

Onchan District Commissioners

Residents Newsletter

WELCOME

Welcome to the winter edition of the Commissioners Newsletter for residents of Onchan. There have been some interesting discussions with our colleagues in central government since the last edition, and this is the ideal time to bring you up to date.

A new term has come into use in the last few months. The phrase "local government transition" is starting to appear regularly in correspondence and discussion as a replacement for "transfer of services." As you may be aware, from April this year local authorities across the island picked up additional services that used to be performed by government departments, and in return the government froze a proposed increase in waste disposal charges. The suggestion made some time ago that housing authorities could be combined into larger units has now been made again as part of this "transition" process. Your Commissioners have steadfastly

opposed any change in the structure or delivery of local authority housing in Onchan. They consider that no evidence has been produced to demonstrate any failing in their existing provision, nor how their operation can be improved. They remain committed to protecting Onchan's independence as a cost-effective and locally accountable housing authority.

Refuse services are also under discussion once again, as central government seeks further budget savings. Your Commissioners have always maintained that the weekly collection service operated by this local authority is both cost-effective and efficient. Environmental initiatives such as recycling points have been introduced with minimal cost, and easy access to special collections of large household items for a modest charge does much to prevent the fly-tipping of unwanted goods. Your Commissioners continue to challenge the cost of infrastructure and services provided through central government, and to defend the existing provision of services to the people of Onchan.

In respect of social housing, your Commissioners have again been asked by central government for their views on what the rent rise should be for the forthcoming financial year. Again, your Commissioners have made their proposal that the rent rise should be 0%. This is on the basis that there have already been significant rent rises above inflation over the last 3 years which have had a serious impact on those with limited incomes. The government made plain in 2012 that the central

subsidy to rents would have to be drastically reduced, and this could only be done by increasing the rent paid by tenants. It is the position of your Commissioners that the increases suffered over the past 3 years have done much to reduce the contribution from central government and it is not necessary to impose any further burden on our tenants. It remains to be seen whether central government are sympathetic to this view.

On a different subject, you will by now be aware of the changes brought in by Manx Gas to their pricing structure. Your Commissioners have expressed their public concern at the potential impact of any price increases on the residents of Onchan, and have sought to influence politicians at a national level to ensure that all charges are carefully scrutinised to ensure that the Manx public are not being overcharged for this vital supply.

There are doubtless many more discussions to be had, but your Commissioners will do all that they can to ensure that both tenants and residents of Onchan are treated fairly by central government departments and private sector suppliers alike.

If all this sounds a bit like the bleak midwinter, please remember that spring is just around the corner, and there are local *and* national elections in 2016. Make sure that your voice is heard.

With best wishes for a Merry Christmas, and a safe and prosperous New Year from all Commissioners and Officers

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Keep Warm and Well this Winter
Look out for the symbol throughout this newsletter for details





TRAFFIC CALMING—SCHOOL ROAD

The Department of Infrastructure have introduced traffic calming measures along School Road around the area of Onchan Primary School. This is now a 20mph "Home Zone" .

 Set your thermostat to 21°C and 18°C at night

SCHOOL DROP OFF

School opening and closing hours are busy times for pedestrians and vehicles outside the school. We do understand everyone is in a hurry in the morning, but it is important to be respectful to others and most importantly for the areas to be safe for the children.

If you use a car to drop your children off we would request that you are considerate to the residents living in the area. Please do not park on yellow lines, in front of driveways, garages or in the bus stop.



Always park and turn legally around schools

Avoid dangerous manoeuvres such as U-turns and three-point turns

Always give way to pedestrians.

Never park in or near a bus stop or dedicated bus zone.

Park safely even if it means walking further to the school gate.

Observe all parking signs and parking restrictions. They are planned with children's safety in mind.

Never double park as it puts children at risk.

Slow down near the school crossing and near pedestrian crossings.

At a supervised crossing, observe the directions of the school crossing patrol officer.

Avoid parking across the school gates or the entrance to the school car park

 Get to know how the timer and thermostat on your heating system work. If it's very cold, set the timer to switch the heating on earlier rather than turning the thermostat up to warm your house quickly.



Model safe and considerate behaviour for your child – they will learn from you.



Darker nights 10 ways to Beat the Burglar!



A house in darkness says to the burglar that no one is at home, so use timer devices to switch on lights. Leaving a radio or television playing makes it sound as if someone is in and can help to deter burglars.



Keep your curtains or window blinds closed at night to stop people seeing whether anyone is at home and to prevent them seeing your possessions.



Make sure that you lock all windows and doors, even if you are just leaving home for a few minutes. Please make sure UPVC doors are doubled locked by lifting the handle and using the key to lock.



Leave a spare set of keys with a trusted neighbour. Never leave them outside or in a garage or a shed.



After Christmas, take present boxes to the council waste re-cycling centre or break boxes down and conceal them prior to recycling collection. Burglars will look in bins and boxes to decide whether or not to target an address.



Lock away garden tools and ladders and don't give a helping hand to the opportunist criminal by leaving them out. Consider securely chaining ladders and valuable tools as an extra deterrent.



