

Housing News

The newsletter of Orkney Islands Council Housing Services.

Issue 82, Winter 2024.



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If you would prefer to receive a digital copy of this newsletter going forward, please email claire.pritchard@orkney.gov.uk

Featured Articles

Housing Staff - course completion!

Several staff at Housing Services have successfully completed their Level 4 (Chartered Institute of Housing) Certificate in Housing. Chris, Moira, Inga and Ashley completed their course earlier this year.

Chris (Housing Officer – Homelessness & Advice) explained that the course has helped him to 'gain a technical knowledge and understanding across a broad range of housing practice'. Some of the subjects studied as part of this course included - Professional Practice Skills for Housing, Housing Law and Housing Policy, etc.

Moira added that the course provided her with an 'in-depth knowledge', that will help 'to deliver effective housing services'. Moira was also nominated by her lecturers for the 'House Prize', which she was later awarded. The award consisted of a £50 gift voucher, plus the offer of one week's work experience with Hillcrest Housing, Dundee who had sponsored the prize.

Congratulations to Housing Staff members for completing this challenging course. Their knowledge will help to improve the service that we provide to all our customers.

Recipe - winter gingerbread biscuits (serves 20)

Before trying this recipe, please check that the ingredients are suitable for your dietary requirements.

Ingredients

- 2 teaspoons of ground ginger;
- 1 teaspoon of ground cinnamon;
- 350g /12oz of plain flour;
- 1 teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda;
- 125g / 4 and a half oz of butter;
- 175g/6 oz light brown sugar;
- 4 tablespoons of golden syrup;
- 1 egg.

To decorate

- White icing (made using icing sugar and water);
- Cake decorations.

Method

1. Using a sieve, sift the flour into a large baking bowl. Then add the bicarbonate of soda, ginger and cinnamon. Slowly add the butter and blend until the mix looks like breadcrumbs. You can either blend the mixture by hand or using a food processor. Once your mixture resembles breadcrumbs, stir in the sugar.
2. Lightly beat the egg and golden syrup together and add this to the main mixture. Stir in slowly until the mixture comes together to form a dough. (If you are using a food processor, you can pulse it lightly until it combines).
3. Lightly dust a clean surface with some flour. Tip the gingerbread dough on to this surface and knead until the dough becomes smooth. Wrap the dough in clingfilm and place it in the fridge to chill for 20 minutes.
4. Preheat the oven to 180 degrees Celsius / 350F / Gas mark 4 and line two baking trays with greaseproof paper. Take the dough out of the fridge and roll it out to a 0.5cm/quarter inch thickness on a clean, lightly floured surface. Cut out the gingerbread shapes using cutters and place them on to the baking tray.
5. Bake for around 12-15 minutes, until lightly golden brown. Once baked, remove the gingerbread biscuits from the oven and leave them on the tray to cool for ten minutes. After this time, place the biscuits on a wire rack to finish cooling. Once the biscuits are fully cooled, you can decorate with icing and your choice of decorations.



Ways to reduce your energy bill

There are many simple and inexpensive ways to reduce your energy bill. This article covers some practical tips that can help you to reduce the energy you use, thereby reducing your energy bills.

Get to know your energy bill

Spend some time reading your energy bill to make sure that you are paying the right amount. It is helpful to familiarise yourself with some of the terminology to better understand your bill. –

Tariff – An energy tariff sets out how your provider charges you for your energy usage. There are generally two main types of tariff – fixed and variable. A fixed tariff guarantees a fixed price for your energy for a set period (such as 12 months). If you are on a variable tariff, this means that your energy provider can increase or decrease the price of a unit rate or standing charge.

Unit rate – The Unit rate sets out how much your energy provider charges you per unit of electricity you use. This is usually shown as Kilowatts per hour (Kwh).

Standing charge - this is a fixed daily charge that covers the cost of maintaining the energy grid and carrying out meter readings, etc.

