



NEWS

Festive Greetings



OFFICE CLOSURE OVER CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR

The office will close midday on
Tuesday 24th December for the
festive break. We will re-open on
Monday 6th January 2025.



Allocations Policy Review

Dunbritton Housing Association is currently reviewing its Allocation policy through the HOMEArgyll partnership. This Policy is reviewed regularly to ensure it is compliant with current legislation and good practice.

HOMEArgyll is a partnership of the four main Registered Social Landlords (Housing Associations) operating in the Argyll and Bute area, along with Argyll and Bute Council’s Housing Service. The partnership delivers a Common Housing Register and Common Allocation Policy with the primary aim to create a system, which allows applicants to complete one housing application to be considered for Housing Association properties within the Argyll & Bute and West Dunbartonshire areas.

The existing HOMEArgyll Policy has been reviewed to ensure it meets with current legislative requirements and good practice standards.

Following this review members from the HOMEArgyll partnership met to discuss the potential changes and improvements. These changes can be viewed on the HomeArgyll website.

If you are interesting in finding out more and wish to pass on your own views, please visit the HomeArgyll website at; <https://www.homeargyll.co.uk/content/consultation/>



Dunbritton Housing Association Pop-up Event at Lochgoilhead Village Hall



On 4 December 2024, Dunbritton Housing Association, in collaboration with Community Links Scotland and Citizens Advice Bureau, hosted a pop-up event at the Lochgoilhead Village Hall.

As Lochgoilhead is the Association’s most remote development, we wanted to ensure our tenants there had access to the support and assistance available to them.

At the event, tenants received help with a variety of issues, including:

- Debt and benefits advice
- Understanding utility bills and energy consumption
- Tips for achieving the most cost-effective use of heating systems
- And much more

The event was well attended, and we received positive feedback from those who participated.

If you feel that you would benefit from a referral to Citizens Advice or our Energy Advisers, please contact our Housing Team on 01389 761 486 (option 2).

Date for your Diary

Our next Pop-up Event will be held on Thursday 9 January 2025, 12noon – 2pm at Drumfork Community Centre, Churchill Square, Helensburgh, G84 9HN.



Join the Dunbritton Housing Association Armchair Critics Group (ACG)

Who Should Join?

The Armchair Critics Group is perfect for tenants who are passionate about community involvement but don't want to leave the comfort of their home. It's ideal for residents who:

- Are eager to voice their opinions
- Want to suggest improvements
- Aim to actively shape our future without leaving their own home

Your Voice Matters!

We are excited to invite any our tenants to join the **Armchair Critics Group (ACG)** at Dunbritton Housing Association. At Dunbritton, your opinions are invaluable to us, and we strongly believe in the power of open dialogue. The ACG is a unique platform created exclusively for our tenants to voice their thoughts, offer feedback, and actively participate in shaping our policies for the future—all from the comfort of your own home.

What is the ACG?

The ACG is a community-driven initiative designed to encourage active participation from every tenant within Dunbritton Housing Association.

It serves as a collective voice, allowing you to:

- Express your thoughts
- Share insights
- Contribute ideas on various aspects of community living and our Policies

Why Join?

By joining the ACG, you can:

- Be part of positive change
- Share creative solutions
- Enhance our communities

How to Express Your Interest?

If this sounds like you, we'd love to hear from you! To express your interest, please: email us at **admin@dunbritton.org.uk** or call **01389 761486** option 2. Join us in making a difference and shaping the future of our communities!





REMEMBER TO PAY RENT THIS CHRISTMAS

The festive season can be a challenging time financially, especially with the ongoing cost-of-living crisis and rising energy prices. Many people find it difficult to balance the extra costs associated with Christmas, such as gifts, food, and entertainment.

However, it's crucial to remember that paying your rent remains a priority. Rental income is essential for maintaining the services we provide to all our customers. Without it, we wouldn't be able to continue offering the support, maintenance, and resources that help keep your living space comfortable and safe.

Rent is due in advance from the 1st of each month. It is important not to miss a payment – even missing one month's rent can be difficult to get back on track – rent debt can quickly build and put your tenancy at risk.

We offer a range of payment methods including direct debit. Direct debit reduces the risk of missing payments, especially at Christmas. We are asking all customers to make sure that they do not miss their rent payment due in December 2024.

If you want to set up a direct debit payment, please call the office on **01389 761486** option 3 or speak to your Housing Officer.

For customers who pay rent by standing order, debit, or credit card over the telephone, please note that our office will close at 12.00 pm on Tuesday 24 December 2024 and will not open again until Monday 6 January 2025 at 9 am.