Make sure that your family does not leave valuable presents such as bicycles in the garden where they can easily be seen and stolen. Ensure that they are placed in a securely locked shed or garage.



If you are going out for the evening and need to use a taxi, make sure that you book your journeys with a reputable firm.



Don't advertise the fact that you're away on your telephone answering machine.



Please ensure that you or your children don't say on social networking sites such as Facebook that you are going away.



Oil Theft—Police have warned householders to secure their oil tanks..

 Put your heating on timer to come on just before you go to bed and switch off after you've gone to bed. If it's very cold set it to come on earlier and go off later rather than turning your thermostat up as this is more effective.



Get a flu jab—you may be able to get these free from your GP if you have a long term health condition or aged over 65. .

YOUTH AND COMMUNITY CENTRE—REFURBISHMENT

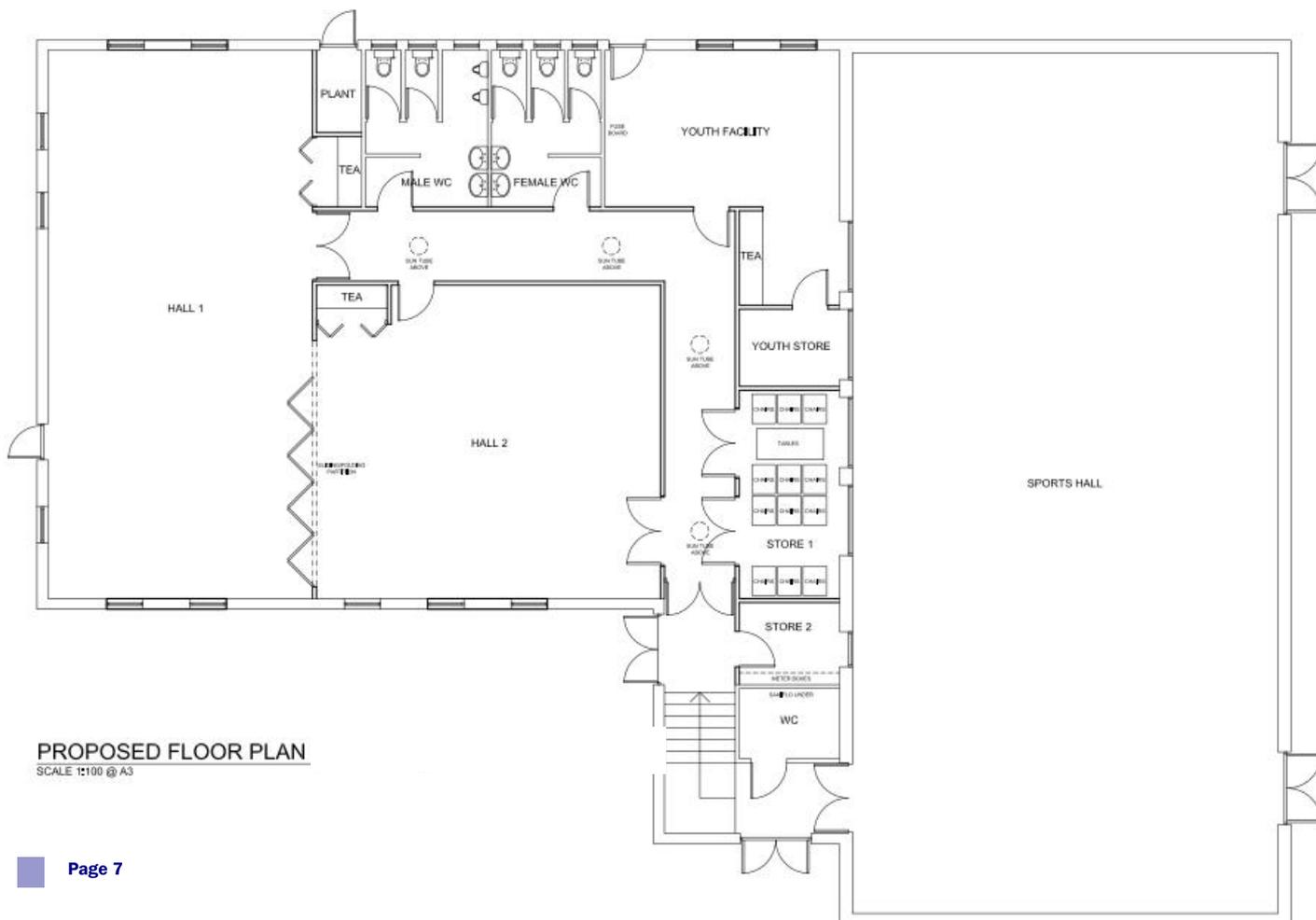
Onchan District Commissioners are currently considering refurbishing the Youth and Community Centre. Under the current layout there is a considerable amount of space which is wasted because it is not lettable when any other part is occupied.