Actual bill – This is a precise bill based on the energy you have used. An energy provider will be able to calculate your actual bill based on Smart Meter readings, or the meter readings that you provide them with.

Estimated bill – an estimated bill is where there is no meter reading provided. An estimated bill is calculated based on a number of factors, including; your past energy usage, the time of year and the number of people living in your home.

Energy saving tips

Below are some simple tips that can help you to reduce your energy usage:

- Turn off the lights when you aren't using them.
- Avoid over filling the kettle and only boil what you need each time.
- Switch your appliances off instead of leaving them on stand-by.
- Run your washing machine with a full load and set your washing machine to eco/30 degrees – this will reduce the amount of energy needed to heat the water.

For more information, you can visit the following website - www.homeenergyscotland.org/easy-ways-save-energy

Tips to keep your home warm

There are a variety of ways that can help you to heat your home more efficiently, these include:

- Making use of draft excluders on the bottom of your doors and around your windows. Heavy curtains can reduce thermal energy loss. Close your curtains (and blinds if you have them) to keep the heat in your room during the evening and night as the temperature drops.
- Try turning your thermostat down by 1 degree. This will help you to save money on your energy bills. Please note however, your home should be heated to between 18 – 21 degrees Celsius (unless you are in an 'enhanced needs' household).



- Maintain the heating in all the rooms of your home. This will limit the possibility of condensation formation, reduce the possibility of mould growth and remove potential cold spots that can drain heat from other areas of your home.
- Reduce the condensation in your home – it is more difficult to heat a home when the air inside is damp. You can reduce the moisture in your home via effective ventilation. Opening your windows for ten minutes every morning will help remove damp and stale air. You can also keep your trickle vents open - these are usually located at the tops of your windows. Trickle vents work by allowing a steady flow of fresh air in to replace the damp air within the home. Trickle vents can be closed temporarily during high winds to reduce drafts. If you have a mechanical ventilation system, keep these running throughout the winter. These are not expensive and cost an average of £1.35 per week to run.
- Ensure that there is a gap between your heaters and furniture, and make sure that you don't have curtains or any other items covering your heaters.
- Blankets and soft furnishings help to make our homes feel warmer. Add blankets, cushions, rugs and curtains to help enhance the feeling of warmth in your home.

You can visit the following website for more information –
www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/energy-at-home/

Information and updates (Housing Services)

Annual Tenant Report (2023/24)

Housing Services (Orkney Islands Council) are pleased to announce that the 'Annual Report' for tenants and service users (2023/24) is now available. This report provides more information on:

- Our performance;
- the work we are doing to improve Housing Services;
- how we compare to a number of similar Scottish Councils and;
- areas of the service that show strong performance, along with areas that require improvement.

The Annual Report compares our performance over to the last 3 years and highlights a number of key trends. Overall, Orkney Islands Council has shown a strong performance in a number of areas – our properties are in good condition, and we have delivered well against the energy efficiency standards. Moreover, our current rent collection is high and our response to homelessness is good. You can find some key details contained within the 2023/24 Report below. –

Housing Stock

As of 31 March 2024, the Council owned 1011 homes. In 2009 – 2010, the Council began a program of building additional social rented housing. This program was completed in 2024 and has increased Orkney Islands Council's (OIC) housing stock by 37%.

Quality of Housing

The Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) is a standard that ensures that properties are in a good standard of repair, meet energy efficiency standards, are safe, healthy and secure, etc. In 2023/24, 83% of our housing stock met the SHQS, compared to 52.82% in 2022/23.

Repairs, Maintenance and Improvement

The average number of hours taken to complete emergency repairs in 2023/24 was 8.93 hours. This was a decrease from an average of 9.12 hours during the previous year. In 2023/24, there was an average of 0.34 emergency repairs per property, and 1.43 non-emergency repairs per property.

Value for Money

In 2023/24, 65% of tenants of OIC felt that their rent represented good value for money. This was compared to the Scottish Average of 81.58%.

