

New Office Opening Hours

- Office open **Monday to Thursday 9am-5pm** (closed for lunch 12:30 to 1.30pm)
- Calls taken **Monday to Thursday 8.30am-5.30pm**
- **Home-visits now available** between 8.30am and 6pm **Monday to Thursday**
- **Office closed to the public** on **Fridays** with out of hours emergency service in place

Our repairs service will continue as normal and still be available Monday to Friday with an out of hours service for emergencies.

We will be closed from training every Wednesday 9:30 - 12 noon.

Gill's Message

It's been a transformative year for Homes for Life, as we implemented a new organisational structure, bringing key services in house. We also appointed a new responsive repairs contractor's and recruited six new Board members. Latterly negotiating new pension arrangements and moving to a four day working week to support Hfl's property, investment and service needs.

Another exciting year ahead for Hfl and our tenants.

We wish everyone a wonderful Festive break and Happy New Year.

Gill
CEO



Going into 2025 we will continue to rollout planned maintenance investment to tenants homes and hopefully commence a new build project in Gullane. We will also be refurbishing 16 properties at Old Course Gate, Musselburgh. These properties will be under our new Homes for Life structure arrangements and be let out for mid-market rent by our subsidiary company Homes for Life Plus.

Tenant Board Member Vacancy

We currently have a vacancy on our Board to appoint a new Tenant Board Member. If you are passionate about making a positive difference to Homes for Life tenants and their communities we would love to hear to from you?

What you can expect from us?

- You will receive a board member induction
- Training tailored to your professional and personal development needs
- Experience of working in the voluntary sector at a strategic level
- Being part of an organisation with an ambitious agenda, with a local investment for social change

Post Details

- Unpaid Voluntary Role with expenses paid for Hfl board business
- Attendance in person at quarterly board meetings and training as required

More info and how to apply

For more information, and to complete a Board Member Application form please contact **Caroline Lavery**, Business Support Officer **01620 829300** for an Application Pack.

For an informal chat, please contact our Chief Executive Officer, **Gill Binnie** on **01620 829300**



HfL Housing Elect New Chair

After nearly 9 years as Homes for Life Housing Partnerships, Chair, Jamila Greig stepped down at our AGM on the 25 September 2024. Jamila took up the position of Chair initially in 2013 and served 5 years up to 2018 and was re-elected in April 2021.

‘HfL has always been close to my heart and as Chair for 9 years, I have been very dedicated and have worked hard taking the organisation through some very challenging times. As a result, we have achieved a very good outcome and I can now happily step down leaving a new, transformed Homes for Life in good hands.’

‘I would like to thank our CEO, Gill for her hard work through all this. I would also like to thank all my colleagues on the Board for their support and our staff team who have been a support to me’

On behalf of HfL, Staff Team, Board and Tenants we express our thanks To Jamila for her dedication to HfL. Jamila will continue to support HfL as a Tenant Director Board member.

New Chair

Rob Hughes was elected to the position of Chair at this year’s post AGM Board meeting. On being elected Rob said,

‘I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to my predecessor, Jamilla, who has been at the helm of Homes for Life for several years. During that time, she has had to deal with some difficult times for the organisation and latterly a period of considerable change. So, it’s much to her credit that HfL is where it is today, about to embark on its first developments for many years.’

Rob has worked for 40+ years in social housing, including for the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, Dundee City Council, Hillcrest Housing Association and serving for many years on other housing association boards. We welcome the sector knowledge and experience that he will bring to HfL.

‘I am delighted and honoured to be taking over as Chair at this time in the life of Homes for Life. We now have the opportunity to provide some new housing for the people of East Lothian, both for Social and Mid-Market Rent, which is sorely needed in this area of very high housing demand. I’m looking forward to working now with the Committee and Gill and the other staff to oversee our continued delivery of housing services to our tenants as well as the delivery of new houses across the area, and seeing the organisation go from strength to strength.’



Tenant Energy Support

from **CHANGWORKS.**



Homes for Life
housing partnership

We know managing energy bills and systems isn't the most straightforward. That's why we're excited to let you know that we have partnered with **Changeworks** and joined their **Tenant Energy Support service**.

