

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2025



Welcome to the Winter News 2025

Season's Greetings from all the Paragon Team. We hope you have a great Christmas and New Year.

There is lots to dive into in this edition of the Winter News.

- Find out about our award-winning Tenant Communication Profile and how you can help us with the next steps
- If you or anyone you know is looking for a repairs and maintenance apprenticeship - there is a great opportunity inside
- If you need Energy Advice or support, there are details about our latest project
- It's ideal weather for damp, mould & condensation problems - find tips and advice of how to avoid it
- Trying to understand the benefits maze? We can help
- Keep your newsletter handy over Christmas & New Year as it has details of our holiday opening times and how to access emergency services
- We will be consulting on rents too so look out for that information soon

Season's Greetings
Welcome to your
Winter News 2025

Included in this edition

- **Winners- See Page 2!**
- **Apprenticeship Opportunity with Sureserve**
- **Stay Safe & Warm**
- **Get energy and advice and possible financial help**
- **Avoiding issues with Damp Mould & Condensation**
- **Performance Matters**
- **Keep in the know on benefits**
- **Holiday Opening Details**
- **Helpful Contacts**

Contact us

Phone: 01324 664966

enquiries@paragonha.org.uk

Web site: www.paragonha.org.uk



You can keep up to date with the latest Association news, get advice and information anytime from our Facebook Page or Web Site. Why not pay us a visit?



SCOTLAND
HOUSING
AWARDS 2025

WINNER

We are delighted to announce that we won a major award at the Chartered Institute of Housing's 2025 Scotland Housing Awards ceremony in Glasgow. The work on the Tenant Communication Profile scooped the top prize for Excellence in Customer Service. This project has been developed by the Tenant Scrutiny Panel, Committee members and staff.

The Tenants' Scrutiny Panel was recognised too as they were shortlisted for Excellence in Tenant Scrutiny. Thanks to everyone involved – we appreciate you. We are moving forward with some plans on the communications front. If you are interested in getting involved in our project to make more of our publications in Easy Read and audio formats, please get in touch.



Apprenticeship Opportunity with Sureserve

We would like to share an upcoming opportunity for someone interested in starting a career in housing repairs and maintenance. Sureserve will be recruiting a trainee to join their team from January 2026.

The role will provide hands on experience across key trades such as electrical work, gas engineering, plumbing, joinery and general property maintenance. After gaining experience in these areas, the successful applicant will choose a trade to specialise in and move into a formal apprenticeship expected to begin around August 2026.

The position will be based at the Grangemouth Depot and will support repairs and maintenance across our homes. Anyone interested can apply by sending an initial letter outlining qualifications and any relevant training to SESUK.HR@sureserve.co.uk



We publish several performance reports throughout the year including an Annual Return to the Scottish Housing Regulator on the Scottish Social Housing Charter known as the Tenants Charter (ARC). Find out about our performance across a wide range of indicators. Here's a taster. Our annual report on our Charter return can be found on our website - go to the Facts and Figures Pages or email us and we'll send you a summary report.



Performance Matters - Key 2024/25 ARC Stats

Tenant Satisfaction Rising: Overall satisfaction at **88%**, and further gains into 2025/26 with 91% for the first half of 2025/26

Repairs Performance Strong: Emergency repairs completed in just **1.3 hours**; 95% "Right First Time." Non-emergency repairs averaged **6.39 days**, an improvement from 10.22 days last year.

Rent & Housing Impact: Rent arrears reduced to **4.8%** and **67%** of lets went to homeless applicants.

Stay Safe & Warm Winter Checklist

Gas Safety – Please Let Us In

- Please allow us access for your annual gas safety and maintenance check. This keeps you, your family, and neighbours safe and warm.
- We'll do our best to arrange appointments at a convenient time, but we must gain access before the anniversary of your last check.
- If we can't arrange access, we may have to force entry and recharge the costs to you.

On Site Safety Session

- In December, Balfour Court, Plea residents joined a safety session after a fire safety system upgrade.
- Scottish Fire and Rescue supported our Estates Team and maintenance staff.
- The session covered fire safety and practical advice on managing damp, mould, and condensation at home.

Tip: Check out the safety advice from Scottish Fire and Rescue Services on their web site <https://www.firescotland.gov.uk>.

Tenant Safety Handbook

- Download your copy from our website or request a paper copy by calling 01324 664966 or emailing enquiries@paragonha.org.uk.
- We're reviewing the handbook soon — get in touch if you'd like to help or have suggestions for new topics.



Burst or Frozen Pipes

- You can find our guide on what to do on our web site

Energy Advice

- Thanks to funding from Octopus Energy, we continue to offer energy advice to all tenants.
- We can also provide direct energy support payments to tenants who qualify.
- Want to be included in the assessment? Please get in touch.