If you are experiencing any difficulties in paying your rent, having problems with your benefits, or struggling with household bills, please contact us for help on **01389 761486** and press option 2 and ask to speak to your Housing Officer.



Selection Boxes

Spreading Festive Joy to Our Youngest Residents!

The festive season is here, and Dunbritton Housing Association staff are once again bringing holiday cheer to the community! This year, we're delivering delightful selection boxes to children aged 1 to 8 years old, ensuring little ones feel the magic of Christmas.

If your child is aged 1 to 8 and hasn't received their selection box yet, we'd love to hear from you! Simply contact our Housing Team at **01389 761 486** (option 2), and we'll make sure your little one gets their holiday treat.

From all of us at Dunbritton, we wish you a joyful and magical holiday season!



Garden Competition Awards 2024!

Our AGM allowed for the celebration of individual achievements with our annual awards being presented by the Chair.

Mr and Mrs Johnstone of Beechwood in Arrochar collected the garden competition award for Argyll and Bute and Mrs Linda Murphy of Levenbank Terrace, Alexandria was the winner for West Dunbartonshire. Dunbritton's tenants pride themselves on keeping stunning gardens, and it is a positive reflection on both winners that they have succeeded in the face of some tough competition.

Congratulations to both our winners!



Linda Murphy



Mr and Mrs Johnstone



Changes in Housing Services

We are delighted to welcome Laura McGarvey to the Housing Services Team at Dunbritton as our new Housing Services Assistant!

Laura brings over 15 years of invaluable experience in the retail sector, with a strong background in customer service and management. In her previous role as Assistant Manager at Game, she successfully led a team of

eight, showcasing her exceptional leadership and team-building abilities.

Having recently completed her Honours Degree in 3D Visualisation, Laura is eager to bring her unique blend of skills and experience to her new role in Housing. We are excited to have her on board and look forward to seeing her contributions to the team. Welcome, Laura!



Good Neighbour Award

This year's winner of the Good Neighbour award was Annette Hunter from East Montrose St, Helensburgh.

Annette was nominated by one of her neighbours who stated "the nomination was a long time coming as Annette has always been there looking out for her neighbours making sure they are okay. During lock down she would check on her neighbours to see if they needed anything when she would go to the shops. With a neighbour that lived on the street previously who was

struggling as she got older, Annette would offer to cook for her and walk her dog.

Recently she saw that there was a neighbour in the street struggling with their shopping and Annette who had been hanging out her washing at the time stopped what she was doing and went to go help her. Annette will also regularly check in on neighbours if she hasn't seen them in a while just to make sure they are okay."

Well done, Annette, you're an inspiration to us all!!!



Welfare Checks for Tenants Aged 80 and Over

At Dunbritton Housing Association, we prioritise the well-being of our tenants. As part of this commitment, our Housing Team has contacted all tenants aged 80 and over to ensure their welfare and help in managing the challenges of rising energy costs, benefits, and more.

Support Available

We are proud to collaborate with Community Links Scotland – Energy Advisers and the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) to provide tailored support:

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB):

CAB offers advice on:

- Debt and benefit entitlements, including Pension Credit / Winter Fuel Payments.
- Employment issues.

- Housing concerns.
- Additional guidance on a variety of topics.

Community Links – Energy Advisers:

Their services aim to:

- Help tenants tackle fuel poverty and manage fuel debt.
- Reduce household energy consumption.
- Provide energy-efficient appliances to lower bills and enhance energy savings.

Get in Touch

If you are facing difficulties and would like assistance from Citizens Advice Bureau or Community Links – Energy Advisers, please contact our Housing Team at 01389 761 486, option 2.



Additionally, CAB provides a drop-in service every Thursday from 1 PM to 4 PM at the Dunbritton Housing Association Office: 1 Hatters Lane, Dumbarton G82 1AW.

We are here to support you—don't hesitate to reach out!

Direct Contact with Your Housing Officer



We know how important it is for tenants to be able to get in contact with their Housing Officer. Housing Officers are here to help you manage your rent account, discuss a move (transfer), ensure your estate is maintained and assist with any neighbour disputes.