The service is available to all our tenants and is free for you to use whenever you need it. It is offered by **Changeworks** - Scotland's leading environmental charity and experts in energy advice.

What you can expect from us?

The service is by your side to help you manage your energy at home.

- **An online energy advice library** you can access whenever you might have an energy question or wondering what to do about a problem you're having with your energy.
- **Support from friendly and knowledgeable advisors** who are on hand to guide you through managing your home energy use, whether you want to stay warm, save energy, or take care of money worries.

How you can access your free energy advice?

You can get energy advice at your fingertips by visiting the online advice library. Visit the webpage www.homesforlife.co.uk or you can scan the QR code on this letter.

If you're needing a bit more support or have an energy issue that is worrying you, you can also speak to an Affordable Warmth Advisor. You can call their energy helpline on freephone **0800 870 8800** between 9am - 5pm, Monday - Friday.

If you have any questions, please contact **Caitilin Rodgers**, our Tenancy Sustainment Officer on **01620 829300**.



A Brief Guide to Condensation & Mould

What is Condensation

Condensation forms because the moisture in the air can no longer be held as a vapour, so returns to liquid form. This occurs when warm moist air comes into contact with either cooler air or a cooler surface. 'Dew point' describes the temperature when air containing a given quantity of moisture vapour will condense onto that surface.

While condensation is obvious when it occurs on impermeable surfaces – most commonly window glass, cold-water pipes, and ceramic tiles– it will also form on any surface which is at, or lower than, the dew point.

The presence of condensation on more absorbent surfaces (such as paint, plaster, or wallpaper) becomes obvious when disruption, damage, or mould growth forms on that surface.

How to Recognise Condensation

Mould growth is a typical sign of chronic condensation and occurs as spores which are always present in the air. These spores find water (condensate) and organic material (dirt and grease) that support their life cycle. Mould is a significant health risk to asthmatics, anyone with other respiratory conditions, the very young and elderly people. The high humidity levels associated with condensation also enables house dust mites to flourish. The droppings from these microscopic creatures as well as mould spores can cause allergic reactions which are also linked to the onset of asthma.

Bedroom areas

Please open bedroom windows when you go to bed at night; a 10mm gap will do. If it really is too cold to do this, wipe the condensation off the windows first thing in the morning, but please do not put the cloth you used on the radiator to dry as this will create more condensation.

Kitchen area

When cooking, cover pans. Please use extractor or ventilation fans where provided. If you do not have an automatic kettle, take care to ensure it is not left boiling. These precautions will help to reduce steam and therefore moisture in the air. Keep the door closed while the kitchen is in use to prevent the steam escaping to other parts of the house.

General

Please ensure that any ventilation bricks or openings in the building are not obstructed.

Laundry

Please avoid drying clothes on radiators. Tumble dryers should be vented to the outside unless fitted with a condenser.

Portable Heaters

Portable gas heaters can create a significant amount of damp and condensation within our properties.

Please do not use these types of heaters unless you have permission from the Association.

If you're struggling to heat your home, please contact **Caitlin Rodgers**, Tenancy Sustainment Officer or the Housing Team.

What Action is Required

Double glazing, new heating types and improved insulation means we have warmer homes, but unless a property is adequately ventilated, it can become damp, which leads to condensation and mould forming.

We ask all our tenants to work with us, to ensure that our properties are sufficiently ventilated by taking a few simple precautions stated below in order to avoid condensation and the build-up of damp.

Shower/bathroom area

Please ensure full use of extractor or ventilation fans. Where these are not provided, open a window after bathing or showering to give the steam and damp air a chance to escape. Wipe windows, walls, and mirrors to remove condensation (a microfibre cloth is the most efficient means of doing this) and dry the shower tray or bath. Keep the door closed while the bathroom is in use to prevent the steam from escaping to other parts of the house.

Living areas

Where there are chimney openings, please do not block them up. If a wall appears to be damp, do not place furniture in front of the chimney opening, allow some circulation of air.

Windows

Please keep glass as clear of condensation as you can. Wipe away any moisture that has formed using a soft cloth. Leave open any 'trickle' vents in double glazed units. Please open windows, when required to keep the moisture content in the air down and to air the property whenever you can.