Plans for improvement

Our future plans for improvement include:

- Re-roofing works.
- Improving planned renewal and upgrade works so we can provide better information to tenants and predict/plan works more efficiently.
- Improving performance relating to the delivery of repairs and rent arrears collection.
- Improving tenant satisfaction generally (etc).

You can find the Housing Services' Annual Report (2023/24), by visiting our website at --

<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/.../housing-services-annual...>

Alternatively, if you would prefer a paper copy of the report, please contact our Tenant Participation Officer on telephone 01856 873 535 (Mon – Fri 9am to 5pm excluding public holidays).

EICR and Interlinked Smoke Alarm Access

In October 2024, G&A Barnie were awarded the new contract for the Electrical Installation Condition Report, (EICR) and the testing and renewal of interlinked smoke alarms. The contract will be delivered over a five-year testing and replacement programme – work relating to this has recently begun.

The law requires each property to have a valid EICR report. As part of this report, a satisfactory test must be carried out every 5 years. Where a test returns an unsatisfactory result, the electrician (G&A Barnie) will carry out remedial works to resolve the situation.

The interlinked smoke alarm installation is also required by law, and they must be replaced every ten years. Likewise, the installation of these alarms will be carried out by G&A Barnie. Throughout the new contract, some properties will also have additional fittings installed into vestibules and porches to enhance protection within the property.



G&A Barnie will be contacting each tenant by telephone/email over the course of the next 5 years to arrange an access date and time to carry out the above works. They will require access to the property for approximately 2-3 hours to complete an EICR and 1 hour to replace/provide interlinked smoke alarm installations.

As Orkney Islands Council have a statutory obligation to ensure that these works are carried out, we would greatly appreciate your cooperation in allowing access for G&A Barnie to complete the works once they have contacted you and arranged a date and time.

Rental payments

Paying your rent is important and it is classed as a 'priority' bill. Rental payments to Orkney Islands Council are due weekly, although you can choose to pay your rent either fortnightly, or monthly.

Rent for Council Housing is payable for 48 weeks per year. Rent for Homelessness accommodation is payable for 52 weeks per year and rent for garages is payable monthly.

How do I pay my rent?

You can pay your rent in one of the following ways:

- Payment via cheque or postal order (please do **not** send cash in the post).
 - Credit or debit card – you can telephone Customer Services on 01856 873 535. Alternatively, you can visit in person and use your credit or debit card to pay.
-

- Cash – You can visit the collection offices in Kirkwall and Stromness and pay your rent there using cash.
- Internet banking – You can pay your rent via internet banking to the following account:

Bank: Royal Bank of Scotland, 1 Victoria Street, Kirkwall, KW15 1DP.

Name of Account: OIC Rent Collection.

Sort Code: 83-24-07.

Account Number: 00233800.

Please quote your Rent Payment Reference number.

- Standing order – you can contact your bank to set up a standing order to pay your rent.
- Online – you can visit the Orkney Islands Council website to pay your rent online - www.orkney.gov.uk/online/pay-it/online-payment/

‘Rent-free’ weeks

Rent for Council Housing is payable for 48 weeks per year. Orkney Islands (OIC) classes the last two weeks of the financial year, and the two weeks at Christmas as ‘rent-free weeks’ for OIC tenants. Generally, OIC tenants are not required to pay rent during these rent-free weeks. However - if you are in **rent arrears** - **you will need to pay your rent** as normal during the ‘rent-free’ weeks.

I am struggling to pay my rent - what should I do?

There are many reasons that can affect someone’s ability to pay their rent. This includes; long term sickness absence, financial strains from the cost-of-living, and job loss, etc. If you are struggling to pay your rent, please contact Housing Services as soon as possible to discuss your situation. You can contact Housing Services by telephoning 01856 873 535 (Between Monday – Friday, 9 – 5 PM, excluding public holidays). Alternatively, you can contact Finance Services on 01856 873 535 extension 2115. We will discuss your situation and endeavour to make suitable arrangements to help you to pay off any rent arrears. We will also refer you other sources that can provide you with advice and support.

