

# Prospectus



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SUMMER EDITION

## HOW TO ALLOCATE PROSPECT HOMES?

We are reviewing our Allocations Policy and want to hear your views on the approach you think we should take.

For many years, demand for social housing in Edinburgh has outstripped supply. Currently there are over 21,000 households on the Edindex housing register but only around 2,700 homes become available each year from the Edindex landlords. The allocations policies set by social housing landlords take account of this high level of housing need and define how to make fair and best use of the limited supply of homes available.

Our Allocations Policy must take account of the legal and regulatory framework that social housing landlords work within. We are also allowed to develop some practices to meet the needs of the community we are part of. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 has introduced some changes that will come into effect this year to make sure that those people most in need are helped to find a home. So, we plan to update our Allocations Policy and are keen to hear from our tenants as part of this. Let us know your thoughts, reply to the questions texted out or see the news section on our website for more information.



## TENDAI WINS THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY FUN RUN

The **Wester Hailes Fun Run** had a high turnout this year with 154 people of all ages making their way round the 5k route in the sunshine.

The winner was 13 year old Tendai Nyabadza from Walkers Rigg who ran round the 5k route with a great time of 20:48:47. Over 150 people of all ages and abilities took part in the sunshine, with everyone winning a medal when they passed the finish line. Tendai trains 3 nights a week with Harmeny Athletics Club who have been coaching him in the 1,500 metres category. He said it was a tough course but he knew parts of it well as he runs regularly round Wester Hailes. His mum Lois was full of praise for Harmeny AC for all the support they give Tendai and other young people that helps them compete so successfully.

Prospect is part of the Fun Run Planning Group and we are involved both in the lead up and in providing help on the day. The Fun Run is a great community celebration and we are proud to be part of it.

● Pictured here is the overall winner of the Fun Run, **Tendai Nyabadza**. We were delighted to present him with his trophy, especially as his family are Prospect tenants.



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Prospect Community Housing is a registered charity. No. SC029797



## HOUSING ASSISTANT UPDATE

Whilst **Gillian Scougall** is on maternity leave, we are delighted to welcome **Fiwasade Onifade** to join us as a Housing Assistant. Fiwasade brings a wealth of experience in housing.

Meanwhile we wish Gillian well with their new addition to the family.



“I’VE HAD A GOOD START AND I’M LOOKING FORWARD TO WORKING WITH EVERYBODY.”

## DATA PROTECTION OFFICER

Prospect has appointed **Leigh Pettigrew** as our Data Protection Officer.

The primary role of the data protection officer is to ensure that Prospect processes your personal data in compliance with the current data protection rules. Our Fair Processing Notice has been updated to include Leigh’s contact details and is on our website. If you have any questions about how we process your data, please contact Leigh at [leigh.pettigrew@prospectch.org.uk](mailto:leigh.pettigrew@prospectch.org.uk)



## CHANGES TO YOUR TENANCY RIGHTS

Due to changes in the law, with effect from 1 November 2019, the rules for the following situations will change

- Adding someone to your tenancy (joint tenant)
- Transferring your tenancy to someone else (assign your tenancy)
- Subletting your property
- Who can take over your tenancy after you die (succession)

Members of your household (including children and carers) will be subject to a new 12-month qualifying period. The qualifying period will only begin once we have written confirmation from you that they are living there.

So, after 1 November 2019, if you do not give us 12 months’ notice in writing that someone is in your property they will not be eligible to become a joint tenant, you will not be able to seek permission to transfer your tenancy to them (assign the tenancy), nor will they be entitled to take over the tenancy if you die (succeed).

Let us know who is living in your house or of any changes to your household by emailing: [housing@prospectch.org.uk](mailto:housing@prospectch.org.uk), contact us via our website or write to us.

## HELP WITH CHILDCARE COSTS

**Tax-Free Childcare** is a government scheme available to working parents with children from 0-11 years.

Eligible parents can get up to £2,000 per child, per year to spend on qualifying childcare. So for working parents with 2 children, it could mean a £4,000 per year saving on the family’s budget.

Tax-Free Childcare isn’t just for everyday childcare costs, such as, childminders and nurseries, parents can also use it to pay towards the cost of:

- after school clubs
- summer camps
- school holiday activities

To apply, please visit [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)



## EEA national?

**Czy jesteś obywatelem EOG?**

Martwisz się o Brexit i nie wiesz, jak na ciebie wpłynie? Jeśli tak, możesz rozważyć ubieganie się o Status Osiedlony w Wielkiej Brytanii. Aplikacja jest bezpłatna. Więcej informacji (w tym jak się zgłosić) można znaleźć pod adresem: <https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families/applying-for-settled-status>



# UNIVERSAL CREDIT – DON'T PANIC!

## HERE'S ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW



**Universal Credit** is a new benefit which has now been rolled out in Edinburgh. If your circumstances change you might be asked to apply for it.

### 1 What benefits does it replace?

Housing Benefit, Employment and Support Allowance, Job Seeker's Allowance, Income Support and Tax Credits. Instead of receiving these separately, you will receive one monthly payment.

### 2 Who will this benefit affect?

Working age people who have a change of circumstance. Check with us if you are told by DWP to claim Universal Credit (UC) and we can confirm which benefit you need to apply for.