Your Housing Officer is available at our office or by telephoning through their office direct dial or through their dedicated mobile:



Lyndsey McGillion,
Housing Officer for
Helensburgh
Direct dial -
01389 310890
Mobile number -
07717 782 791



Lindsey Reid, Joint
Housing Officer for
the Lochside and
Dumbarton
Direct dial -
01389 310892
Mobile number -
07976 708 077



Sharon Kane,
Housing Officer for
Alexandria
Direct dial -
01389 310891
Mobile number -
07717 792 894



Kirsty McGlashan,
Joint Housing Officer
for the Lochside and
Dumbarton
Direct dial -
01389 310908
Mobile number -
07717 762843



New Tenants



New Tenant – Christine Kirk

Earlier this year Christine was delighted to view and accept an offer of housing from Dunbritton. The new property was just what Christine needed, and she says she feels settled and happy in her new home.



New Tenant – Isabel Wilson

Another new tenant Isabel Wilson moved into her Dunbritton property in 2024. Isabel loves that the flat is close to her family and near to many local shops.



Make a Difference: Join Our Tenant Scrutiny Group!

Do you have ideas about how we can improve our services? Are you passionate about ensuring tenants receive the best value for money? If so, we invite you to join our Tenant Scrutiny Group and play a key role in shaping the future of Dunbritton Housing Association!

As a member of the Tenant Scrutiny Group, you'll work alongside like-minded individuals to review our services and report directly to our **Board of Management**. Your input will help ensure we're delivering the highest quality services to our customers while identifying areas for improvement.

Why Join?

- **Be the Voice of Tenants:** Share your ideas, provide feedback, and help influence decisions that matter to you and your neighbours.
- **Work Closely with the Board:** Gain insights into how the Association operates and help guide our performance.
- **Meet Like-Minded People:** Collaborate with others who are passionate about making a positive impact.

We're incredibly grateful for the contributions of our current Tenant Scrutiny Group members, but we're always looking for fresh perspectives. Meetings are held quarterly (just four times a year), making it an



ideal opportunity to get involved without a large time commitment.

If you're ready to help shape the future of Dunbritton's services, we'd love to hear from you! For more information or to express your interest, call our **Housing Services Team** at 01389 761486 and select Option 2.

Together, let's make a difference in our community!

Picture above of some of our Tenant Scrutiny Group members and opposite one of our groups celebrating her special Birthday.



Keeping Our Community Clean This Festive Season

As the festive season approaches, let's work together to keep our neighbourhoods clean, safe, and welcoming. With the holiday hustle and bustle comes extra waste—from cardboard boxes to wrapping paper—but proper rubbish and recycling practices can make all the difference.

Lately, we've noticed some household waste, including loose bin bags, being left outside bins. Not only does this create an untidy environment, but it also attracts vermin, like rats, posing health and safety risks for everyone. Let's keep our communities looking their best by following these simple steps:

Nearest Recycling Centres

- **West Dunbartonshire:** Dalmoak Civic Household Recycling Centre, Renton Road, Dumbarton, G82 4HQ.
- **Argyll & Bute:** Blackhill Recycling Centre, Luss Road, Helensburgh, G84 9EE.

Contact Us for Help

If you need assistance or have questions about waste disposal this holiday season, we're here to help! Call us at **01389 761486** and press **option 2** to speak with your Housing Officer.

Let's make this season merry, bright, and clean for all. Your cooperation ensures a safe and pleasant environment for everyone to enjoy!

A Festive Reminder: Rubbish & Recycling

As Christmas draws near with its festive delight,
Let's keep our community tidy and bright.
With wrapping and boxes, the waste may grow,
But a clean, safe home is the gift we bestow.

Bins with numbers help keep things clear,
Mark yours to avoid confusion this year.
Cardboard flattened will make more room,
Let recycling bins blossom, not burst with gloom.

In shared euro bins, please don't overfill,
If one's at capacity, use others at will.
When all bins are full, don't leave waste outside,
Take it to the centre where it can reside.

Bulk items don't belong in the bin,
To the recycling centre, they must go in.

Or call your council for a special uplift,
And let your Housing Officer know of the shift.

Spills from the bins? Please clean them away,
To keep our developments fresh every day.
For food and recycling, stick to the plan,
Check council guidelines if you need a hand.

With teamwork and care, we'll achieve our goal,
A cleaner community for every soul.
This holiday season, let's do what we can,
For a tidier world—it's a win-win plan!

If questions arise or assistance is due,
Call **01389 761486** and press option 2.
Together we'll make this festive time gleam,
With a clean, safe home for our holiday dream.





Emergency arrangements over the holiday period

Our office will be closed from 12 noon on Tuesday 24th December 2024 until 9 am, Monday 6th January 2025.

During this period, only Emergency repairs will be carried out. Emergency repairs should be reported to our out of hours service, Hanover Telecare, on **0131 524 1418**. Please state clearly that you are a Dunbritton Housing Association tenant and that you are reporting an emergency repair.