Can I get help with paying my rent?

If you have a low household income, you may be eligible for Housing Benefit, or the ‘housing costs’ element of Universal Credit. This will cover the cost of either all, or part of your rent. What you get depends on your circumstances, including:

- Your household income.
- Your age, and the age of people that live in your household.
- Any savings you have.

If you wish to make a claim for Housing Benefit or Universal Credit - contact Orkney Citizens’ Advice Bureau for advice on making an application. The Citizens’ Advice Bureau can also advise you on whether you may be eligible for Housing Benefit, Universal Credit and other benefits.

Orkney Citizens’ Advice telephone number: 01856 875 266.

You can contact the Universal Credit Helpline by telephoning 0800 328 5644.

Is there any other help available?

Discretionary Housing Payments

Discretionary Housing Payments are available to those in receipt of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit (housing element) that need extra help with their housing costs. Discretionary Housing Payments are also available for those who are affected by the Universal Credit and Housing Benefit under-occupancy reductions (sometimes referred to as the 'bedroom tax'). Discretionary Housing Payments are made at the discretion of Orkney Islands Council.

You can find an application form for Discretionary Housing Payments by visiting the following website - www.orkney.gov.uk/Service-Directory/D/Discretionary-Housing-Payments_2.htm - the form is contained in the 'related downloads' section. (Please note, you will need an internet connection and a suitable device to access our website). You can also make a paper application for Discretionary Housing Payments – contact Housing Services to request an application form.

Alternatively, you can contact Orkney Islands Council on 01856 873 535 and request to speak to the Benefits Section.

Reduced Council tax

If you are on a low income or eligible for certain benefits, you may qualify for a reduction in the amount of Council tax you pay. Eligibility for this reduction will depend on a range of factors, including your household income, savings and the number of children/adults living in your household, etc. You can make an application for a Council Tax reduction to Orkney Islands Council. The discount will be applied to your bill if you are eligible.

Help with debt & money advice

If you are struggling with rent arrears, the Orkney Citizens Advice Bureau can provide you with advice. For advice on maximising your income, reducing your bills and easing the cost of living you can visit the Citizens' Advice 'Money map' webpage. You can find the website by visiting www.moneymap.scot. If you don't have access to the internet, or if you would prefer to speak to an adviser, you can contact Orkney Citizens Advice Bureau on – Telephone: 01856 875266 between 10am and 2pm, Monday to Friday to arrange an appointment.

Tenant Participation

Rent increase consultation

The council is required by law to consult tenants on any proposed increase to Council House rent. We are also required to take these views into account when considering whether to make an increase.

A tenant consultation relating to the proposed increase to Council Housing rent levels was conducted in December 2024. All Tenants were provided with a letter, survey and a freepost envelope to return their completed survey. Tenants were asked for their feedback on the proposed rent increases for the next 3 years:

- 4% in 2025/26
- 4% in 2026/27
- 2.5% in 2027/28.

We would like to thank all those who took part in the survey. Tenant feedback will be given due consideration during the decision-making process relating to any rent increase. We will publish the results of the consultation, the decision we made and how your feedback influenced our decision in the next edition of our newsletter.



The Armchair Panel

We are now recruiting members for our Armchair Panel! You can find out more by contacting our Tenant Participation Officer on the details contained at the end of this article.

What is the Armchair Panel?

The Armchair Panel gives tenants the option to participate in consultation and engagement opportunities from the **comfort of their own home**. Members can choose a method of engagement that suits them, such as telephone consultations, paper methods, or online. There are many factors that can limit a person's ability to engage. These include; family commitments, working hours, or being resident in a rural area, etc. The Armchair Panel is designed with this in mind and aims to provide all tenants with the opportunity to participate.

How will I benefit from becoming a member?

There are many benefits to becoming a member of the Armchair Panel, including:

- Increased awareness of the role of Housing Services;
- transferrable skills;
- the chance to provide valuable feedback that can improve our service and influence our decisions;
- something to add to your CV.



