



All you need to know about the annual gas servicing and safety checks ... *page 2*

Universal Credit

2nd May Universal Credit is being introduced in West Lothian. Find out more ... *page 3*



DON'T FORGET... our office will close for Easter weekend.
We will be closed on Friday 30th March and re-open at 8.30am on Tuesday 3rd April

Gas servicing & safety checks

The servicing of gas fired appliances in your home is a legal requirement and all appliances must be serviced and checked for safety once every 12 months.

Our contractor WRB will notify you in writing at least six weeks in advance of the due service date to advise you on which day and at what time the gas safety check has been scheduled in your home.

WHEN IS SERVICING CARRIED OUT?

- 8.00am through to 6pm Monday to Friday
- 9.00am to 1pm on Saturday mornings

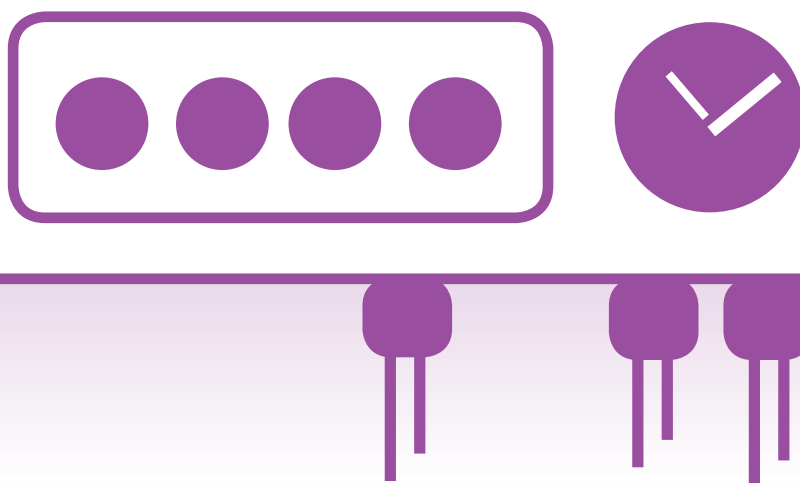
WHAT MUST YOU DO?

- Let us in to your home on the appointed date and time

- If the time and date notified to you is inconvenient, you must contact our contractor WRB or the Almond office to make an alternative appointment
- If you have a prepayment meter, please ensure there is sufficient credit on the meter to allow the service and testing of the appliances in your home

IF YOU DON'T KEEP AN APPOINTMENT...

Almond will instruct legal action to gain access into your home and recharge all costs to you including solicitors' fees, sheriff's fees and locksmiths – often in excess of £300



If you smell gas!

- Put out any cigarettes and don't use matches or naked flames
- Turn the gas off at the meter
- Don't switch on or off any electrical switches or appliances
- Don't press buttons on the door entry systems
- Open doors and windows to get rid of gas
- CALL TRANSCO ON 0800 111 999, USING A PHONE OUTSIDE OF YOUR HOME



What is Universal Credit?

From 2nd May Universal Credit Full Service will be introduced to West Lothian. Universal Credit is a payment for people in or out of work and claimants in a full service area have the option to get paid once or twice a month. Over the next few years, it will replace:

- Housing Benefit
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Child and Working Tax Credits

You will be asked to claim Universal Credit but will not be able to claim it unless you have the following:

- An email address
- A bank account

There are a number of key differences between how Universal Credit is paid and it is important that you understand these changes. We are asking all tenants who are required to claim Universal Credit from May to contact us to make sure we get you any help we can. For example, if you do not have an email address, you can pop into our reception and use our free wifi or laptops to set up an email address.

Please get in touch with us if there is anything you are not sure about regarding Universal Credit.



Estate Inspections – want to have your say?

As part of our estate management service, we inspect and maintain areas that we own, as well as shared areas. These areas include landscaped areas with grass, shrubs and trees, and any footpaths or hard landscaped areas which are not maintained by the local council. For flats, the shared areas also include the roof, stair entrance door and external walls.

Your Housing Officer carries out estate inspections on a regular basis and reports repairs as required. We also check and monitor door entry systems and closes and, if required, arrange repairs or clean-ups. Some tenants living in flats are responsible for cleaning

closes and stairs in their building. In other flats, primarily in Craigshill, we have a close cleaning contract.

We also check that gardens don't become overgrown or littered with refuse. With over 2500 properties we get round them all eventually, but if you see an overgrown garden or have concerns about a tenant not disposing of refuse correctly, let us know.

You can also contact us if you would like to join your Housing Officer in reviewing the estate or you have an area you want to highlight.

We have a winner!

Congratulations to Miss Levins of Ladywell, who has won our Almond Award for this quarter! Miss Levins was delighted to be presented with **£250 worth of vouchers** for Almondvale Shopping centre and Asda.



The draw is our way of thanking folks for keeping on top of their rent payments, taking care of their home and generally being a good tenant!

Our next Almond Award will be run in Summer 2018. All you need to do in order to be entered for the draw to win £250 worth of vouchers is to:

- 1** Have maintained a clear rent account for a minimum period of three months immediately prior to the draw
- 2** Not be involved in any anti-social behaviour in your area
- 3** Maintain your tenancy and any garden area to a satisfactory standard
- 4** Have allowed our contractor to gain access to your home to complete the annual gas check

Well done to Miss Levins and a big thanks to all our tenants!

Need help with your garden?

As an Almond tenant, it is your responsibility to keep your garden tidy. Our Housing Officers carry out regular checks to make sure that the area where you live is clean, tidy and well maintained.

We understand that not all our tenants are able to look after their garden. Therefore, some are entitled to help with maintaining their garden, specifically grass cutting. If you fall into this category and are not yet on the list, please contact your Housing Officer.

To get help with your garden you must be either:

- Over 70 years old, or registered blind or disabled
- Suffering from ill health and receiving Disability Living Allowance
- Aged between 65 and 69 with a Doctor's Certificate

Please note, if you have any able bodied adults in the house you will not qualify. To find out more, contact us on **01506 439291**.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

EMERGENCY "OUT OF HOURS" REPAIRS: 0845 038 0040

Almond Housing Association	01506 439 291	Homeless Persons	01506 280 000	Scottish Power	(General) 0845 270 0700
Gas Leaks	0800 111 999	Howden Health Centre	01506 423 800		(Emergency) 0845 272 7999
Citizens Advice Bureau	01506 432 977	Litter Hotline	0800 616 446	St John's Hospital	01506 523 000
Craigshill Health Centre	01506 432 621	Police	101	Street Lighting	01506 280 000
Energy Advice	0808 808 2282	Refuse Collection	01506 280 000	West Lothian Council	01506 280 000