Heating

We do realise and recognise that energy bills have increased over the past year and we encourage our tenants to please provide a reasonable level of heating (no less than 10°C in an unused area, or 16°C if in use); cold rooms are susceptible to condensation. Remember, the best way to heat a room and avoid condensation is to maintain a low level of warmth throughout the day rather than to turn the heating off while you are out and put it on at a high level when you return home.

Please do not disturb mould by vacuuming or brushing as this can give rise to respiratory complaints. If you think that you have problems with condensation or mould, please contact the **Maintenance Team on 01620 829300 (option 4)** or by emailing repairs@homesforlife.co.uk.

Important Guidelines for Legionella Prevention

We'd like to share some simple guidelines for preventing Legionella bacteria, which can grow in water systems if not properly maintained.

Please follow these steps to reduce risks:

- ✓ **Run Taps Regularly:** Allow all taps (both hot and cold) to run for at least 2 minutes weekly if they are not frequently used. **Outdoor taps where they exist should also be run on this frequency.**
- ✓ **Flush Showers:** Let water flow through showerheads for at least 2 minutes weekly to prevent stagnation.
- ✓ **Clean Showerheads:** Descale and disinfect showerheads and hoses every 3-6 months.
- ✓ **Keep Hot Water Hot:** Ensure water heaters are set to a temperature of at least 60°C, as high temperatures kill bacteria.
- ✓ **Report Issues Promptly:** Notify Homes for Life immediately if you experience any water system issues, such as unusual odours, low water temperature, or discoloured water.

These measures are especially important if water outlets are unused for extended periods, such as after holidays or long absences.

Your cooperation helps ensure a safe and healthy living environment for everyone. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us.

RTS Shutdown (Radio Teleswitch Service)

The RTS signal is due to shut down on 30th June 2025. We know a lot of people are concerned about this, so we have sought support from Changeworks to help guide our tenants where support is required. **RTS Shutdown (Radio Teleswitch Service) | What to do**

The most important thing they have recommended is "if you are likely to be affected you must contact your supplier as soon as possible to ensure continued power supply to your home".

Your meter may use the RTS if you are on a tariff that charges different electricity rates at different times of day. Some examples are:

- **Economy 7**
- **Economy 10**
- **Total Heat Total Control (THTC)**
- **Comfortplus with WeatherCall/White Meter**
- **Heatwise**
- **Warmwise**
- **Budget Warmth**

Those with single rate, smart meters and green tariffs will not be affected.

If you would like a referral to Changeworks Service for this or any other utility advice needs please contact info@homesforlife.co.uk or call us on **01620 829300** during working hours.



Emergency Out of Hours Numbers

Gas Repairs/Air Source Heat Pump Repairs
Lothian Gas – 0131 440 4666

All other Repairs Emergencies
JR Facilities Management – 0800 774 7183

HfL Maintenance Team during opening hours – 01620 829300



If you don't want to miss a call from our repairs contractors or maintenance team please save these numbers to your phone.

If you think you can smell a gas leak, **NEVER** attempt to find a gas leak yourself. Instead contact **NATIONAL GRID** immediately on **0800 111 999**.

East Lothian Council is responsible for providing a winter maintenance service on adopted roads and pavements. More information can be found at www.eastlothian.gov.uk – searching “get ready for winter”. Emergency issues can be reported to ELC by calling **01620 827946** during working hours or **01875 612818** out with working hours.

Kitchen Replacements

As planned JR Facilities replaced 27 Kitchens at Muirfield Gullane this year and 1 additional trickle transfer. The remaining 20 kitchens at Muirfield will be completed as part of the 2025-2026 kitchen upgrade programme.

Heating

17 out of 35 fully funded fabric first heating upgrades have been completed in conjunction with Greensky at Walden, Gifford. The remaining 18 properties are to be scheduled for completion of this work by April 2025. We have also completed a fabric first heat pump installation at Bankfoot, Respite Unit.

Planning has commenced for further fully funded programme of fabric first heating upgrades for MacFarlane Court in 2025-2026 and a trial property has now been completed.

10 trickle transfer properties have had their heat pump systems replaced, funded by HFL.

Grounds Maintenance

Chris Smith Gardening Services have continued their Homes For Life Grounds Maintenance Contract. Tenants are expected to maintain the upkeep of their own gardens including grass cutting and shrubbery maintenance.