### 3 How is Universal Credit different?

Instead of receiving potentially lots of different benefits, you will receive one monthly payment. This will be paid into a bank account. You will need to apply for this benefit online and keep in touch with DWP via an online internet account or "Universal Credit journal". You will need to budget this monthly payment to make sure you have enough money to pay your bills (including your Prospect rent) each month. You will need to apply for Council Tax Reduction separately from City of Edinburgh Council for help to pay your Council Tax.

### 4 What happens if I'm receiving benefits but nothing changes?

There will be no change and you'll continue to receive your current benefits. It may be several years before you are asked to move onto Universal Credit.

### 5 What do I need to do to be ready for Universal Credit?

- Open a bank account if you don't already have one.
- Make sure you have identification.
- Think about where you can access the internet. You will need to apply and manage your claim online.
- Remember to keep your mobile phone number if you change phones or make sure you update Prospect and DWP if you change it and you receive Universal Credit.

### 6 How can Prospect help?

We can help with:

- Checking that Universal Credit is the right benefit for you – speak to your Housing Officer, or our Welfare Rights Officer, Fiona McLuckie if you have a change of circumstances.
- Confirming your rent for Universal Credit. We'll let you know when we do this and remind you to update your Universal Credit journal.
- Agreeing and setting up ways to pay your rent to Prospect. You will need to pay your rent directly to us as we won't receive it from Housing Benefit for you anymore.
- Providing internet access. We have 3 computers and a printer available to use in our Community Room. We can help with making a claim and using your journal.
- Keeping your Universal Credit journal updated.
- Applying for Discretionary Housing Payments from City of Edinburgh Council if you are under occupying. We can help you apply.

KEEP IN TOUCH – WE'RE HERE TO HELP WITH **UNIVERSAL CREDIT**

## BEST START GRANT - NEW SCOTTISH GRANT FOR CHILDREN!

The **Best Start Grant** includes 3 one-off cash payments:

1. **Pregnancy and Baby Payment** – £600 or £300
2. **Early Learning Payment** - £250
3. **School Age Payment** - £250



### Are you getting one of the following benefits?

- |                                                        |                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Child Tax Credit   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Income-based Jobseekers Allowance (JSA), not 'contribution based' JSA               |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Universal Credit   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), not 'contribution based' ESA |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Income Support     |                                                                                                                         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pension Credit     |                                                                                                                         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Working Tax Credit |                                                                                                                         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Housing Benefit    |                                                                                                                         |

If so, you should be eligible for the new Best Start Grant paid by the Scottish Social Security Agency. Apply online at <https://www.mygov.scot/best-start-grant/> or call our Welfare Rights Officer, **Fiona McLuckie** for help – **0131-272-5038**.



## MY PROSPECT ACCOUNT

We offer a 24/7 service via our website [www.prospectch.org.uk](http://www.prospectch.org.uk) where you can log into your Prospect account. Here you can log repairs, pay your rent, and get in touch with us. You will be able to log and upload photos of repairs as well as being able to download your rent statement.

If you haven't yet logged into your Prospect Account, you'll need to ask us for the activation code to get started. If you need a hand to get going online, pop into our Community Room and we'll be happy to help.



## COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE

Between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019, we handled 136 stage one complaints and 14 stage two complaints. 68% of stage one complaints and 64% of stage two complaints were upheld or partially upheld.

### What we've learned from complaints:

#### Case Study One:

● We received a complaint from a tenant who was unhappy with the process we had in place for handling rechargeable repairs. The tenant was unhappy the invoice had taken a long time to be issued and it didn't detail what the rechargeable repair was for. The tenant also commented the letters to follow up payment appeared to be overly harsh and it was difficult to speak to a member of staff to deal with the queries. We upheld the complaint and are planning to make some changes to the way we handle rechargeable

repairs. We will send out a communication to the tenant to confirm when a repair is rechargeable. We will amend our invoices to provide a clear description of the rechargeable repair and why the tenant has been recharged. We will also change our follow up letters to give details on how to pay the bill and queries will always be responded to as soon as possible by the most appropriate member of staff even during periods of annual leave.

#### Case Study Two:

● A tenant complained they had not received goods after a few weeks from Bethany following a referral by our Housing Management Team. Our staff investigated with Bethany and discovered the referral

information had been lost. We have now implemented a system that all referrals are acknowledged by Bethany and if they have not responded within 24 hours our staff will follow up to ensure there are no future delays.

## PROSPECT SCRUTINY GROUP

### ASSESSES THE ROUTINE REPAIRS SERVICE

● Pictured here are some members of Prospect Scrutiny Group, with our Admin Officer Nikki, when they spent time with her as part of their latest project to have a close look at our repairs process. If you'd like to join them or the Tenants Forum to have a greater say in how Prospect works, just let us know.



## AGM

● This year's AGM will be held on **Tuesday 10 September** at Whale Arts at 6pm. All Prospect members will be very welcome to join us. If you're not a member yet, it's only £1 to join – ask at reception for a form or contact **Julie Thynne** on **0131 458 5480** for more information.



### OUR VISION:

PROVIDING HOMES AND BUILDING COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

### OUR VALUES:

PIONEERING RELIABILITY LISTENING FAIRNESS PARTNERSHIP