Midlothian

TPAS SCOTLAND

ALLOCATIONS

Due to recent changes in law, the Council will be changing the way it allocates houses. These changes are intended to address homelessness and ease pressure on the current system. Houses will now be allocated on the basis of housing need rather than previous criteria such as the amount of time applicants have spent on the waiting list.

Details of these changes will be explained at the Tenants' Conference. This session will allow you the opportunity to ask any questions about allocations and homelessness.

Conference Programme:

9.30am	**Registration & Arrival**
10.00	**Main Session**
10.50	**Comfort break – tea and coffee**
11.05	**Discussion Sessions:** **Council House Allocation and Antisocial Behaviour**
12.45	**Close & Lunch**

(Please note that depending on numbers the discussion sessions will either run back to back or as different options)

Crèche facilities will be provided on request. Please book when you phone to confirm your place.

If you are planning to come to the conference please phone to let us know.

TPAS free phone number 0800 269 645

Midlothian

TENANT NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO.2

SPRING 2006

Midlothian Council is holding its first Tenants' Conference Next Month. The Conference is open to all Midlothian tenants and we are keen that as many as possible come along and take part.

TENANT'S CONFERENCE

Dalkeith Community Centre

18th March

9.30am - 1.00pm

WHY A TENANT'S CONFERENCE?

The Conference is for all tenants of Midlothian Council. Important areas of the Housing Service will be discussed with opportunities for you to question the way things are done. It is your chance to find out about housing issues that affect you.

If you are interested, please book your free place by Monday 6th of March 2006. We need to know how many people will be attending. The Conference will feature short speeches

A TENANTS FORUM FOR MIDLOTHIAN TENANTS

Come and find out more about the Tenants' Forum! The Council is currently working with several tenants who are interested in setting up a tenants' forum.

A tenants' forum would give tenants a collective voice in Midlothian on issues such as Antisocial Behaviour, Housing Conditions and Housing Services.

The forum would provide an excellent opportunity for local people to influence the housing service provided by the Council.

The tenants' forum would receive support and funding from the Council. This would include annual funding and training on topical Housing issues.

If you are interested in getting involved in the tenants' forum, please contact either Colin Cassie or Jamie Ballantine at the Tenants Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) on 0800 269 645 or speak to us at the tenants conference.

LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY

All local authorities must produce a 'local housing strategy' that sets out how they will manage, maintain and finance their houses. Local authorities are required to keep this strategy under review. Midlothian Council would like to find out your views on the Local Housing Strategy.

The Local Housing Strategy will shape how housing services are provided in the years to come. The Council will use the Tenants' Conference to provide information and consult tenants over the Housing Strategy.

Midlothian

SCOTTISH HOUSING QUALITY STANDARD

SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

The Scottish Executive recently set out their plans for achieving better standards in social housing. These plans are known as the Scottish Housing Quality Standard or SHQS. The Council will have to make sure all their houses comply with the new standard by 2015. There are 5 main aspects to the new standard:

1. **Houses must meet the current statutory Tolerable Standard**
2. **Houses must be free of serious disrepair**
3. **There must be a commitment to improving energy efficiency. Efficient central heating and insulation will be required in all houses.**
4. **Houses must be equipped with modern facilities, in particular kitchens and bathrooms.**
5. **Health and safety requirements must be fulfilled, such as sufficient ventilation.**

The Council will set out their approach for meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard at the Tenants' Conference. This will explain what kind of improvements will be made to houses and any likely impact on rents.

How do you want to be consulted?

Newsletters, tenants' conferences and local events are a good way of providing information and getting tenant's views and feedback on housing services. The Council is always interested to know about other ways you would like to be consulted.

The Tenants' Conference is a great opportunity to let the Council know what things they are doing right or what could be done differently.

Please try to attend - your views can help make a difference to how housing services are delivered.

Discussion sessions

Discussion sessions will give you a chance to talk about housing issues in more detail.

TACKLING ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Tackling antisocial behaviour is a key priority for the Council. This session will outline our approach to addressing antisocial behaviour and the measures we have put in place.

Midlothian Council's Antisocial Behaviour Team has been in place for almost a year now. Two antisocial behaviour officers are based in Buccleuch House, Dalkeith and work closely with the Police, Social Work and other agencies to tackle antisocial behaviour.

The Council has recently set up an antisocial behaviour advice line. It is funded by the Scottish Executive as part of the national commitment to addressing antisocial behaviour and is for the use of both residents and businesses throughout Midlothian. The two antisocial behaviour officers can be contacted on the line and will give advice and information on all antisocial behaviour issues.

Midlothian Council's Antisocial Behaviour team, local Councillors and Gorebridge Community Wardens

ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ADVICE LINES

MIDLOTHIAN EAST
0131 271 3390

MIDLOTHIAN WEST
0131 271 3393