Bathroom Replacements

The bathroom upgrade programme has continued at MacFarlane Court with a further 10 bathrooms having been completed in 2024-2025. Subject to budget approval the remaining bathrooms at MacFarlane Court will be upgraded in 2025-2026.

External Painting

External painting works were completed this year at:

- Forth Street North Berwick
- St Andrews House, North Berwick

We have had to postpone the reminder off the 2024-2025 pending budget review.

Gutter Cleaning

The gutter programme commenced in Autumn for 2024-2025 and all HfL properties will be included.

Future Planned Maintenance

Following review of HfL asset investment requirements, and with board approval, we have amended our component replacement cycles to reflect what is possible within budget and resources at this time.

Elements	REVISED LIFECYCLE
Kitchens	25
Bathrooms	25
Windows	30
Doors (Front & Back)	30
Electric Heating	30
Gas Heating (Boiler)	15
Heating (Full System)	30

Subject to further board and budget approval the full planned maintenance programme for 2025-2026 will be confirmed in spring 2025, with an outline of our plans for next 4 years issued shortly after that. We will hopefully be able to provide more details in the next newsletter and affected tenants will receive a letter with more details nearer the time.

We understand that some tenants may want to undertake home improvements themselves and if this is something you are considering; it is worth familiarising yourself with the Scottish Secure Tenants (Compensation for Improvements) Regulations.

You can find more information on this under Compensation for Improvements in the policy section of our website <https://www.homesforlife.co.uk/policies/> or by contacting us and asking for a copy of the policy to be sent to your home address.

Homes for Life Garden & Pot Competition 2024

We are delighted to announce the winners of this year's garden and pots competition!

We were absolutely blown away by all the entries we received and loved seeing just how green-fingered our tenants are. It was amazing to see the passion and commitment that went into every garden and pots we visited.

Thank you to all our tenants who participated in this year's competition. Jamila Greig (Chair) and Donna Dougal (Housing Manager) visited in August this year to look at the gardens and pots that had been nominated.

We were truly impressed by the quality of entry, and it was very difficult to make our decision. Once again, a very well done to the following winners, who all won vouchers for the Merry Hatton Garden Centre:

Gardens

- 1st Jacqueline Tervet
- 2nd Alexander Young
- 3rd Catherine Livingstone

Pots

- 1st Liz Salkeld

Please remember to nominate your neighbour or yourself in 2025.



Rent Consultation 2025/26

Enclosed with your Newsletter is our Rent Consultation 2025/26, there are several options for your response:

You can share your views as part of this consultation by completing:

- ✓ The enclosed survey form and returning it to us by post in the envelope provided,
- ✓ Complete using the QR code,
- ✓ Complete using the link sent in your recent text message <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/AHVKQU/>
- ✓ The rent survey link on our website <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/WNGNW7/>
- ✓ By completing a rent survey when we contact you by phone.

The Consultation period will run until the 24 January 2025 and your response will be used to inform our Board's decision making on Rent levels for 2025/26. Changes to rent levels will be effective from 1 April 2025.





Our Customer Promise

Homes for Life, is a small RSL with a mighty passion, committed to providing our customers with an affordable, tailored, responsive service where we will deliver more than “homes for life”. We will achieve this by **investing in our people, our properties and communities** assisting them to thrive and flourish.

We promise to work with our Tenants Panel to develop our Customer Promise.

We will create a set of guiding statements where you can measure how we are performing and hold us accountable.

To provide a safe place to live

We will ensure your home meets all fire safety standards and contains an appropriate smoke detection system.

We will make sure gas and electric safety checks are carried out in the required timeframe- it is your responsibility to allow us access to carry out these checks.

To deliver a reliable repairs service

We will aim to attend emergency repairs in three hours to make safe and complete standard repairs in 10 days.

We will procure and **deliver cyclical and planned maintenance** contracts aligning with HfL's Asset Management Strategy.

We will keep you updated on the status of your repairs and maintenance and seek your feedback to continually improve our service.

To care about you

We will recruit and invest in the development of caring colleagues providing training to ensure that services will be provided with **respect, knowledge, and support.**

We will demonstrate transparency, ownership and honesty in decision making and communication.

