



TENANT NEWS

01 | Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

We joined up with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library 4 years ago to offer under 5's who live in Hjaltland properties free books every month until their 5th birthday.

Dolly Parton created the Imagination Library as a tribute to her Dad, who was unable to read and to support reading from an early age.

We are delighted to say that bairns currently receive a book every month.

Do you have a child under 5 and haven't yet signed up for your free books?

If so, please contact us at the office on 01595 694986 for an application form. It's quick and easy to do and your child will receive a brand new book delivered every month until they turn 5. *What are you waiting for?*

Addison Rexter is delighted to be receiving a book every month.



CHRISTMAS OPENING HOURS

DECEMBER
 Monday 23rd 9am-5pm
 Tuesday 24th CLOSED
 Wednesday 25th CLOSED
 Thursday 26th CLOSED
 Friday 27th CLOSED
 Monday 30th CLOSED
 Tuesday 31st CLOSED

JANUARY
 Wednesday 1st CLOSED
 Thursday 2nd CLOSED
 Friday 3rd 9am-5pm

02 | Christmas Office Closure Arrangements:

Our office will close for the festive period at 5.00pm on Monday 23rd December 2024 and will re-open as normal at 9.00 am on Friday 3rd January 2025.

If during this time you have an emergency repair please contact our out of hours repairs service on **01595 692387**.

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An emergency arises where there is danger to life or limb or serious damage to property. We aim to undertake emergency repairs within 6 hours and the following are emergencies:

- ✓ A failure in the mains electrical supply, other than a power cut
- ✓ A dangerous electrical fault
- ✓ A burst water pipe or water tank
- ✓ A blocked drain, if there is serious leakage
- ✓ A blocked or totally unusable WC
- ✓ A property that is insecure, with a broken window or a damaged door, following an event such as a break-in or possibly storm damage
- ✓ A tenant is locked in or locked out if the person is elderly, disabled, has other special needs or has children in the household

The Association will also complete the following repairs, although these will not be prioritised to be completed within 6 hours of being reported.

- ✓ A non-vulnerable tenant who is locked out of their home
- ✓ A containable leak from the heating or hot water system
- ✓ No heating or hot water

Please remember that it is important to ensure that you cover your rent during this time. For those of you who pay by direct debit we will take the monthly payment on the 3 January so it is important that you ensure there are funds in your account.

There are a lot of demands on our money at this time but please ensure that you leave enough to pay your rent.



We are delighted that our new development in the centre of Walls, Forralea, was completed and all new tenants signed up back in November. We wish them all the best in their new homes.

Still on site and making good progress is our large scale development at Staney Hill, Lerwick. Presently there are excavation and groundworks being carried out. The actual house-building programme is expected to start on site in Summer 2025.



04 | 2025 Management Committee Dates

Hjalmland Management Committee will meet monthly on the following dates:

- ◆ 20th February
- ◆ 27th March
- ◆ 29th May
- ◆ 21st June
- ◆ 28th August
– AGM is same date
- ◆ 23rd October
- ◆ 18th December

Become a member of Hjalmland. This entitles you to vote at the AGM (*Annual General Meeting*). This also means that you can be voted onto the Committee or you can nominate someone to become a Committee member.

If you are interested, all you need to do is complete a form and pay £1. The forms are available at our office or on our website www.hjalmland.org under the 'get involved' section.



The Association would like to take this opportunity to wish all tenants a very

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

05 | Support with Rent Payments

The Association recognises it has been another difficult year for our tenants due to the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. We appreciate many tenants are struggling with rising food, energy and other costs and our staff have been at the forefront in providing support to our Hjalmland tenants.

We want our tenants to know that Association staff can offer help and support if you are struggling to pay your rent during the festive period.

We can help in the following ways:

- ✓ Assist with benefit claims, such as Universal Credit, Housing Benefit, Community Care Grants
- ✓ We can assist you to apply for an additional rent benefit payment if you meet the criteria
- ✓ Signposting you to professional debt advice
- ✓ We can take your rent payments over the phone
- ✓ You can set up direct debit and standing order payments to pay your rent

Here to Help

Don't sit at home worrying about your rent or any other money problems. We want to help – if you are struggling financially, speak to us and we can help you. Your rent is a priority; ignoring the problem will only increase your debt and can put your tenancy at risk.