What level of commitment does it require?

Being a member of the Armchair Panel is **low level commitment**. You are in control of which consultations you take part in, and you can take part in a way that suits you. If you'd prefer to engage online - or via paper and telephone means - we can tailor our engagement methods to suit you.

Please note, you must be over 18 and a tenant of Orkney Islands Council to register as a member.

Alternative methods of Tenant Participation

There are many other ways that you can engage with your landlord (OIC). This includes:

- Becoming a member of the Residents' Panel.
- Staying up to date with news and information contained in the Housing Newsletter.
- Following the Housing Services Facebook Page – www.facebook.com/OIChousingservices (Please note, you will need a Facebook account, internet access and a suitable device to access our Facebook Page).
- Completing one of our surveys.

If you would like further information on becoming a member of the Armchair Panel, or on any of the above, please contact our Tenant Participation Officer, Claire Pritchard on –

Email: claire.pritchard@orkney.gov.uk

Telephone: 01856 873 535 (Monday – Friday, 9am to 5pm, excluding public holidays).

Benefits, support & further information

Check your benefits entitlement

You may have recently received a letter notifying you that you are entitled to certain benefits. If you'd like support with your application, or if you'd like to check your eligibility, you can contact any of the following:

Orkney Citizens Advice Bureau on –

Telephone: 01856 875266 between 10am and 2pm, Monday to Friday to arrange an appointment.

The Council's Benefits team by contacting:

Telephone: 01856873535 extension 2116 (Monday – Friday 9am to 5pm, excluding public holidays).

Email: benefits@orkney.gov.uk

Changes to Carer's Allowance

The DWP's Carer's Allowance is being replaced by Social Security Scotland's Carer's Support Payment for people in Scotland. Individuals who live in Scotland and are in receipt of the DWP's Carer's Allowance will automatically be switched to the new payment.

How much will I receive?

The amount you are paid will not be affected. If you are in receipt of Carer's allowance, the amount you will receive under Carer's Support Payment will not change. You will also continue to receive the Carer's Allowance Supplement twice a year.

What should I do now?

If you are currently in receipt of Carer's Allowance, you don't need to apply for the new benefit. Everyone in receipt of Carer's Allowance will have their benefit moved across automatically. The DWP will send you a letter notifying you of when your benefit will switch to Social Security Scotland.

When will the change to Carer's Allowance take place?

The change from Carer's Allowance to Social Security Scotland's Carer's Support Payment began in February 2024. It is likely to take until Spring 2025 to ensure that everyone's benefit is moved across.

What will happen during the switch?

The DWP will provide information to Social Security Scotland about your Carer's Allowance payments. Social Security Scotland will use this information to ensure that your payments stay the same as they did under the DWP. You will continue to receive your Carer's Allowance payments until Social Security Scotland starts paying your Carer's Support Payments.

During the switch, Social Security Scotland may contact you to confirm your details, such as your address and bank account details. Social Security Scotland will call you from the following number: 0800 182 2222. If you are unsure whether it is Social Security Scotland that is calling you, do not provide any of your personal details, terminate the call, and call Social Security Scotland on 0800 182 2222 to confirm. If you receive an email relating to your payments, you can call Social Security Scotland to verify if it was them who emailed you.

You can find out more information by visiting the following website:
www.mygov.scot/carers-allowance-changes-in-scotland

Changes to Attendance Allowance

Attendance Allowance in Scotland is being replaced by a new benefit called 'Pension Age Disability Payment' (PADP). From 21 October 2024, this benefit will be piloted in Orkney and Shetland, along with Aberdeen City, Argyll & Bute and Highland.

What is Pension Age Disability Payment?

Like Attendance Allowance, Pension Age Disability Payment is a non means tested benefit that ranges between £290 and £434 per month. It is paid to people of pension age who have a long-term disability or health condition. This payment helps those living with a long-term health condition that need supervision to stay safe or help with looking after themselves.