We will follow and adhere to the SPSO Complaints Handling process.

To help communities grow

We will invest in our future putting in place the structures and identifying opportunities for **partnership working** to support our local communities to thrive.

We will carry out regular inspections to make sure your neighbourhood and amenities are clean and tidy.

We will take strong action where anti-social behaviour happens and work closely with partners to tackle incidents.

To tell you where your money goes

We will **balance commercial awareness with social purpose.**

We will tell you how your rent and service charges are calculated each year.

We will inform you how and why we spend money on your home and community.

We will review our policy and procedures and **explore opportunities to enhance our service** ensuring we can evidence value for money.

To work together with customers and partners

We will work collaboratively and assist you contacting relevant agencies who can offer specialist advice such as the police, charities and East Lothian Council.

We will work with you to **receive feedback and improve our services.**



Homes for Life

housing partnership



Come and Join Our Tenants Panel

We would like to increase our Tenants Panel.

The aim of the Panel is to:

- **Seek your views on current services**
- **Identify any recommendations for improvement**
- **Assist in policy and service review**

The meetings are held every 4-6 weeks in our meeting room in Haddington. We will reimburse any travel costs. We will also provide transport if needed.

If you are interested in getting involved or would like to know more about the Tenants Panel, please email donna.dougal@homesforlife.co.uk or call **01620 829300**.



Team Updates

Andro will be leaving us at the end of year due to Zoe returning from her maternity leave. We all wish Andro the best and thank him for his contribution whilst covering Zoe's maternity leave.

New Team Members

New team members joining HfL:



Lindsay Johnstone
Finance Manager

Lindsay joined the Homes for Life Team as Finance Manager in June of this year. Lindsay brings with her significant experience of Housing Finance, having worked in the sector since 1991.

Lindsay is looking forward to bringing her financial expertise to Homes for Life and bringing the previously outsourced finance function back in house.



Caitlin Rodgers
Tenancy Sustainment Officer

Caitlin has spent the last fifteen years working within the charity sector, supporting people from a wide range of backgrounds, focused on improving the experiences of vulnerable people facing poverty, deprivation and often loneliness and isolation. Previous roles have focused on supporting those experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness, and assisting migrants and refugees to settle into life in Scotland. She has spent the past five years working in East Lothian in the mental health field. She is excited to be joining Homes For Life, working with the team and HfL Tenants.

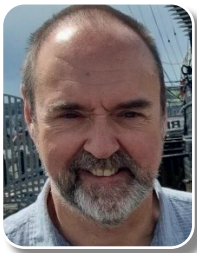
Caitlin is here to help navigate the challenges that life can throw at us and to support you to live well as a Homes for Life tenant. I can help you to:

- **access financial grants and furniture**
- **access home energy support**
- **address rent arrears**
- **manage correspondence, set up accounts and fill in forms**
- **access specialist services for health, financial and social support**
- **keep safe and healthy at home**

To talk about how I can help you, contact her on:

07394 801 595 / caitlin.rodgers@homesforlife.co.uk

Board Updates



Rob Hughes
New Chair

Rob is a retired housing professional with 40 years experience working in various social housing roles, the last of those as Operations Manager for Hillcrest Homes, responsible for the management of 6,500 tenancies.

He has also previously served 12 years as a committee member of Rural Stirling Housing Association, and has served as a Scottish Housing Regulator board appointee to another Registered Social Landlord.



David Leisham
New Vice-Chair

David is a Qualified Accountant, with a focus on Financial and Management Accounting, and has over 7 years of experience in the Social Housing sector in various Finance roles.

He was elected Vice Chair at the recent HfL AGM and is excited to take on this new role, serving the tenants and other local stakeholders, and to also help support the Chair in delivering continued good governance of Homes for Life.

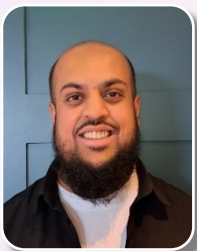
David is also the Chair of HfL's Audit and Compliance Committee.

David currently lives in East Lothian and would like to contribute to his local community through Homes for Life.