Contact us for more information or support:






-  **Phone:** 01324 664966
-  **Email:** enquiries@paragonha.org.uk

Damp, Mould & Condensation (DMC)

This time of the year can really highlight issues with damp, mould and condensation so we are reissuing our guide to managing these issues.



We take any reports of these issues seriously. It's a "fabric first" approach to all reports of Condensation, Damp & Mould. This means if you contact us to report condensation - we will always come out and assess the situation and deal with any repairs to the property that could improve the situation. We are also improving the way we manage this and have new case management processes in place. We also need your help in dealing with this. A combination of the temperature of your home and everyday activities can cause problems. It is important that you understand how they happen so you can help tackle them.

	Washing Clothes	0.5 litres a day
	Cooking	3 litres a day
	Drying clothes without ventilation	5 litres a day
	Breathing when active	0.2 litres per hour per person
	Showers and Baths	1.5 litres per person

There is always moisture in the air. The warmer air gets, the more moisture it holds. The colder it gets, the less moisture it holds. Most moisture gets into the air via condensation. Air indoors gets damp and humid from everyday things like taking showers, cooking, and drying clothes. When that humid air hits colder surfaces – like windows and walls – then it turns back into water droplets, which mould loves.

Whether it's cooking, cleaning or just sleeping, we generate a lot of moisture throughout the day in our homes. Look at the table to see how much moisture comes from some of our daily activities.

If you are having an issue with damp, mould and or condensation in your home, let us know about it as soon as possible. We can work together to resolve it by following some simple steps. Report any issues to us as soon as you can.



Mould Busters

Put less moisture in the air	Ventilate: Get moisture out of your home	Keep your home warm	Removing mould
If you notice any leaks or other problems with your home that could be allowing damp to get in, please report them to us as soon as possible.	Open the trickle vents in your windows if you have them – they are usually above the window frame	A warm home means fewer cold places for wet air to settle and turn into water droplets.	Vinegar: a mild acid which is non-toxic and can kill 82% of mould species. Spray white, distilled vinegar onto a mouldy surface - leave it to sit for an hour. Wipe clean with water and allow the surface to dry
Close the door to the room when you're cooking or showering / Keep lids on pans when cooking	Use any extractor fans in the bathroom and kitchen or open the windows slightly. Contact us if you can't open your windows or if your extractors fans are not working	The Energy Savings Trust recommends heating your home to at least 18°C. A low heat running evenly through the day will help tackle mould even if you don't heat every room daily.	Baking Soda: harmless to your family and pets but deadly to mould. It absorbs moisture and gets rid of bad smells. Add a teaspoon of baking soda to a spray bottle of water or a damp cloth and scrub the affected area
Give your windows, sills and any other surfaces a wipe when they're wet	If your drying clothes indoors, do it in well ventilated areas, e.g. the bathroom with the door closed and extractor fan on or window open	If you are struggling to heat your home or concerned your heating isn't working properly, please contact us	Bleach spray – can kill virtually every species of indoor mould that it meets, but it is only effective if the mould is growing on non-porous materials like tiles, bathtubs, glass and counter tops, it won't work on things like wood and carpet and can damage and stain them. Always handle with care and follow manufacturers' directions
	Open windows for a few minutes in the morning to replace the damp air with fresh air from outside.	If you want to check your room temperature, then we can give you a thermometer	

Working Together to Keep Our Estates Safe, Clean and Welcoming

At Paragon, we know that a well-managed estate is about more than just buildings—it's about creating places where people feel safe, respected, and proud to live. That's why we refreshed our **Estate Management Strategy (2024–2028)** last year and updated the **Estate Management Policy**, both of which are already helping us tackle the challenges of maintaining our neighbourhoods.

From fly-tipping and graffiti to overgrown gardens and abandoned vehicles, estate management covers a wide range of issues. Our strategy sets out clear objectives to address these, including regular inspections, proactive maintenance, and strong partnerships with local authorities and other agencies. We're also committed to making sure tenants understand their rights and responsibilities and have access to the support they need to sustain their tenancies.

But we can't do it alone.



Tenant led inspection earlier this year

Our **Estates Team** is out and about regularly, and we'd love to hear from you. If you'd like to take part in an inspection or have ideas for improving your area, please get in touch.

We're inviting all residents to get involved — whether that's by joining us on estate

inspections, reporting issues when you see them, or simply taking pride in your own surroundings. Your input helps us identify problems early and make sure our estates

Together, we can continue the positive progress we're making and ensure our communities thrive.

📞 Call us on 01324 664966

✉ Email: estates@paragonha.org.uk

New Chair Elected 2025



Following our AGM in September 2025, Susan Gilbert was elected as Chair when Audrey Anderson stepped down. A great big thanks to Audrey for all her hard work and support. The good news is she is staying on as a member of the Management Committee.

