenants in retirement complexes across the area.

In Wishaw, the pupils and tenants discussed periods of the older people's lives, such as childhood memories, school life or favourite songs, before the pupils brought them to life on the iPads using their digital skills.

Tenant, Tom Muir, said: "I really enjoyed getting to know the young people, they really took the fear out of it and make the whole process more relaxed, it was very enlightening. They were so patient and tolerant; we had such a good laugh as well."

P6 pupil Amelia said: "I just love it! Anne is so nice when we work together, and I can help her use her new iPad."



Tell us what YOU think

If you have recently had a housing repair carried out then please go online, complete our repairs satisfaction survey and be entered into our free prize draw for £50 of shopping vouchers.



It's quick and easy to do and everyone who completes a survey will be entered into our free monthly draw. Mrs Molloy, Coatbridge, gave us her feedback and was delighted to win last month's prize draw.

We really want to hear what you think, your comments help us monitor and review performance and improve services.

So go online today at repairs satisfaction survey [surveymonkey.com/r/RepairsSatSurvey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RepairsSatSurvey) and be in with a chance of winning.

Award for energy efficiency excellence

We're celebrating after being awarded a National Energy Efficiency award in the category for Council/Local Authority of the Year.



The award recognises our success in improving the energy efficiency of our homes and the environment, together with our drive to tackle fuel poverty and enhance tenants' lives. We are investing £40m, over three years, to deliver significant results across our communities.

Over 900 properties have benefited this year alone from measures including roofing and rendering, loft insulation, cavity wall insulation and external wall insulation, all of which can help save money on energy bills.

We're also embracing new, renewable technologies such as solar panels which are being installed on to council properties to help improve home energy efficiency.

Take a look at energy saving advice to help make your home more energy efficient: homeenergyscotland.org

New council homes at former school site

The transformation of the former Plains Primary School site is now complete and home to our latest council housing development.

The development, known as Park Place, Plains, comprises 16 new properties. It's the 42nd development completed as part of our ambitious plans to deliver 5,000 new, affordable homes by 2035.

Every one of our housing developments supports the local economy and community, provides jobs, improves the lives of our tenants and residents and helps us realise our vision of making North Lanarkshire the place to live.



Report highlights positive housing performance

Our housing service is performing above the Scottish average in key areas, including providing value for money rents and a high level of repairs service when compared alongside other Scottish Landlords according to the Scottish Housing Regulator's (SHR) Landlord Report. The comparison report rates the performance of social landlords against a key set of standards which include; homes and rents, tenant satisfaction, quality and maintenance of homes, neighbourhoods and value for money:

- Our average weekly rent of £74.58 is well below the Scottish average of £85.36 for all landlords - £10 a week lower.

- Our time taken to complete emergency repairs was 3.18 hours on average compared to a Scottish average of 4.2 hours, demonstrating a year-on-year improvement.
- Our average completion rate for non emergency repairs was 6.19 days compared to the Scottish average of 8.9 days.
- Satisfaction with opportunities to participate in our decision-making process increased to 96.8% and is now over 10% higher than the Scottish average of 86.6%
- Keeping tenants informed had a 92.6% satisfaction rate against a Scottish average of 91.1%

- For cases of anti-social behaviour reported in the last year, 99.1% were resolved compared to the Scottish average of 94.7%.

Further information on our performance can be found on our website: northlanarkshire.gov.uk/housing-annual-performance-report-20212022



How to contact us

To discuss any aspect of your tenancy or if you need general advice about housing you should contact your local housing office.

AIRDRIE

1 Chapel Lane, Airdrie ML6 6GX
t: 01236 758035
e: airdrie-cumbernauldhousing@northlan.gov.uk

BELLSHILL

26 Motherwell Road, Bellshill ML4 1RE
t: 01698 332340
e: motherwellandbellshillhousing@northlan.gov.uk

COATBRIDGE

Buchanan Centre, 126 Main Street, Coatbridge ML5 3BJ
t: 01236 812530
e: CKHousing@northlan.gov.uk

CUMBERNAULD

Fleming House, Ground Floor, 2 Tryst Road, Cumbernauld G67 1JW
t: 01236 632726
e: airdrie-cumbernauldhousing@northlan.gov.uk

KILSYTH

Parkfoot Street, Kilsyth G65 9AA
t: 01236 828120
e: CKHousing@northlan.gov.uk

MOODIESBURN

Blackwoods Crescent, Moodiesburn G69 0EZ
t: 01236 812530/828120
e: CKHousing@northlan.gov.uk

MOTHERWELL

Dalziel Building, 7 Scott Street, Motherwell ML1 1SX
t: 01698 274135
e: motherwellandbellshillhousing@northlan.gov.uk

SHOTTS

162-164 Station Road, Shotts ML7 4AW
t: 01501 824747
e: shottshousing@northlan.gov.uk

VIEWPARK

135 Burnhead Street, Viewpark G71 5DD
t: 01698 403700
e: motherwellandbellshillhousing@northlan.gov.uk

WISHAW

Houldsworth Centre, Kenilworth Avenue, Wishaw ML2 7LP
t: 01698 302920
e: wishawhousing@northlan.gov.uk

If you need this information in large print, on audio tape, in Braille or in another language, please contact:

t: 01698 274139
e: housingservices@northlan.gov.uk



MANDARIN

如果你需要用其他语言或者其他格式表示这些信息，请与我们联系以便讨论你的要求。

POLISH

Jeżeli potrzebujesz tą informację w innym języku lub formacie, proszę, skontaktuj się z nami, żeby przedyskutować Twoją potrzebę.

URDU

اگر آپ کو دوسری زبان میں یہ معلومات درکار ہو تو براے مہربانی ہم سے مندرجہ ذیل پتہ پر رابطہ کریں

ARABIC

إذا كنت بحاجة الى هذه المعلومات في لغة أخرى أو على شكل آخر، يرجى الاتصال بنا لمناقشة الاحتياجات الخاصة بك