EMERGENCY REPAIRS:

- Loss of heating where there is no other form of heating available
- Major water leak or flood within the property (or flat above)
- Loss of electrical power or lighting or electrical fault which may endanger a building or resident (but not a power cut from the electricity grid)
- Burst radiator (but not a minor leak)
- Insecure property
- Broken windows
- Broken/blocked WC (if only one WC is in the house)

- Blocked drains
- Total common stair lighting failure
- Safety-related problem
- Smoke alarm/carbon monoxide detector continually beeping but only after batteries have been replaced and eliminated as a fault

In the event that Hanover can't be contacted, please call contractors directly: (Hanover must be the first point of call)

1. Electrical emergencies: Ledgerwood Electrical - **01389 752944 (07703125702/3)**
2. Gas Heating and Plumbing repairs: City Technical Services - **0333 2020 708**
3. Joinery and broken windows: Central Timber Construction - **01436 677930 (07384220296)**

OTHER EMERGENCIES

- In the event of a fire, please contact the emergency services on 999 immediately.
- If you notice a Gas leak, please contact the national gas emergency number immediately on **0800 111 999**.



Fire Safety at Christmas



As Christmas rolls round again, it is important to ensure that we keep our homes safe while enjoying the holidays. Christmas can be one of the most dangerous times of year for fires, statistics show that house fires are most common in December. Here are some useful tips for keeping your home safe this festive season:

- Ensure trees are kept in an open area away from any heat sources or lit candles.
- Check that your Christmas lights are not damaged or broken before use and look out for any loose wires. All lights should be marked with a British Safety standard.
- If hanging lights outside, ensure that they are suitable for outside use and always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Avoid using extension cables intended for indoor use when plugging in outside lights and make sure all leads and connections are kept well above ground. Do not trail leads through puddles, snow, or across paths where they are likely to get trodden on.
- Ensure all lights, inside & outside, are switched off before going to bed.
- Do not overload plug sockets or extension cables.

NEW STAFF

Alysha McAsey

The Asset Management team are delighted to announce the appointment of Alysha McAsey. Alysha joined the team as a temporary recruit from Reed's specialist recruitment agency in July 2024. After only a short period within the team Alysha was offered a permanent contract and joined the team on a permanent basis in October 2024.

Alysha has a wealth of experience from the facility management and hospitality sector with over 9 years' experience in a customer service and a compliance driven environment.

Having previously lived and studied in New Zealand, Alysha is looking to settle into a career within the Asset Management team at Dunbritton.

Alysha is office based as one of our Asset Management Assistants, Alysha will be able to help our customers with all Asset Management related enquiries – Welcome to the team Alysha .



Avoid the misery of frozen pipes

During the winter season, it is advisable to take precautions to avoid frozen pipes.

Please ensure you know where your mains water stop valve is located, and that you can turn it off and on.

If you will not be at home during the winter period:

- Leave your heating on at a low temperature as this will help to stop pipes from freezing.
- Open your loft hatch door. This will allow warm air from other parts of the house to circulate in the loft and help prevent pipes from freezing.

If your pipes are frozen:

- Turn off the water at the main stopcock.
- Call the emergency repairs number. Hanover Telecare on 01315241418

Drying out:

- Keep the affected rooms heated.
- If possible, open windows and doors during the day. Open the doors of built-in cupboards. This will allow air to circulate and dry out the property.

If a pipe has burst:

- Turn off the water at the main stopcock.
- Call the emergency repairs number.
- If water is coming through the ceiling, collect it in a bucket to reduce any damage to floor coverings.
- If wiring or any electrical appliance has been affected, do not touch them until advised to do so by an electrician.
- If in doubt, turn off your electricity at the mains.
- Remove belonging from the affected area.

Contents Insurance

It is vital that you have insurance in place for your home as the Association does not provide insurance coverage for your household furniture, floor coverings and effects. For further information please contact our office on 01389 761 486 (selecting option 2).

Please note that the Association is not liable for damage to the contents of your home.

A guide to dealing with condensation & mould in your home



Condensation occurs during cold weather and affects 1 in 5 properties in the UK. Ventilation is often reduced in winter to keep the heat in, and this causes moisture vapour to rise and condensation to form. It appears on cold surfaces such as walls, windows, and metal, and in places where there is little movement of air such as behind large furniture and in bay windows.