What should I do now?

If you currently receive the DWP's Attendance Allowance, you will automatically be transferred from the DWP to Social Security Scotland's PADP. You do not need to do anything for this transfer to go ahead. The transfer will happen in phases and is likely to begin in early 2025.

I have further questions...

If you have any questions regarding the transfer, you can contact Orkney Islands Council's Benefits team on the details below.

I don't currently receive this benefit, but I think I might be eligible. –

If you think you might be eligible for Attendance Allowance / PADP, you can discuss this further with The Council's Benefits team by contacting:

Telephone: 01856873535 extension 2116 (Monday – Friday 9am to 5pm, excluding public holidays).

Email: benefits@orkney.gov.uk

Sources

For more information you can visit the following website - www.socialsecurity.gov.scot/news-events/news/new-disability-benefit-for-pensioners

Social Security Scotland Telephone no: [0800 182 2222](tel:0800182222)

The Information in this article is correct as of 27 November 2024.

Tackling Household Affordable Warmth Orkney

THAW Orkney is a charitable organisation that was established in 2014. THAW helps to provide energy advice and access to wider energy support to the people of Orkney.

THAW provides a range of services to help tenants who are struggling to keep their heating on. THAW also provides help to those struggling with energy debt, energy bills and energy efficiency. The help that THAW provides includes:

- Information and advice on energy efficiency and heating systems.
 - Electricity tariff switching and billing support.
 - Assistance to access other grant funded programmes.
 - Financial support for prepayment and credit meters.
 - Support with energy debt.
-

If you are experiencing issues with your bills or energy supply, please contact your supplier first as they may be able to resolve issues with you over the telephone. Alternatively, if you are experiencing short term energy debt or struggling to heat your home, you can apply for the Home Heating Support Fund (details below).

Otherwise, if you need any other help with energy efficiency, energy bills or your heating system, feel free to contact THAW Orkney onEmail: info@thaworkney.co.uk

<https://www.thaworkney.co.uk/>

Telephone: 01856878388

Anchor Buildings,
Bridge Street,
Kirkwall,
Orkney, KW15 1HR

Office hours: Monday - Tuesday &
Thursday - Friday, 9.30am-4.30pm



Home heating support fund:

<https://homeheatingadvice.scot/>

Self referral: <https://homeheatingadvice.scot/home-individual/>

Email: support@homeheatingadvice.scot

Changes to the Winter Fuel Payment

Winter fuel payment (Scotland) update –

In the last Housing Newsletter, we notified you that changes had been made to the Winter Fuel Allowance. Since then, a further change has been announced. Details on the latest update are contained in this article: --

The Scottish Government has announced that every pensioner household in **Scotland** will receive a winter fuel payment **next year**. However, these payments will vary. Individuals who are of pension age and are in receipt of qualifying benefits (such as pension credit) will receive between £200 and £300, depending on their age. All other individuals of pension age will receive a payment of £100. This payment will be limited to one payment per household.

A new benefit is due to replace the Winter Fuel Payment for the people of Scotland – this new benefit is known as the ‘Pension Age Winter Heating Payment’.

Payments in Winter 2024

In winter 2024, the Pension Age Winter Heating Payment will be paid by the DWP. If you are eligible, the DWP will send you a letter notifying you of the payment - you should

receive your payment automatically. You should contact the DWP if you have any questions about the Pension Age Winter Heating Payment in winter of 2024.

DWP contact details:

Telephone: 0800 731 0160

Textphone: contact [Relay UK](#) on 18001 then 0800 731 0160

Payments in Winter 2025

From winter 2025, the Pension Age Winter Heating payment will be paid by Social Security Scotland.

Check your entitlement for pension credit

There are many people that are eligible for pension credit that are not yet claiming the support they are entitled to.

If you are unsure whether you are eligible, or if you would like further support in making an application, you can contact Age Scotland and the Orkney Citizens Advice Bureau on the details at the end of this article.

I'm no longer eligible for the full Winter Fuel Payment – is there any other help available?