New Board Members

Jav Yaqub

Jav is an experienced IT professional having managed large enterprise infrastructures and platforms for 30 years for tier one organisations such as the NHS, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), Glasgow City Council and many others. His specialism is in improving and renewing complex distributed IT platforms and services and he hopes to bring this experience to benefit Homes For Life with their aspirations on transforming their technology for the betterment of their customers.



Shamsu Rahman

Shamsu was appointed in August 2024 to the Board. Over the last decade he has worked in the social housing this period carrying various various digital transformation and core infrastructure changes.

Scott Robertson

Scott has been working as a housing professional for 20 years within social housing delivering services in Edinburgh, East, Mid and West Lothian and the Scottish Borders.

Currently working as an Area Housing Manager Scott manages housing developments in Edinburgh involving allocations, rent arrears, staff and tenancy management service.

Scott aims to bring 20 years of working within social housing to help Homes for Life deliver more than homes for life.



Benefit Highlights from Scottish Government 2025/26

Pension Age Winter Heating Payment

The Scottish Government will provide universal support through the introduction of Pension Age Winter Heating Payments (PAWHP) next year ensuring a payment for every pensioner household in winter 2025-26.

Carer Support Payment

The 'earnings threshold' for Carer Support Payment (and Carer's Allowance for those who receive this in Scotland) will be increased from £151 to £196 from April 2025. Carer Support Payment and Carer's Allowance are income-replacement benefits for people who are providing 35 hours or more of care a week to someone getting certain disability benefits. The change means carers will be able to earn an additional £45 per week and still receive support from these benefits, helping remove barriers to work, provide more stable support, and allowing for increased incomes. The new threshold will also align with the threshold for Carer's Allowance for those in England and Wales. This change will support national outcomes around Health and tackling Poverty, and will help in meeting our overall aims for Carer Support Payment, in particular that it provides stability and support for carers to have access to opportunities outside of caring, where possible and should they wish to do so.

Tenancy Sustainment & Grant Updates

26 tenants have received **£294 in fuel vouchers** (over £7000 in tenants' pockets so far!) from when, which funds were used

- ✓ 11 referrals to Changeworks for 1-1 Home Energy support and guidance
- ✓ 13 tenants currently receiving regular check in visits/contacts
- ✓ We have signposted tenants to mental health services, foodbanks and employability support
- ✓ We received an award of **£2500** from **Arnold Clark** to allow us to assist tenants who are struggling to keep warm over the winter months



Homes for Life Housing Partnership

If you have carried out improvements to your property and are moving out, you may be entitled to compensation. Section 30 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 provides “qualifying persons” a right to claim compensation for “qualifying improvements” at termination of “Scottish secure tenancies”.

What improvements qualify for compensation?

Improvements must have been completed with the Company’s prior written consent, must comply with all conditions of that consent, and must have been completed no earlier than 30th September 2002. Examples of improvements where compensation may be provided are:

1. Bath or shower	12
8. Kitchen sink	10
9. Loft insulation	20
13. New kitchen or bathroom or part of	10

When can compensation be claimed?

Compensation must be claimed no earlier than 28 days before and no later than 21 days after the end of a tenancy of a home owned by HfL.

How can compensation be claimed?

Compensation must be claimed in writing and must provide HfL with sufficient detail to assess eligibility and compensation.

Claims may only be submitted by any of the following “qualified persons” -

A person whose Scottish Secure Tenancy of the property has just been or is about to be terminated, and who carried out the improvement during that tenancy

A person who was a joint tenant of the property at the time the improvement was carried out

A person who has or is about to succeed to a tenancy of the property, due to the death of the tenant who carried out the improvement, but only where a Scottish Secure Tenancy has been or is to be granted on succession.

For further details please contact a member of the Maintenance or Housing Teams.