It can be spotted in the corners of windows, around window frames, in or behind wardrobes and cupboards and often forms on cold north-facing walls. An average household will produce approximately 14 litres, (24 pints) of water per day. Moisture is produced throughout the day, from people's breath and daily activities

such as cooking, bathing, and showering.

Modern features such as double glazing and loft insulation are important to keep homes warm, but they can contribute to poor air circulation. In the past there would be a natural escape for warm, damp, and poor-quality air around window frames, doors, and chimneys. However, buildings are now designed to cut down heat loss and therefore inhibit natural ventilation.

With the high costs of heating, we do not want to keep windows open all day, so we need to minimise the problem as much as possible. If not, stale humid air is trapped, and this will inevitably lead to musty smells, dampness, and

mould growth. Moist stale air may also contain dust mite allergens and volatile organic compounds (from cleaning products, hairspray, and deodorants, etc), which can contribute to asthma symptoms.

How to avoid condensation

To prevent condensation, you must maintain the balance of heating, insulation, and ventilation.

- When cooking, reduce moisture by placing lids on pans.
- Do not leave kettles on the boil or pans of water on the hob when not in use.
- Use the minimum amount of water to boil food.
- When filling the bath, run the cold water first then add the hot – it will reduce the amount of steam produced, which will reduce condensation on surfaces.
- Put washing outdoors to dry or hang in the bathroom or kitchen, with the door closed and the window open, or extractor fan on. Do not dry laundry, wet towels, or cloths on radiators.
- If you have a tumble dryer, make sure the vent leads outside.
- Ventilate your home regularly to remove moisture. Kitchen and bathrooms require a lot of ventilation, especially when washing, cooking, bathing, or drying clothes. Windows should be opened when boiling food, and after bathing or showering.



AGM 2024

In September, we held our Annual General Meeting (AGM), a key event in the Dunbritton calendar! Our AGM provided a fantastic opportunity for our members to reflect on the Association's achievements over the past year.

The meeting began with our accountant giving a detailed review of the Associations financial performance, followed by our CEO and Chair sharing exciting insights into our progress. They were proud to announce that Dunbritton has had another exceptional year, with impressive results across all key areas.

As always, our dedication to providing top-quality services to our tenants remains at the core of everything we do, ensuring excellent value for money and a continued commitment to excellence in all that we offer.



Become a Member of the Housing Association!

As a member, you will have the opportunity to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM), where you can vote on important issues and have your say in the direction of the Association. Members also get the chance to participate in the exciting AGM raffle. This year, lucky winners walked away with amazing prizes, including a high-end laptop, a wide-screen TV, a luxury hamper, and supermarket gift vouchers, all generously donated by our contractors.

For just a one-time payment of £1, you can secure a lifetime membership.

To learn more about becoming a member or to apply, please contact our Finance & Corporate Services Team at 01389 761 486, and select option 5.



Appointment of New Chair and Thank You to Sephton MacQuire for His Years of Service

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Gary Mulvaney as the new Chair of the Association, as of 27 November 2024. This important leadership change marks a new chapter for the Association.

With having served on our Board since June 2003, The Board is confident that under Gary's leadership, the Association will continue to achieve our goals while promoting a culture of collaboration and progress.

We would also like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to Sephton MacQuire, who has served as the Chair of the Association for 5 years. Under Sephton's leadership, the Association has seen significant growth, achieved important milestones, and strengthened its impact in the community. His dedication and tireless commitment have been invaluable.

Throughout his time as Chair, Sephton has provided guidance through challenges and celebrating successes. His leadership has set a high standard, and his legacy will continue to inspire all of us as we move forward.



On behalf of the Board, staff, and all members of the Association, we extend our thanks to Sephton for his exceptional service and leadership. We are deeply grateful for his years of hard work and passion.

Community Support Fund

At Dunbritton, we are committed to building vibrant and dynamic communities, and we recognise that supporting local groups is key to achieving this. Each year, we offer grant funding of up to £500, available to schools, local groups, and charities.

The fund is managed by three members of our Board and administered by our Finance & Corporate Services Team.

So far throughout the year, the fund has supported the following initiatives:

- Clyde Valley Gymnastics Club
- Food for Thought
- Garelochhead Station Trust
- Lennox Early Learning & Childcare Centre
- Lomond & Clyde Care & Repair
- Lomond Community Food Pantry
- Vale of Leven Football Club 2018's



If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us on 01389-761486 or email admin@dunbritton.org.uk.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library: Promoting a Love of Reading in Our Community

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a book gifting program designed to inspire a lifelong passion for reading in children. Each month, children receive a high-quality, age-appropriate book delivered to their home at no cost. This initiative aims to improve educational opportunities and cultivate a love of reading among young children in our community.

