

Newsletter

Glasgow Edinburgh Inverness

March 2011



The Scottish Government Energy Assistance Package



What is the Energy Assistance Package?

The Energy Assistance Package is a holistic package to help maximise incomes, reduce fuel bills and improve the energy efficiency of homes. It replaces the Central Heating and Warm Deal programmes.

The package builds on the existing energy efficiency advice network and will be delivered in partnership with existing advice providers, energy companies and the Scottish Government. Overall management of the delivery of the package will rest with the Energy Saving Trust.

The Energy Saving Trust manages delivery of the package on behalf of the Scottish Government. To find out what the package can offer you, telephone the Energy Saving Trust on 0800 512 012 or visit

www.energyassistancepackage.com.

Debt Recovery

We have had requests from owner/occupiers in regards to how as a company we manage accounts that are not being paid by owners. We are very pro-active in our response times and reaction to debts outstanding over £500.00. We have an in-house Paralegal and a debt assistant who are actively chasing outstanding accounts. Our debt recovery procedures are:

Accounts are sent every quarter, February, May, August, November, owners then have 28 days to pay their accounts, a further 14 days later a reminder is then sent, if the account is still outstanding 7 days later, a reminder is sent and an administration fee of £15.00 is added to the debtors account. If no monies are received or an agreement for a payment plan has not been set, then sheriff officers are instructed to attend the property with a charge being allocated to the debtors account. As a company we have to secure the debt and if no action is then taken by the debtor we serve a N.P.L (Notice of potential liability) against the debtors property will prevent them from selling their property, re – mortgaging or securing any debt against the property without the debt to Grant & Wilson being cleared. All charges will be allocated to the debtors account.

Therefore, a debt at say £200.00 can end up as high as £490.00 if no communication is made. We can accept payment by Direct Debit, Credit Card, Debit Card, Cheque, bank transfer and cash, we are happy to discuss a payment plan if owners are struggling. We appreciate at times owners may have a dispute in regards to cleaning, gardening etc however this does not excuse the non-payment of an account with other charges, as Grant & Wilson are paying Contractors and Insurances in advance. If owners on a development do not pay their accounts, this can have a profound effect for the development and other owners. As a company we cannot pay for repairs or insurance premiums if there is a large amount of debt outstanding. Due to data protection we cannot supply the details of the debtors on site, however when an N.P.L (Notice of Potential Liability) is served on a debtor and it is with the Registers of Scotland, this information is not data protected and is therefore available in the public domain.

New Members of Staff

Management at Grant & Wilson Property Management Limited would like to welcome our new members of staff to our team.

Glasgow

Glasgow

Edinburgh



Giovanna Waters
Debt Recovery



Anne Marie Hamilton
Reception/Typist



Tom Heaney
Property Manager

Interesting Fact ...

Scotland boasts over 600 square miles of fresh water lakes, known as lochs, of which the most famous one is Loch Ness (with its monster).

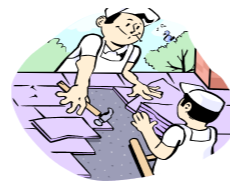


IMPORTANT NOTICE!

We would like to make owners/occupiers aware that for your own safety, under no circumstances should you

be accessing the roof area within your property, to repair tiles, stop water leaks or clean gutters. You are not qualified or insured and more importantly it is not safe.

If you have any problems in connection with your roof call your Property Manager and they will arrange for a qualified contractor to attend.



Bogus Caller

Unfortunately this is becoming an increasing concern within our society; however there are general precautions you can take before you give ANYONE access to your home. If someone is trying to gain access into your home and prior arrangements have not been made, **consider asking the following:**

- ASK Who do you work for?**
- ASK Why are you here?**
- ASK Can I see your identification?**

If the answer to any of these questions are evasive or you are given a lame excuse, DO NOT take the risk in allowing this person into your home. If the visitor states they are from Grant & Wilson Property Management Ltd and you are not convinced DO NOT hesitate to call your Property Manager or the main office telephone numbers: Glasgow 0141 552 2230 Edinburgh: 0131 555 3100 Inverness 01463 259460 If the caller is insistent and is attempting to gain access, telephone the police immediately.