Muirfield Gardens, Gullane Development Consultation

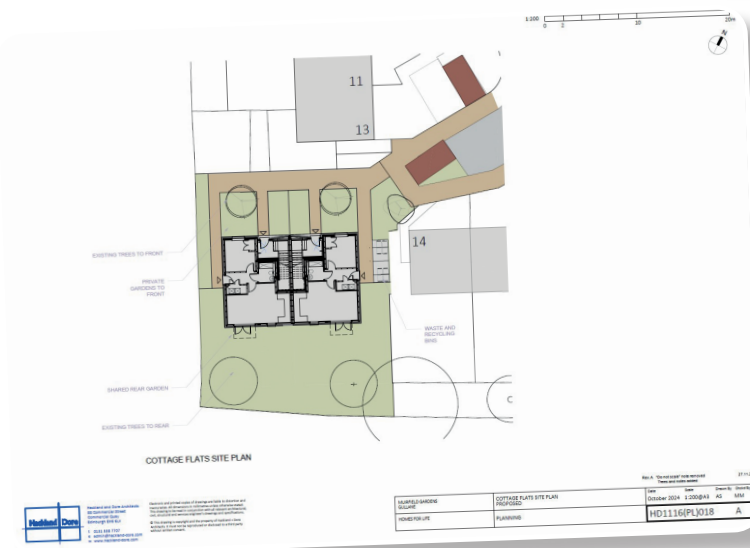
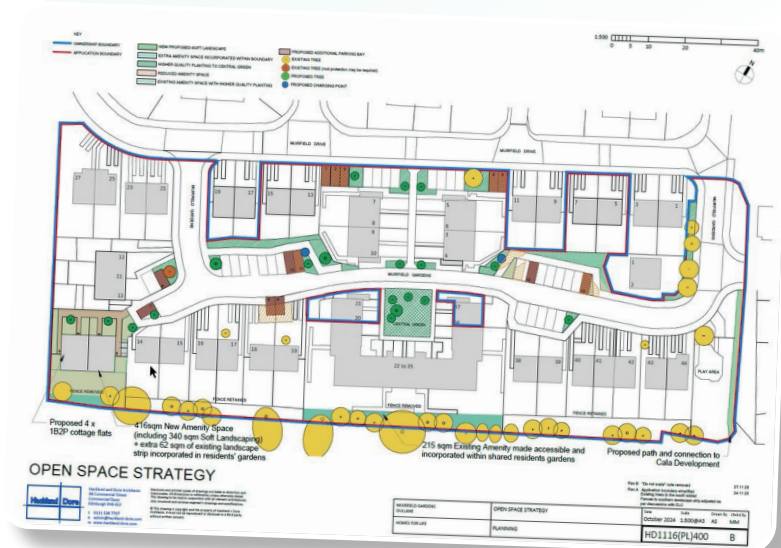
On Thursday 3rd October this year we held a successful consultation meeting with the residents of Muirfield Garden and Drive at Gullane Primary School, on the proposals to develop 4 affordable housing units and landscaping improvements.

We had a good turnout to view and provide feedback on the proposals. The feedback from residents helped shape the final planning application which was submitted to East Lothian Council this month.

Below are drawings of proposed improvements and details for the 4 new homes.

HfL would like to take this opportunity to thank all residents who attended and provided feedback.

Further to this feedback we are also now taking forward proposals to introduce soft landscaping and trees within the central green area in Muirfield Gardens.



Christmas Recipes

Left-Over Roast Turkey Pie

Use the leftovers of a roast Turkey to create this creamy 1-hour pie, perfect on a chilly day.

METHOD

1. Heat 1tbsp of olive oil in a pan. Cook the mushrooms over a fairly high heat, stirring, until cooked and golden brown.
2. Take the mushrooms out the pan and place in a dish for later. Add the leeks and butter to the pan and cook gently for 10-15 minutes until really soft, then sprinkle with the flour. Stir the leeks over the heat for 2 minutes then gradually stir in the chicken stock. Simmer for 3-4 minutes until thickened.
3. Add the crème fraiche, mushrooms, turkey and parsley. Tip everything into a baking dish.
4. Heat the oven to 190C/fan – 170C/gas 5. Cover the baking dish with the pastry, crimping the edges with a fork, then make a steam hole in the middle of the pastry. Bake for 25-30 minutes for until puffed and golden.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tsp Olive Oil
- 250g Chestnut Mushrooms
- 2 Leeks
- 25g Butter
- 2 Tsp Plain Flour
- 300ml Strong Chicken Stock
- 4 tsp Creme Fraiche
- 500g Cooked Turkey
- 1 tsp Parsley
- 320 Ready-Rolled Puff Pastry



