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Summer  
2013

# Abertalk



## It's survey time! STAR Satisfaction Survey

We have included a satisfaction survey with your newsletter. Please find the time to complete this survey and return to us in the freepost envelope provided (no stamp required).

### Why do we need this?

The Housing Scotland Act 2010 and the Scottish Social Housing Charter have placed an obligation on landlords to survey their tenants and service users regularly and submit the results to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

The survey will help us identify where we are meeting, exceeding or failing tenant and service user expectations. Being able to measure satisfaction will allow us to make important decisions on changes to the services we provide you. It's not just about whether we are doing the right things but that

we are also doing things right. **So your feedback is important to us!**

We intend to hold a prize draw from the surveys we receive so please remember to include your contact details. This is optional, you can remain anonymous if you wish, but please be aware we will not be able to include you in the prize draw. Prizes include vouchers for Tesco, Asda and Hydro electric.

The closing date for completion and return is **Friday 2nd August 2013**. The prize draw will be held and the winners announced on our website, in reception of our main office and sheltered housing complexes in late August 2013.

If you have not received a survey with your newsletter, please contact Customer Services on Tel No. 903545 and we will be happy to deliver one to you.

## Notice to all Tenants



You are cordially invited to  
**Abertay's 17th Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 18 September 2013 in Fintry Parish Church @ 6.30 pm**

As in previous years, there will be a report from our Chairperson, along with the presentation of our Annual Accounts. All Shareholders will have the opportunity to vote and stand for committee, and as we are a tenant led organisation we need more tenants on our Committee of Management. If you are interested in becoming a member, or would like to come along to one of our committee meetings as an observer, then please contact Chief Executive Ian Thomson.

*We look forward to seeing you all there!*



## WELFARE CHANGES - BENEFITS SURGERIES

The Association is doing absolutely everything we can to help those tenants who are affected by welfare changes.

If you have any questions or problems connected with:

- **Paying rent**
- **Under occupancy**
- **Discretionary Housing Payment**
- **Benefit Cap**
- **Universal Credit**
- **Mutual exchange**
- **Online benefit applications**
- **Any other benefits issues**

Feel free to come in and have a chat with Anna,

Welfare Reform Officer. Anna will be available for **ALL ABERTAY TENANTS** every week starting from Tuesday 16 July 2013. You can come in to any one of the following locations:

### Every Tuesday 1-3

- Fintry Mains Sheltered Complex  
6/8 Fintry Mains DD4 9HF

### Every Wednesday 1-3

- Dryburgh Gardens Sheltered Complex DD2 3JL

### Every Thursday 11-1

- Dura Street Sheltered Complex  
57 Dykehead Place DD4 6TJ

## Welfare Reform Update

### What is Welfare Reform?

Welfare Reform is the biggest shake up of the welfare system this country has ever known. The UK Government's reform of the welfare benefit system is well under way and most changes are aimed at reducing the benefit bill.

If you have any questions about how any of the changes may affect you, please contact our **Financial Inclusion Officer, Julie Bruce**, on 01382 903545.

Here is news of some more changes that happened recently.

### Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is moving to Personal Independence Payments (PIP)

From **June 2013** new claims for DLA for adults will be abolished and replaced by a new benefit called Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

From **October 2015** DLA claimants will be invited to make a claim for PIP. This will include people who have been given an indefinite award. DLA will remain in payment until a decision on PIP has been communicated to you.

### The change will not affect DLA for children or those aged 65 or over as at 8 April 2013.

The changes to DLA do not affect Attendance Allowance. There are no plans to replace Attendance Allowance.

## The Scottish Welfare Fund

From **April 2013** Dundee City Council will be responsible for administering and paying out **Community Care Grants** and **Crisis Grants** on behalf of the UK Government.

This part of the social fund has been devolved to the Scottish Government.

These grants will now be known as **The Scottish Welfare Fund**.

### Community Care Grants

Helping you to leave care and live independently, or to continue living independently

### Crisis Grants

Providing you with a safety net in the event of a disaster or emergency

## New Senior Appointments for Abertay Housing Association Ltd

Abertay is delighted to welcome two new Directors to the Staff Team **Marjorie Sloan has been appointed as Corporate Services Director.** Marjorie is a qualified CA with over 20 years' experience in the public sector and has previously worked with Stirling District Council and Stirling Council, in a variety of financial roles dealing with the Council's Housing Service and more recently worked with Raploch Urban Regeneration Company.