If you are not entitled to the Winter Fuel Payment, Orkney Citizens Advice and Age Scotland have information on further sources of support that **may** be available to you.



FREE Confidential Advice and Financial Checks

Phone 01856 872438

Age Scotland Orkney and Orkney Citizen Advice Bureau are working together to support older people by offering advice and financial checks for extra help this winter, including Pension Credit for the Winter Fuel Payment.

Age Scotland Orkney also have access to funding to support older people who do not qualify for Pension Credit.

Please contact Age Scotland Orkney to find out more:

Telephone **01856 872438** or e mail enquiries@agescotlandorkney.org.uk

Age Scotland Orkney, 46 Victoria Street, Kirkwall, KW15 1DN. Registered Charity Number SC007638

Greener Orkney Community Fridge

Greener Orkney's Community Fridge Project offers surplus food to individuals, free of charge. One of the primary aims of the Project is to limit the amount of food waste going to landfill. The Community Fridge is located in Stromness and Kirkwall. Greener Orkney's Community Fridge receives donations of surplus food from many local organisations on a regular basis. Anyone can pop along to the Community Fridge, although please be aware, that the supply is sometimes limited. Regular updates are posted on their Facebook page with information on the food that is available – www.facebook.com/greenerorkneycommunityfridge



Locations:

- 26 Bridge Street, Kirkwall
- 116 Victoria Street, Stromness

Opening times:

Please note that **opening times** over the **Christmas break will differ**. Please check the Greener Orkney Community Fridge Facebook page for updates.

	Kirkwall – 26 Bridge Street	Stromness – 116 Victoria Street
Monday	8:30 pm – 9:00 pm	8:30 pm – 9:00 pm
Tuesday	12:00 pm – 2:00 pm 8:30 pm – 9:00 pm	8:30 pm – 9:00 pm
Wednesday	8:30 pm – 9:00 pm	12:00 pm – 2:00 pm 8:30 pm – 9:00 pm
Thursday	12:00 pm – 2:00 pm 8:30 pm – 9:00 pm	12:00 pm – 2:00 pm 8:30 pm – 9:00 pm
Friday	8:30 pm – 9:00 pm	12:00 pm – 2:00 pm 8:30 pm – 9:00 pm
Saturday	12:00 pm – 2 pm	12:00 pm – 2:00 pm 8:30 pm – 9:00 pm
Sunday	Closed	8:30 pm – 9:00 pm

Office contact details

Housing Management:

Telephone: 01856873535.

Email: allocations@orkney.gov.uk

Homelessness and Advice:

Telephone: 01856873535.

Email: homeless@orkney.gov.uk

Homelessness Out of Hours Service:

If you require emergency housing outside regular office hours, please telephone 07921582962. An alternative is to contact Police Scotland on 101 and ask for Kirkwall Police Station.

Write to us:

Housing Services, Orkney Islands Council, School Place, Kirkwall, KW15 1NY.

Emergency Duty Worker Service:

This service can be accessed by telephoning the Balfour Hospital on 01856888000 and asking to speak to the Duty Social Worker.

Out of Hours Repair Service

The out of hours service is for emergencies only. Emergencies are defined in the tenants' handbook. The staff on standby will act in a supportive manner and help any caller.

Where the caller genuinely needs immediate technical guidance or an emergency repair to be carried out, this service is included within the tenants' rent, and no further charge is due.

If the caller has called where there is obviously no emergency, then Housing Services will decide if there is a charge to be made.

Recharges will reflect the cost of providing the callout service as well as an abortive charges by workmen.

If you need to contact the out of hours service in an emergency, call 01856873430.

If you lose your keys and call our out of hours repair officer, we will charge for this. You may wish to consider keeping a spare set with a friend or relative who you can trust.

Homelessness Service

If you require immediate emergency housing outwith office hours, please telephone the mobile number 07921582962. An alternative is to contact Police Scotland on 101 and ask for Kirkwall Police Station.