Over the past year, 408 books have been delivered through this program.

If you would like to enrol your child to receive a free book each month, or if you would like more information, please contact the Finance & Corporate Services team at 01389 761 486, selecting option 5.

Thank You for Your Participation in the Macmillan Coffee Morning!

On behalf of everyone at Dunbritton Housing Association, we would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all those who participated in our recent Macmillan Coffee Morning. Your support, enthusiasm, and generosity helped make this event successful, and together, we have contributed to Macmillan Cancer Support.

Whether you baked cakes, bought a cuppa, or simply came along to enjoy the morning, your involvement played a vital role in raising both awareness and funds for this fantastic cause. The money raised will go towards providing invaluable support and services for people living with cancer and their families, ensuring they receive the care and support they need, when they need it most.

We are proud to be part of such a wonderful community that comes together for a good cause. Your kindness is a testament to the power of unity, and every donation, no matter how big or small, helps make a difference in the lives of those affected by cancer.



A special thank you goes out to our contractor Central Timber Construction for the cash donation and Asda Community Champion for their contribution of some sweet treats and all the volunteers who helped run the event. Your hard work and dedication ensured everything went smoothly, and we could not have done it without you!

The Macmillan Coffee Morning is a perfect example of how, together,

we can have a real impact. We are thrilled to report that the event raised £237.00 for Macmillan Cancer Support, and we look forward to continuing to support this amazing charity in the future.

Once again, thank you to everyone who joined us, donated, and helped make the day such a success.

We look forward to seeing you at our next event!



Pet AID - Working in Partnership with SPCA

This initiative, called "Pet Aid," is dedicated to ensuring that your cherished pets are well-fed during difficult times.

How to Access Pet Aid

If you are a tenant experiencing financial hardship and believe this initiative could help, please don't hesitate to reach out. Contact us at 01389-761486 and ask to speak with a member of our Finance and Corporate team. We are here to ensure your pets receive the care they deserve.

Together with the Scottish SPCA, we are dedicated to supporting our community and their pets through the Pet Aid program. We believe no pet should go hungry and no owner should have to

worry about providing for their furry friends in times of need.

We look forward to supporting you and your pets through this wonderful initiative.



Colouring Competition Winner Announced!

We are thrilled to share that the Lesniewska family was the lucky winner of our Family Fun Day giveaway from the last newsletter! They had an amazing time with a day of Crazy Golf, bowling, and some lunch.

Want to be the next winner! Enter our prize draw for a chance to win a fantastic day out for a family of four. Simply tear off the entry form included in this newsletter, fill in your details, and submit it to us by Friday 10 January 2025. This is a great chance to enjoy some quality time with your loved ones and create unforgettable memories. Do not miss out – enter now!

We hope these competitions bring plenty of joy and excitement to both our young and adult readers. Best of luck to everyone taking part!



Staff Awards

Every year, we proudly present awards to celebrate the hard work and dedication of our staff. This year, at the AGM, we were thrilled to honour **Sharon Buchanan** with the Customer Focus Award. This award recognises Sharon's exceptional commitment and outstanding contributions across the Association.



We are also proud to celebrate both Allan Murphy and Marie Clare Freke who have demonstrated

exceptional loyalty and commitment to the Association over the years.

- **Marie Clare Freke, Finance & Corporate Officer (20 years' service)** – Over the past two decades, Marie Clare has been an integral part of both our finance and corporate services teams. Marie Clare has consistently provided invaluable support across multiple departments,



ensuring efficiency, compliance, and long-term sustainability.

- **Allan Murphy, Chief Executive Officer (10 years' service)** – Allan has provided exceptional leadership. Allan's visionary leadership and tireless work have shaped the direction of the Association, steering it through challenges and ensuring continued growth and success. His ability to lead by example and inspire those around him.



Changes within our Finance Team

We are delighted to welcome on board Amy Wood

Amy brings with her a wealth of experience in hospitality and events, along with a strong academic background. She holds both a HND and HNC in Financial

Services, as well as a Bachelor of Arts in Finance, Investment, and Risk.

Amy is excited to further develop her career within the housing sector at Dunbritton as a Finance & Corporate Services Assistant.



Staff Development at Dunbritton Housing

We are delighted to advise that two of our staff members have recently been awarded a new qualification.

Claire Samain, Governance & Compliance Officer, has showcased exceptional commitment to her professional development by earning the CIH Level 4 qualification in Housing. Congratulations, Claire, on achieving this impressive milestone!



