



TENANT NEWS



Bryan Leask, Suzan Roberts, Stephen Gethins MSP, Paul Leask and Ali Morris.

The Minister met tenant Suzan Roberts, who spoke about the improvements made to her home. Suzan explained that her home is now warmer and her energy bills have reduced. She also spoke about the continuing challenge of high electricity costs in Shetland.

Suzan was joined by Bryan Leask, Paul Leask and Ali Morris from Hjaltland. During the visit, we explained how important Scottish Government funding is in helping us make tenants' homes warmer, more energy efficient and more affordable to heat.

We also discussed the need for reliable long-term funding, skilled contractors and suitable support for tenants while work is carried out in their homes.

Hjaltland would like to thank Suzan for welcoming the Minister and sharing her experience. Feedback from Suzan and other tenants helps us improve how we plan and carry out future projects.

01 | Energy Minister visits Thistle Court

Hjaltland Housing Association recently welcomed Stephen Gethins MSP to Thistle Court. Mr Gethins is a Scottish Government minister responsible for Europe, External Affairs and, most relevant to us, Energy.

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02 | Free Energy Advice and Support for Hjaltland Tenants

As the nights are starting to draw in and the outside temperatures drop, many tenants will again be worried about the cost of keeping their home warm and cosy this winter. This is especially important with the energy price cap rising by 4% from 1st October 2026.

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You will find an article within this newsletter on how to use your heating system, but we also want to remind you about free and independent energy advice you are eligible for as a Hjaltland tenant.

Changeworks Tenant Energy Service can provide:

- ✓ Help to reduce energy bills
- ✓ Advice on heating your home efficiently
- ✓ Support with energy debt or billing issues
- ✓ Information about grants and financial support
- ✓ Help understanding smart meters and energy tariffs
- ✓ Practical tips to stay warm and save energy

The service is completely free, confidential and independent.

CHANGeworks.

How to Get Support

You can refer yourself directly to the Changeworks Tenant Energy Service online:
www.changeworks.org.uk/tes-advice/

Or speak to an advisor by calling:

Freephone 0800 870 8800

Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm

You can also email Changeworks at

warmth@changeworks.org.uk,

or fill out our form to request a call back.

If you would like support but are unsure where to start, please contact Hjaltland Housing Association and we will be happy to help point you in the right direction.

Keeping your home warm and affordable matters — don't miss out on the free support available to you.



04 | Annual Report

Along with this newsletter, you will have received recently our yearly report which puts you in the picture with what the Association has been up to over the last 12 months.

We were very grateful to receive support from some members of our Tenant Focus Group, who provided us with suggestions and feedback along the way.

Whilst we are very happy with the final product, we are always looking for suggestions or comments on what we could do to improve this – if you have any comments or ideas, please get in touch and we would be delighted to involve you next year!

03 | DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

Staneyhill, Lerwick

Garriock Bros. Ltd. are progressing well with the infrastructure contract at Staneyhill. The Spine Road is really taking shape, with kerbing and tar surfacing ongoing. The works are due to be complete in early 2027.



With regards to the first of the property construction, DITT Construction Ltd commenced on site in July 2026 and are currently progressing with foundation and substructure works. The 32 Flats are due to be complete in late 2028.

The second phase of the housing development will see an additional 6 units constructed – the tender process for this standalone contract is still being finalised, but we hope these homes will be ready for occupation towards the end of next year.

Houlland Lea, Sandwick

You may have read in the local media recently that we are looking at a further build programme in Sandwick. A further 8 family homes are in the pipeline, which will supplement the existing 12 units at Houlland Lea, completed back in 2021. As things stand, the design team will be appointed before March 2027, with a tender to identify the suitable contractor pencilled in for 2027/28.

05 | New Starts!

We are delighted to welcome 2 new staff to our team.

Our new Corporate Services Administrative Assistant is **Anita Smith**.

Anita has previously worked with the SIC in their Finance Department and latterly, as a primary school teacher.

Joining us as our new Finance Assistant is **Bernie Saunders** who joins us from BML Accounts Ltd.



Bernie standing with Anita

06 | Damp and Mould - Awaab's Law in Scotland

Everyone should feel safe and comfortable in their home. From **6 October 2026**, new rules known as **Awaab's Law** will come into force in Scotland. Whilst our existing maintenance policy ensures we are already operating well within the new legislation, it is important tenants understand what the new law means in practice.