Consideration is therefore being given to revamping the interior space to create two community halls. The proposals consist generally of:-

- ◆ Hall 1 - 14m x 6.5 m (current community hall is 9m x 11m)
- ◆ Hall 2 - 8.8m x 8m
- ◆ There will be provision to open the two halls to create one large lettable area.
- ◆ Each hall will have its own kitchenette facilities.
- ◆ Access to the toilet accommodation will be altered permitting individual access from both halls, and provision will be made for a disabled toilet on that level.
- ◆ Additional storage facilities will be created.
- ◆ Access to the Sports Hall and layout remains unchanged.



The Commissioners are seeking your views on the project and feedback may be submitted by email to admin@onchan.org.im or Telephone: (01624) 675564)



PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN
SCALE 1:100 @ A3

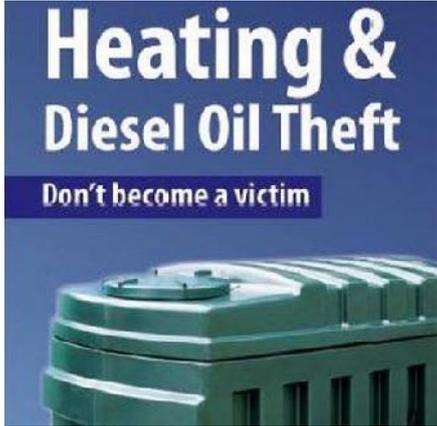
HEATING OIL—THEFT

The theft of heating and diesel oil always tends to increase during the winter when people tend to store up more fuel, and also whenever there's price rises at the petrol pump, which has a knock effect on the cost of heating oil. This can make fuel tanks at farms, transport depots and domestic properties lucrative targets.

There are a number of steps residents in rural areas can take to keep their oil supply safe. Heating oil tanks can contain thousands of pounds worth of oil, so it makes sense to take all possible measures to protect them.

These are a few things you can do to make your tank or supply more secure:

- **Control switches** - control the flow of oil and should be turned off and the electricity supply isolated when the tank is not in use.
- **Padlocks** – it's worth spending a little more on good quality locks, such as close shackle padlocks which offer most resistance to the most common burglar tools like bolt croppers.
- **Oil level gauges** - remote gauges are now available which will sound an alarm if the oil level in the tank suddenly drops or falls below a quarter full and can be located anywhere in adjacent buildings. There are different versions available costing between £70 and £100.
- **Security lights** - can make any property a much harder target for the thief. Low energy 'dusk 'til dawn' lights positioned close to the tank are cheap and an effective deterrent. High powered lights can be used but care should be taken not to cause any nuisance to neighbours or road users.



https://www.herts.police.uk/advice/rural_policing/agricultural_issues/heating_and_domestic_oil_theft.aspx

FREE
Christmas Tree

Shredding

Monday 4th January
to
Monday 11th January

Leave trees in the compound
Commissioners' Car Park
Main Road, Onchan.

General information

Fluorescent materials are effective outside during daytime because they react to the ultra violet rays in sunlight. It could be a stripe on your jacket, patches on your bag or an armband. Spike's jacket is fluorescent.

Reflective materials work in the dark because the special surface reflects light (street lights, car headlights etc.) The stripes on Spike's jacket are reflective



 Look after yourself and others. On cold days try to avoid going outside; however, if you do need to, remember to wrap up warm.

ONCHAN DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS CHRISTMAS REFUSE COLLECTION DATES

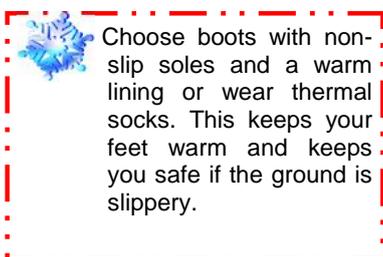
NORMAL COLLECTION DAY		REVISED COLLECTION DAY	
Friday	25 th December 2015	Thursday	24 th December 2015
Monday	28 th December 2015	Tuesday	29 th December 2015
Friday	1 st January 2016	Thursday	31 st December 2015
Monday	4 th January 2016	Tuesday	5 th January 2016
TRADE COLLECTIONS (Food Only)		There will be one collection during the holiday period.	

Normal household collection services will resume with effect from Tuesday 5th January 2016.

Normal trade collection services will resume with effect from Tuesday 5th January 2016.

We recommend that your bin is placed at the curtilage of your property on the night before collection.

If, despite our best efforts, your bin is not collected on the above days, we will collect it on the next available day. Please accept our apologies for any inconvenience that the alterations to the rounds may cause.



Onchan District Commissioners,
Hawthorn Villa, 79 Main Road,
Onchan, Isle of Man, IM3 1RD
Tel: 675564 Fax: 663482
email: admin@onchan.org.im

Christmas Lights Competition

Please fill in the address below of the properties that you would like to nominate for best Christmas Lights 2015. You may also use this form to nominate yourself.

Household nomination	
<i>Merry Christmas</i>	
Commercial Business nomination	

**Please return this form to
Onchan District Commissioners
by Wednesday 16th December 2015.
Winners will be announced the week
commencing 28th December 2015.**