A huge congratulations also to Sean Harwood, Maintenance Officer who has been awarded CIH Level 3 in Housing Maintenance & Asset Management. Sean has shown real commitment towards his personal development by achieving this qualification and has been a true inspiration to his colleagues.



Spreading the Festive Joy

This holiday season, the Dunbritton team came together to bring smiles to local families by donating toys to the “Food for Thought” foodbank in West Dunbartonshire.

In the spirit of giving, our staff contributed funds to purchase a variety of toys, ensuring children in our community experience the festive joy. From educational games to plush

animals and art sets, these gifts will brighten the holidays for families in need.

We are incredibly proud of our team’s generosity and dedication, which reflects the true essence of community spirit. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed and to “Food for Thought” for their tireless work supporting local families.

Wishing everyone a warm and joyful holiday season!



Spreading Joy

This festive season, we set out with the goal of spreading holiday cheer and making the festive season a little brighter for our tenants. With the incredible support of our contractors, we were able to make that goal a reality.

This year, we prepared special festive hampers, thoughtfully filled with items to bring comfort and joy. These hampers were carefully curated to ensure they could make a real difference in the lives of our tenants, adding an extra touch of warmth to their holiday season.

Thanks to the generosity of our contractors—Central Timber Construction, City Technical, Ledgerwoods, MacDonald & Cameron, and Sheils Builders—we were able to assemble and

distribute 20 hampers to our tenants. In addition to the hampers, we also distributed selection boxes to the children of our tenants.

The support we received has truly made this holiday season special for so many. We are grateful for the kindness and generosity shown by our contractors.



CHRISTMAS GINGERBREAD BISCUITS

This easy recipe for gingerbread Biscuits makes great Christmas presents or decorations - perfect for baking with children.

Preparation time:
30 mins to 1 hour
Cooking time: 10 to 30 mins
Serves: Makes 20

Ingredients

- 350g/12oz plain flour, plus extra for rolling out
- 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 2 tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 125g/4½oz butter
- 175g/6oz light soft brown sugar
- 1 free-range egg
- 4 tbsp golden syrup

To decorate

- writing icing
- cake decorations

Method

Sift together the flour, bicarbonate of soda, ginger and cinnamon and pour into the bowl of a food processor. Add the butter and blend until the mix looks like breadcrumbs. Stir in the sugar.

Lightly beat the egg and golden syrup together, add to the food processor and pulse until the mixture clumps together. Tip the dough out, knead briefly until smooth, wrap in clingfilm and leave to chill in the fridge for 15 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4. Line two baking trays with greaseproof paper.

Roll the dough out to a 0.5cm/¼in thickness on a lightly floured surface. Using cutters, cut out the gingerbread men shapes and place on the baking tray, leaving a gap between them. For decorations, use a skewer to make a small hole in the top of each biscuit.

Bake for 12-15 minutes, or until lightly golden-brown. Leave on the tray for 10 minutes and then move to a wire rack to finish cooling. When cooled decorate with the writing icing and cake decorations.