INGREDIENTS

- 75g Salted Butter
- 200g Ginger Biscuits
- 2 Large Mince Pies (roughly 100g)
- 100g Mincemeat
- 500g Full Fat Soft Cheese
- 300g Double Cream
- 50g Icing Sugar
- 2 Oranges (1 zested, both juiced, plus extra zest)



Mince Pie Cheesecake

METHOD

1. Butter the base and side of a 20cm cake tin and line with baking parchment. Melt the butter in a saucepan over a low heat. Blend the ginger biscuits to fine crumbs in a food processor then add the mince pie pieces and pulse a few times to break up further. Add the butter and pulse to combine. Tip the mixture into the tin and press into an even layer using the back of a spoon. Chill for 30 minutes.
2. If the mincemeat has pieces of suet, warm in a saucepan over a low heat to melt the suet, then leave to cool completely. Briefly whisk the soft cheese to loosen, whisk in the cream and icing sugar until the mixture is holding its shape. Add the orange zest and juice and the mincemeat, and whisk again briefly to combine.
3. Spoon the cheesecake mixture over the base and smooth using a spatula or spoon. Chill for 8 hrs until set. Decorate with mince pie pieces and orange zest, then serve.

Parsnip Soup

A perfect winter warmer, ideal for a chilly evening and for using up any extra Christmas vegetables!

METHOD

1. Fry the onion and celery in 1tbsp olive oil for 5 minutes until softened, then add the carrot and parsnip for 10 minutes until soft. Add the garam masala and paprika and season, then add the vegetable stock, bring to the boil and simmer for 15 minutes. Using a stick blender, blend the soup until smooth. Swirl in 1tsp of double cream and a drizzle of chilli oil to serve.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 Onion
- 1 Stick of Celery
- Olive Oil
- 2 Carrots
- 500g Parsnips
- 1tsp Garam Masala
- 1tsp Paprika
- 1 litre Vegetable Stock

To Serve

- Double Cream
- Chilli Oil



INGREDIENTS

For the Meringue

- 6 extra large Egg Whites
- 2 cups Icing Sugar-sifted
- 2 tsp Cornstarch
- 1 tsp Vanilla Extract

For the Pavlova Wreath

- 3 cups Heavy Cream
- 1 cup Icing Sugar-sifted
- 1 tsp Vanilla
- Fresh Fruit (Berries)
- Fresh Mint



Pull Apart Pavlova Wreath

METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 90C / 195F and line two baking trays with parchment paper
2. Beat the egg whites until foamy
3. Add the icing sugar then continue beating until the egg whites are bright white, voluminous and form stiff peaks when the whisk is pulled out of the mixture
4. Add the cornstarch and vanilla and whip until combined
5. Pipe or spoon small moulds of meringue (approximately 5cm in diameter) onto the prepared baking sheets, leaving 5cm space in between them
6. Using a teaspoon, make a little dent in each pavlova
7. Place in the oven and allow to bake for 60 minutes then switch the oven off and allow to cool completely (approx. 2 hours) before removing from the oven
8. Once cool, remove the meringues from the oven then place in a wreath shape on a large serving platter or board
9. Whip the cream, icing sugar and vanilla together until medium stiff peaks form
10. Spoon some of the cream onto each pavlova and decorate

Christmas Wordsearch

Find these words in the puzzle

REINDEER
FESTIVE
SNOW
SLEIGH
DECEMBER
MARZIPAN

PARSNIP
DECORATIONS
TURKEY
ELVES
CELEBRATIONS
MISTLETOE

SANTA CLAUS
WINTER
BAUBLES
HOLLY
FAIRY
PARTY

S	D	E	C	E	M	B	E	R	P	A	R	T	Y
T	R	C	E	L	E	B	R	A	T	I	O	N	S
E	E	V	I	T	S	E	F	T	N	I	D	T	N
A	S	P	M	S	N	W	O	N	S	E	T	S	O
R	U	A	R	H	R	H	V	L	C	W	I	P	N
A	A	R	S	L	O	L	T	O	D	R	W	E	A
C	L	S	R	E	E	L	R	R	P	E	G	O	P
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S	S	T	L	M	E	L	D	U	I	R	T	I	E
E	L	S	O	R	W	W	I	N	T	E	R	M	T

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