Susan has previously served as Vice Chair. She takes a great interest in housing matters and regularly attends training, conferences and seminars. Here is she above (right) with Evelyn Mathershaw, Housing Manager when they attended the Tenant Information Service Conference.

She was also shortlisted for SHARE's Learner of the Year in March for her amazing performance in completing their eLearning courses. Well done Susan.



⚙️ Keep in the Know - Changes to Benefits ⚙️

Universal Credit

Universal Credit (UC) is replacing several existing “legacy benefits” like Housing Benefit. These will all end in March 2026. You should have had a ‘Migration Notice’ from the DWP asking you to claim UC. Be sure to claim by the deadline - otherwise, your current benefits will stop, and you won’t receive transitional protection.

UC can be claimed online for help with rent & living costs if you/your partner are working age and on a low income or out of work. It is paid monthly in arrears.

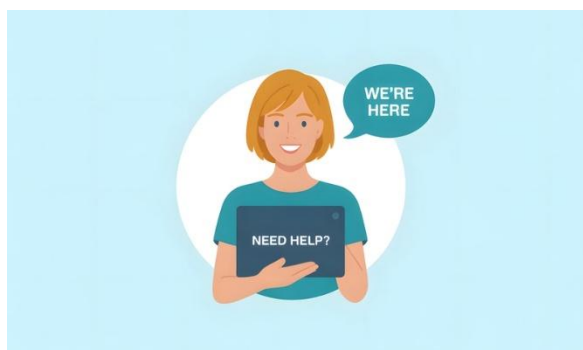


What’s New for Scotland?

- Adult Disability Payment (ADP): Has replaced Personal Independence Payment and some adult DLA claims.
- Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance: remaining adult DLA recipients will move to this by the end of 2025.
- Pension Age Disability Payment (PADP): Replaces Attendance Allowance for pensioners.
- Child Disability Payment (CDP): Replaces child DLA
- Carer Support Payment: Replaced Carer’s Allowance
- Pension Age Winter Heating Payment (PAWHP): Replaced Winter Fuel Payment. People reaching pension age by 21/9/25 with income under £35,000 will be eligible.

Extra Help Is Out There

- If your UC or Housing Benefit don’t cover your full rent, ask your Council about a Discretionary Housing Payment.
- Struggling with costs due to an emergency? Your Council’s Scottish Welfare Fund could help with a Crisis Grant.
- On Pension Credit guarantee? You will receive £150 electricity payment through the Warm Home Discount. Low-income households may also qualify but will need to apply to their electricity supplier.
- Families on certain benefits can get free school meals and clothing grants from the Council.



Need a Hand? We’re Here for You!

Our Tenancy Sustainment Officer is ready to help with benefit questions, applications, and budgeting. Call us on 01324 664966 or email enquiries@paragonha.org.uk

Helpful Contact Information

Paragon Housing Association	Telephone: 01324 664966 Web Site: www.paragonha.org.uk Email: enquiries@paragonha.org.uk
Out of Hours Emergency Reactive Repairs – Sureserve	0330 0531 804
Out of Hours Gas Repairs – City Technical Services	0333 202 0708
For Gas Leaks National Grid Emergency Services	0800 111 999
Scottish Water Helpline	www.scottishwater.co.uk 0800 0778 778
For flooding warnings and advice SEPA Floodline	www.sepa.org.uk 0345 9881118
Electricity Suppliers	
National contact number for power cuts	105
There is useful information on the Scottish Power Energy Networks web site about what to do in the event of a power cut and how to check supply status https://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/	
Council Holiday Bin Collection Bulk /Special Uplifts	
Please check when your bins are due to be collected over the holiday period. Take care to dispose of your rubbish responsibly and do not dump it. Note Stirling Council have suspended bulky uplifts till January 2026.	
Please note that arrangement and charges for uplifts differ in each council area so please contact them direct if you need an uplift. Our staff can also provide you with advice on refuse collection and special uplifts. For some councils you have to book online. Check their web site and they will also have details of recycling centres.	
Clackmannanshire Council	Online booking. General Number 01259 450000
Falkirk Council	Online booking. Contact centre 01324 506070
Stirling Council	01786 404040



Christmas & New Year Services

Public Holidays Christmas

Thursday 25th Dec 2025
Friday 26th Dec 2025
Monday 29th Dec 2025

New Year

Thursday 1st Jan 2026
Friday 2nd Jan 2026
Monday 5th Jan 2026

Only emergency repairs will be carried out during this period and you can find out more about how to report these by visiting our web site www.paragonha.org.uk

Go to our services – emergencies

Here is the link

www.paragonha.org.uk/our-services/repair-services-emergencies

**We wish you a
happy Christmas
and a Good New
Year**