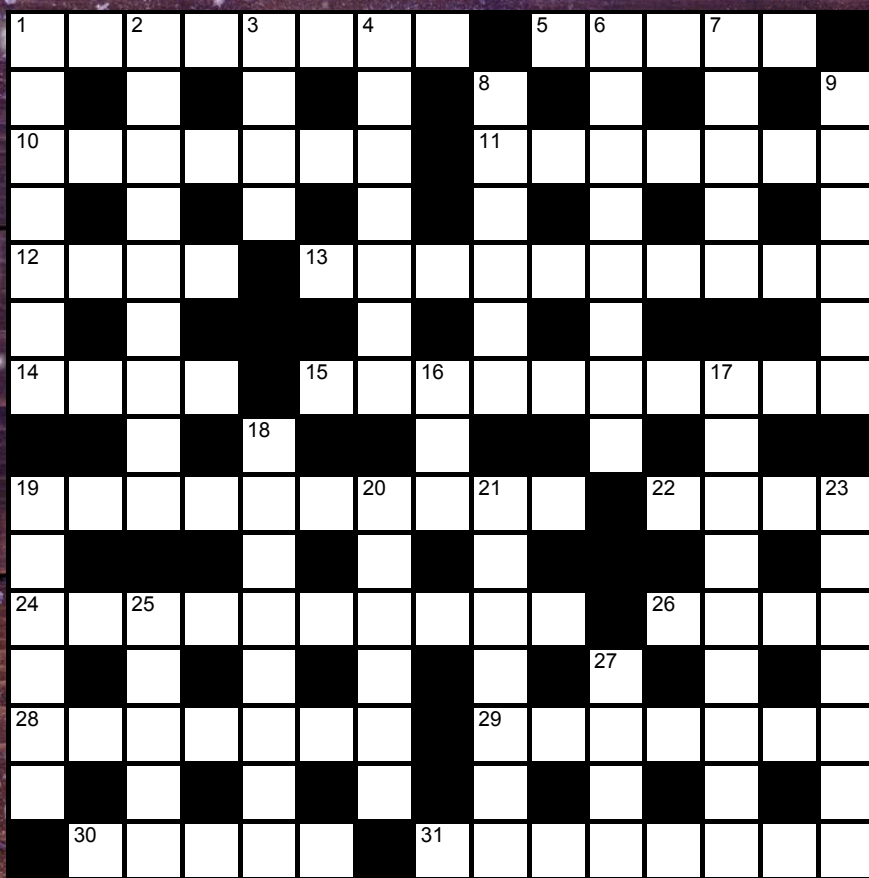
WINTER COLOURING COMPETITION

COLOURING
COMPETITION
FOR KIDS
WIN A £50
VOUCHER!



CROSSWORD
COMPETITION
FOR ADULTS
WIN A £50
VOUCHER!

Crossword Competition



ACROSS

- 1 No-show (8)
- 5 Ring fighter (5)
- 10 Seed providing milk and meat (7)
- 11 Anthropoid (3-4)
- 12 Performs (4)
- 13 Limited (10)
- 14 Island in central Hawaii (4)
- 15 Area of South London (10)
- 19 Senior mail official (10)
- 22 Passport endorsement (4)
- 24 Large city (10)
- 26 Fruit a ka the Chinese gooseberry (4)
- 28 Hearing distance (7)
- 29 Employ excessively (7)
- 30 Stench (5)
- 31 Signal to arise (8)

DOWN

- 1 Praise vociferously (7)
- 2 Pruning shears (9)
- 3 Not one (4)
- 4 Radical (7)
- 6 Biddable (8)
- 7 Survive (5)
- 8 Chicken of very small size (6)
- 9 Lethal (6)
- 16 Furrow (3)
- 17 Religious (9)
- 18 Flatten out (8)
- 19 Treat with excessive indulgence (6)
- 20 Grunts (6)
- 21 Incident (7)
- 23 City in central Texas (7)
- 25 Fortune-telling cards (5)
- 27 Lake or pond (4)

ENTRY FORM

Name:

Contact Number:

Address:

For Kids Colouring Competition only:

Child's Name:

Guardian's Name:

Please tick here if you also wish to enter the **Family Day Out Prize Draw:**

Entrances should be posted to our office at 1 Hatters Lane, Dumbarton, G82 1AW, or e-mail to admin@dunbritton.org.uk by 10th January 2025.

2025 CALENDAR

JANUARY

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

FEBRUARY

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
					1	2
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24	25	26	27	28		

MARCH

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31						

APRIL

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MAY

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JUNE

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JULY

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AUGUST

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SEPTEMBER

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29	30					

OCTOBER

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NOVEMBER

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DECEMBER

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29	30	31				



Festive message from Allan Murphy C.E.O.

As we approach the end of the year, I think we can all agree it has been another difficult year with the ongoing cost of living crisis and hardship affecting many of our communities. However, despite these struggles, your strength, resilience, and cooperation have shown what we can achieve when we come together as a community.

The Association, in partnership with other agencies and has successfully applied for funding to provide help and support to our tenants and supported local organisations as these services are vital to our local communities.

At Dunbritton we have continued to perform well, excelling in key performance indicators, and we remain focused on delivering a quality service and support to all our tenants.

As we look ahead to the festive season, we want to express our sincere gratitude for your continued trust and engagement. Together, we will keep working to overcome any challenges that lie ahead.

On behalf of the Board and all the staff team at Dunbritton we hope this festive season bring you warmth, comfort, and brighter days in the year to come.

All the best for 2025

With warm regards,

Allan Murphy
Chief Executive Officer



Having difficulty reading this? Our newsletter can be made available on talking book or as a text only large print version. Please contact us if you would like to be added to our list for either of these, for this and all future newsletters.



Dunbritton Housing Association Ltd, 1 Hatters Lane, Dumbarton, G82 1AW
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Opening Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday: 9am – 5pm
Wednesday: 9am – 12.30pm (closed in the afternoon for staff training)

