



TENANT NEWS



01 | The Association Reaches a Milestone

Hjaltland Housing Association Ltd celebrated the 50th anniversary of the organisation at an event in Mareel last month. Staff and committee members were joined by contractors, past employees, councillors, community groups, tenant focus group representatives and other organisations engaged with the delivery of housing and support services in Shetland.

We have housing schemes across mainland and island locations, with more than 885 homes – having started in 1975!



02 | Daylight Savings End

It's approaching that time of year again when the days get shorter and the nights are darker.

Daylight savings time ends on **Sunday 26th October** therefore remember to **turn your clocks back at 0200 hours.**



Director of Housing Ian Bray and Housing Officer Estelle Smith are joined by members of the tenant focus group.

The Association has ambitious plans to continue a programme of building and maintaining high-quality affordable homes, considering energy efficient designs and net-zero targets. By listening to tenants and engaging them in the development of service provision, we are committed to meeting demand and improving lives for tenants – now and into the future. John Fraser, council member and tenant gave a heartfelt and passionate speech about his experience as a tenant and the continued important work of Hjaltland within the Shetland community over the years.

If you are interested in becoming more involved with the Association and becoming a member of our Focus Group, please contact us on **01595 694986** or mail estelle@hjaltland.org

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03 | Warm Home Discount Scheme

The Warm Home Discount Scheme gives £150 off electricity bills in winter 2025/26. The scheme runs from October to March, and energy providers usually start accepting applications from the end of September.

Some people who didn't get help last winter might be able to get help in winter 2025/26.



Who can get the Warm Home Discount?

There are two groups who can get the Warm Home Discount: the core group and the broader group.

- ◆ **CORE GROUP:** pension age people who get Pension Credit Guarantee Credit
- ◆ **BROADER GROUP:** low income households that are not part of the core group
 - ❖ Your energy supplier is part of the scheme
 - ❖ You (or your partner) get certain means-tested benefits
 - ❖ Your name (or your partner's) is on the electricity bill

Some electricity providers might have extra eligibility criteria.

How is the Warm Home Discount paid?

The Warm Home Discount is a one-off discount of £150 on your electricity bill. You don't get any money.

If your supplier provides you with gas and electricity, you may be able to get the discount on your gas bill instead of your electricity bill. Contact your supplier to find out if you can do this if you are eligible for the discount.

When is it available?

The scheme opens each year in early October and runs until the end of March the following year.

How do I apply for the Warm Home Discount?

If you are in the Core group, there is no need to apply. You'll automatically get a letter telling you about the discount if you're eligible.

If you are in the Broader Group, you need to apply. Contact your energy company to find out if you're eligible, how to apply and when applications open. The scheme usually opens in October and will have more applicants than places, so make sure you apply as soon as possible.

If you have any questions or require any support applying for the Warm Home Discount, please contact our **Financial Inclusion Officer Jennifer Laurenson** on **01595 694986** or email **jennifer@hjaltland.org**



04 | Staney Hill Development

The infrastructure contract is progressing well with the rock excavation along the terrace area almost complete, along with the installation of the mainline drainage systems and green corridor attenuation ponds.

Work is continuing the installation of a retaining wall to the rear of the terrace area, which will ultimately provide support for the remote footpath linking the North and South access points. Road and service installations are also continuing throughout the site, up through to the connection next to Wista.

Tenders for the housing contract have been received and are currently under review.



Left to right:
Danah Molloy
and Anya Cheatle

05 | New Faces at Hjalmland

We are delighted to welcome two new members of staff to our team.

Anya Cheatle joins us as our new Housing Officer and has 17 years' experience in the housing sector, having worked within the SIC's Housing department most recently and prior to this, in Manchester as a neighbourhood manager.

Joining us as Finance Assistant is Danah Molloy, who joins us from UHI Shetland. From 2017, Danah worked within administration at the North Atlantic Fisheries College in Scalloway before moving to finance when they became part of UHI Shetland.

06 | RTS Teleswitch Meters Are Ending - Make sure your heating and hot water keep working

If you have storage heaters and don't have a smart meter you might still have an RTS (Radio Teleswitch Service) meter. It's very important that you act now to get a smart meter fitted. The RTS system is being phased out across the UK, and once it switches off your heating and hot water may stop working properly.

Don't wait until the switch-off happens – by then it may be too late and you could be left without heating or hot water.