So, if you need our support or simply want to have a chat, just visit the office or give us a ring on **01595 694986**.

You can also email the Association at mail@hjalmland.org



06 | Stay safe this Christmas

The holiday season is here, and it's time to deck the halls, put up the tree, and enjoy all the festive fun. But amidst all the merriment, danger can lurk. Follow these tips to ensure

your Christmas is filled with joy and not unexpected surprises:

Deck the halls, but don't overload the sockets

Using extension cords wisely is key. Plugging too many decorations into one socket can cause overheating and potentially start a fire. Spread out your decorations across different outlets or use a power strip with a built-in circuit breaker.

Twinkling lights, but not overnight

Remember to turn off Christmas lights and decorations before going to bed or leaving the house. Lights can overheat and cause a fire if left on for too long. Setting a timer for your lights to automatically turn off at a certain time each night can be a great help.

Keep the tree fresh and hydrated

Did you know a real Christmas tree can be more of a fire hazard than an artificial one? Artificial trees are usually fire retardant. Real trees require watering and can absorb up to a litre of water a day, so it's important you don't let them dry out.

Candles are lovely, but be careful

Place candles in sturdy holders and keep them away from flammable materials. Candles can easily tip over and start a fire. Consider using battery-operated candles for a safer alternative.

Cooking up a storm? Stay in the kitchen

Never leave cooking unattended, especially when using the stove or oven. Unattended cooking is a leading cause of house fires. Set a timer to remind you to check on your food regularly.

Check your alarms

Test your smoke alarms and replace batteries if needed. Working smoke alarms can give you an early warning in case of a fire.

Got an e-bike for Christmas? Charge it safely!

E-bikes are a fantastic gift, but it's important to charge them safely. Always use the charger that came with the bike and avoid charging it overnight or unattended. Make sure to charge your e-bike in a well-ventilated area and keep it away from flammable materials.

Wishing you all a wonderful festive time!

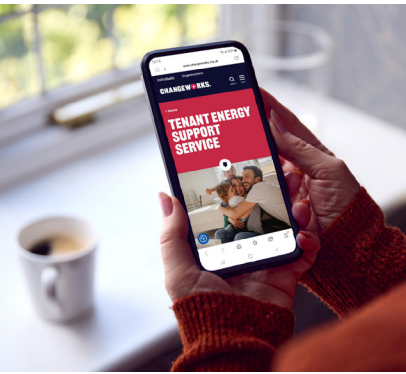
Keep your health in check!

As it's chilly, you're most likely to have your heating on. So, to keep your home warm invest in draft excluders and cover bare, wooden floors with a rug.

There we have it! Our list of top tips to ensure you have a safe, fun and memorable Christmas!

On a final note, during this period, check in on loved ones who are living alone with a quick phone call, or an unexpected Christmas card - these simple acts can go a long way in brightening up someone's day.





07 | Tenant Energy Support Service

We're excited to let you know about a brand-new service, the Tenant Energy Support service. We've partnered with Changeworks - Scotland's leading environmental charity and experts in providing energy advice and support - to deliver this service.

The service is free to access and gives our tenants expert energy advice through the online library. There is also support available from expert energy advisors who can provide expert help, communicate with energy suppliers on tenants' behalf, and direct to financial support if needed.



The Tenant Energy Support online advice library can be accessed via this link: <https://changeworksinfo.org/hjaltland-tes> or scan the QR code, or you can call Changeworks for one-to-one support from an energy advisor.

You can contact **Changeworks** on **freephone 0800 870 8800** between **9am-5pm, Monday - Friday** if you feel you need some additional support or a more detailed chat.

08 | Tea and Tabnabs

We invited the members of our Tenant Focus Group along to our office for tea and homebakes last week. This was to thank members for participating throughout the year in both our quarterly meetings and reviewing documents through email.

We appreciate the time our focus group members give up in order to help make decisions which affect all tenants.

It is so important to our organisation to get feedback and engagement from our tenants so that we can provide the best possible service to all our customers.

If you wish to join our Tenant Focus Group or receive further information, please contact Estelle by emailing estelle@hjaltland.org



Get involved with our Tenant Focus Group



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

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

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



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