If you tell us about damp or mould in your home, we'll arrange to investigate the problem **within 10 working days**. We'll then let you know what we've found **within 3 working days** and, where substantial damp or mould is identified, take action to commence required repairs **within 5 working days**.

Most importantly, **please tell us if you spot a problem**. Damp patches, mould, water staining, persistent condensation or a musty smell can all be signs that something needs attention. Reporting it early gives us the best opportunity to investigate the cause and put things right.

Our duty to investigate possible damp and mould includes if we, or a contractor already working in your home for another issue, become aware of a potential issue. We will need access to your home to inspect the problem or complete repairs, so your help with arranging access is really important.

07 | How Does Contractor Control Improve Tenant Safety?

Contractor control improves tenant safety by ensuring that all contractors working on properties are properly vetted, qualified, and monitored to carry out their work safely and to the required standards.

Key ways Hjalmland Housing Association ensures contractor control enhances tenant safety include:

- ✓ **Ensuring qualified contractors are used**
Contractors are checked to ensure they have the necessary skills, certifications, and experience to carry out work such as gas servicing, electrical repairs, and fire safety installations.
- ✓ **Maintaining compliance with health and safety regulations**
Regular checks ensure contractors follow current legislation, risk assessments, and safe working practices, reducing the likelihood of accidents or unsafe workmanship.
- ✓ **Reducing risks in tenants' homes**
Effective oversight helps ensure repairs are completed correctly the first time, preventing hazards such as electrical faults, gas leaks, trip hazards, or structural issues.
- ✓ **Monitoring work quality**
Inspections and performance reviews help identify poor workmanship and ensure any issues are rectified promptly, helping to keep homes safe and secure.
- ✓ **Protecting communal areas**
Contractors working in shared spaces are monitored to ensure safe practices are followed, reducing risks to residents, visitors, and staff.
- ✓ **Supporting emergency response services**
Clear contractor management arrangements help ensure urgent repairs, such as heating failures, electrical faults, or water leaks, are addressed quickly to minimise risks to tenants.

Hjalmland Housing Association

At **Hjalmland Housing Association**, robust contractor control helps provide tenants with safe, well-maintained homes. By working with competent contractors, monitoring performance, and ensuring compliance with health and safety requirements, the Association reduces risks, improves repair quality, and helps create a safer living environment for all residents.

We are committed to **working in partnership with all tenants** to ensure the home environment remains a healthy and safe place to live. Please phone us on **01595 69 4986** or email **mail@hjalmland.org** if you need to report a repair. We also have a suite of excellent information on our website **www.hjalmland.org.uk/repairs/mould-and-damp**





08 | Reports on Drug Use

We have received reports from tenants regarding the smell of suspected cannabis coming from flats and in communal spaces, such as stairwells and hallways.

We approached Police Scotland for comment, and they provided us with the following advice;

"It's an offence to possess, grow or smoke cannabis, including in a private property. Therefore, any smell, suspected to be cannabis, which is emanating from an address, should be reported to the Police."

As a landlord, we can only take formal action in relation to a breach of tenancy of this nature where there has been a criminal conviction. Therefore, we urge anyone who suspects there is drug use of any kind within a property, to report this to the police in the first instance. You can do this by calling **101** or email contactus@scotland.police.uk

09 | How to Operate Your Home

Our technical staff will be happy to make an appointment to explain the features of any such equipment and make sure that you know how to get the very best from the systems we've installed in your home.

If you would like a technical induction, call **01595 694986** now!

Scan QR codes for technical advice on each component or system.



Dimplex
Quantum Heating



Nibe F470 Exhaust
Air Heat Pump



Titon
Ventilation Unit



Tenant Energy
Support Service

11 | Join the Association

Why become a member?

Members are those who hold a share in the Association and influence the decision making and direction of the Association.

Can I become a member?

If you are over 16-years old, have an interest in the work that we do, and have a spare £1, you can become a member.

Why do I need to pay a £1?

The £1 payment will make you a 'shareholder' of the Association and means you can:

- ✓ Become a member of the Association
- ✓ Stand for election for our Management Committee
- ✓ Attend and participate in our Annual General Meeting

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Association, please pop into our office, email mail@hjaltland.org or phone **01595 694986**.

10 | 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.

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 and Financial Inclusion Officers 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.



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