To make sure your home stays warm and your heating continues to work, you will need a smart meter installed. This replaces the old teleswitch and ensures your storage heaters still come on at the correct times.

What you need to do:

- ◆ **If you don't already have a smart meter, phone your energy supplier as soon as possible to arrange one to be fitted.**
- ✓ **Call Changeworks Tenant Energy Support helpline on 0808 129 0888 for free support and advice**
- ✓ **If you are unsure whether this affects you, please get in touch with Hjalmland Housing Association on 01595 694986 and we'll check for you.**

Smart Meter Visits

If you need a smart meter fitted you may get a knock on the door from your Utility company engineer to arrange fitting a smart meter.

Please don't worry – they'll only be there to talk about installing the meter. They won't be asking about anything else on your account, such as energy bills or debt.

If you're ever unsure, you can always ask to see their ID before speaking to them.

07 | Damp & Mould

If you don't prevent condensation, mould will start to develop, and in ideal conditions mould can germinate in 24 hours. You will be able to see the mould within two to three weeks. The longer that moisture is present, the greater the chance for mould to grow and spread.

Moulds are caused by too much moisture in a building, and they emit spores which can cause a variety of health effects. Some people are particularly sensitive to them, such as babies and young children, older people and those with allergies or asthma.

For those with allergies, breathing in or touching mould spores can cause severe reactions, including asthma attacks, fever, and shortness of breath, while for others, mould can bring on a runny nose, red or itchy eyes and irritated skin.

Did You Know

Water vapour is produced in relatively large quantities from normal day to day activities. A five-person household puts around 10+litres of water into the air every day, without considering any heating:

- ◆ **Breathing (asleep)** - 0.3 litres
- ◆ **Breathing (awake)** - 0.85 litres
- ◆ **Cooking** - 3 litres
- ◆ **Personal washing** - 1 litres
- ◆ **Washing and drying clothes** - 5.5 litres

To report damp and mould call 01595 694986





08 | Policies and Procedures

We would like to remind our tenants that our policies and procedures are reviewed and updated regularly, and if you wish to view any of these, you can access them on our website or we can send to you via email or in the post.

Any changes we make to our policies are reviewed by our tenant focus group before being put forward to committee for final approval. Its important that our tenants have a voice when we look to implement changes which may affect them.

The latest policies to receive a refresh include;
HHA Tenant Handbook; Antisocial Behaviour Policy;
HHA Re-let Standards.



If you wish to be consulted when policies are being reviewed, please let us know by contacting us on 01595 694986 or emailing estelle@hjaltland.org

09 | Budgeting for Christmas

It's that time of year again when Christmas and the festive season are fast approaching and just round the corner.

If you celebrate Christmas, it can be a very expensive time buying presents and extra food and drink.

It is important however to make sure that you have budgeted for this extra cost and you are not missing rent payments to cover the costs of the festive season. Some tips for preparing financially for Christmas are:

- ✓ Start saving as early as you can and putting extra money aside each month.
- ✓ Be realistic about what you can afford to buy at Christmas.
- ✓ Sell any unwanted clothes, toys, household items etc on eBay or local selling sites to save towards the festive season.
- ✓ Use comparison sites when buying items to see where to get the cheapest deal.

KEEP CALM AND STOP SPENDING

Please remember that you can contact the office for budgeting advice or if you wish to discuss your rent account at any time of year.

Our Housing Officers and Financial Inclusion Officer are here to offer help and give advice to our tenants.

Whilst we want all our tenants to enjoy the festive season, it is important that rent is paid on time. By falling into arrears, you are putting your tenancy at risk and could face legal action.

Get involved with our Tenant Focus Group



Hjaltland Housing Association understands the importance of customer feedback, both positive and negative, in helping us improve the services we deliver. We are always looking for new members to join our Tenant Focus Group to help review our services, approve our policies and have a genuine voice in our decision making. If you have never done anything like this before, don't worry - this is a friendly, informal group where new ideas and new members are always welcome.

- ◆ You will have an opportunity to expand your existing skills
- ◆ You can decide how much or little time you want to spend helping us
- ◆ You will have guidance from a professional team
- ◆ We will try to make it easy for you to select the services you want to scrutinise

If you would like to find out more about the Tenant Focus Group, please contact the office.



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INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™
We invest in people Platinum

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