Accreditation or Regulation the Consultation Begins

The regulation of Factors in Scotland will be the end result of a process following the OFT report on Property Managers in Scotland: A Market Study. No matter your views on this report it is viewed as a bench mark for this service sector to be brought in line with other professions and be regulated.

In February 2010, Patricia Fleming MSP gained enough cross party support to have a Members Bill, proposing statutory Regulation of Factors. At the same time a working party has been in the process of consulting with private and public bodies, including the Property Managers Association with regard to an Accreditation scheme. Both formats will end the apparent lack of accountability of Factors.

But what accountability will this bring?

On the one hand the Statutory Legislation will provide that it is an offence for a Factor to operate without being registered. The voluntary scheme will allow all owners the opportunity to decide quite clearly if they wish to have an "accredited or non accredited" company to look after their property. But the most important issue and the one that causes most concern is that of dispute (complaint) resolution. The bill proposes the establishment of a Housing Panel and the Homeowner Housing Committee to decide. The Accreditation scheme provides for the service of an Ombudsman Service Scheme. The later is independent, but no matter the process owners will still have to address complaints through the company procedure in the first instance.

No one, that I am aware of at the Property Managers Association is against the proposals as long as there is a level "playing field" for all. We have seen the moves to accountability in every other sector in the market place from accountancy to law and financial, therefore Factors want in 2010/11 to move forward and set their stall apart from those who have largely brought disreputation to the market then, must embrace the change, work with the proposals and move the Factoring Sector into the next level. After all in the OFT report 70% of clients said they were happy with the service of the Factor so we cannot all be doing something wrong.

The consultation process for the accreditation is open for comment until August and more can be found at the Scottish Parliament website: www.scottish.parliament.uk

Graham Mitchell, MD

Boiler Scrappage Scheme for Landlords

The Scottish Government boiler scrappage scheme offers landlords £400.00 towards the cost of upgrading inefficient boilers to an Energy Savings Trust recommended boiler.

Landlords can apply for the boiler scrappage scheme by calling the Home Energy Hotline 0800 512 012 or by visiting the energy savings trust website: www.energysavingstrust.org.uk

Account Payments

TRADE ACCOUNTS

Any owner who wishes to exercise their rights to view trade accounts must advise their Property Manager in advance of this request, as this will allow time for all accounts to be retrieved from our archive files. We would then request that you make an appointment with your Property Manager, at our offices to view these accounts.

ACCOUNT PAYMENTS

We would appreciate if you are paying your account by bank transfer quote your Grant & Wilson reference number and if by cheque write the reference number on the back. This will ensure that all monies paid will be allocated to your account when confirmation has been received from the bank



Switch Over Reminder

Digital Switchover Advice

By the end of the year 2012, the whole of the UK will switch over to the digital signal, and the old analogue signal will be switched off. However, many areas are already benefiting from the new digital TV signal, and have a greater choice of TV channels and improved reception!



How can I be ready for the Digital Switchover?

Providing you have a modern digital television with either a built in or separate Freeview receiver, you will still be able to receive digital TV channels after the switchover in your area. Please note, you will also need the installation of a digital TV aerial at your property to receive the broadcasted signals from your local transmitter. However, if you have an old television unfortunately this may need to be replaced. If you are unsure call: The Switchover Help Scheme on (08004087654)

Office Contacts

When calling our Glasgow and Edinburgh offices, please listen to the options available and select accordingly. All Property Managers have direct line telephone numbers and e-mail addresses, therefore we ask that you call them direct. If you do not have these details please press "0" and request your Property Managers details from the receptionist.

Increase in the standard rate of VAT

The standard rate of VAT has been increased to 20 per cent as from 4 January 2011. Any sales of standard-rated goods or services that you receive on or after 4 January 2011, will be charge VAT at the 20 per cent rate. This VAT increase will apply to our Contractors and other services we supply as your Property Management Company.