**Bob Sander has been appointed as Operations Director** and comes with an extensive and practical background in housing management. Prior to joining Abertay, Bob worked for Circle 33 (one of the largest English Housing Groups) for 16 years and held various posts including Repairs Manager, Interim Managing Director and Partnering Manager and was most recently their Assistant Director of Property Services, where he was responsible for delivering planned and reactive maintenance services to residents in 16,000 homes.



## Introducing Anna Lieske

**From 22 April we welcomed Anna as a new Welfare Reform Officer.**

Before joining Abertay, Anna worked as a Welfare Rights Assistant with Angus Council. Her responsibilities included giving advice to people regarding a variety of welfare benefits, preparing benefit calculations and filling in benefit forms.



Anna also worked as an employability key worker where she gained knowledge about how to help people who are in transition between benefits and the job market.

In her current post Anna will be mainly dealing with tenants who will be affected by any aspect of Welfare Reform and with all new tenants to ensure their income is maximised.

Anna is very excited to work with Abertay tenants to make sure that Welfare Reform changes affecting both the association and its tenants will be introduced as smoothly as possible.

If you have any questions regarding Welfare Reform (under occupancy, Housing Benefit, Universal Credit, benefit Cap) do not hesitate to contact **Anna on 01382 513826 or [anna.lieske@abertayha.co.uk](mailto:anna.lieske@abertayha.co.uk).**

**Jeżeli mają Państwo pytania dotyczące reformy systemu zasiłków społecznych lub język angielski stanowi barierę w innych sprawach bardzo proszę o kontakt telefoniczny pod numerem 01382051326 lub mailowy na [anna.lieske@abertayha.co.uk](mailto:anna.lieske@abertayha.co.uk).**

## What you need to know about Legionella and Legionnaires' disease.

Legionella are bacteria and can be found in hot and cold water systems and can spread through the spray from showers and taps in your home.

Legionnaires' disease is a

potentially fatal form of pneumonia caused by the legionella bacteria.

The biggest risk is when you have been away from the property for more than a week or so such as on holiday, in hospital or elsewhere. On your return home simply run all the taps with hot water and more importantly flush the shower head with warm water for at least a minute. Make sure you remove

the shower head from the holder before switching on the shower and hold down over drain to lessen risk of inhaling sprayed droplets. Similarly flush the toilet twice to circulate fresh water through the system and empty the cistern. Shower spray heads present a small risk in your home, and should be dismantled and cleaned of scale and debris every 3-6 months.

## Planned maintenance 2013/14

### Dryburgh Gardens

We have appointed Local contractor, McGill's, to undertake a £3 million improvement project at Dryburgh Gardens. The works will include new kitchens, bathrooms, windows and heating for our 83 tenants plus a range of external and communal works to improve security & access for both tenants and owners.

Tenants will be temporarily decanted on a rolling basis and are to be supported by dedicated Tenant Liaison Officers from both Abertay and McGill's who will assist in organising removals and storage. Works are scheduled to start in June/July 2013 and will take up to 1 year to complete.



### Gas central heating

We have awarded local Dundee contractor, WRB Gas, a 4 year gas servicing contract to install new central heating systems for the first two years.

Helping tenants to heat their homes more cost effectively is one of our top priorities and 206 properties are scheduled for works this year with a further 109 in 2014/15. We were successful in securing £300,000 from Scottish Gas Networks to enable new gas connections to be installed at no cost to Abertay.

### Painting and other programmes

Our pre-paint repairs and external painting programme will be delivered by QAPM and Angus Decorating respectively. The painting programme started in May and is scheduled to be finished by mid-November.

Other external programmes of work to chimneys, footpaths and rainwater pipes are being programmed alongside the gas contract to minimise inconvenience as far as possible.

## Rechargeable Repairs

**Often faults reported to Abertay turn out to be issues that tenants are responsible for.**

Therefore, it is important that you are aware of the type of repairs that are your responsibility, otherwise you could find yourself being recharged. Repairs which are your responsibility include:

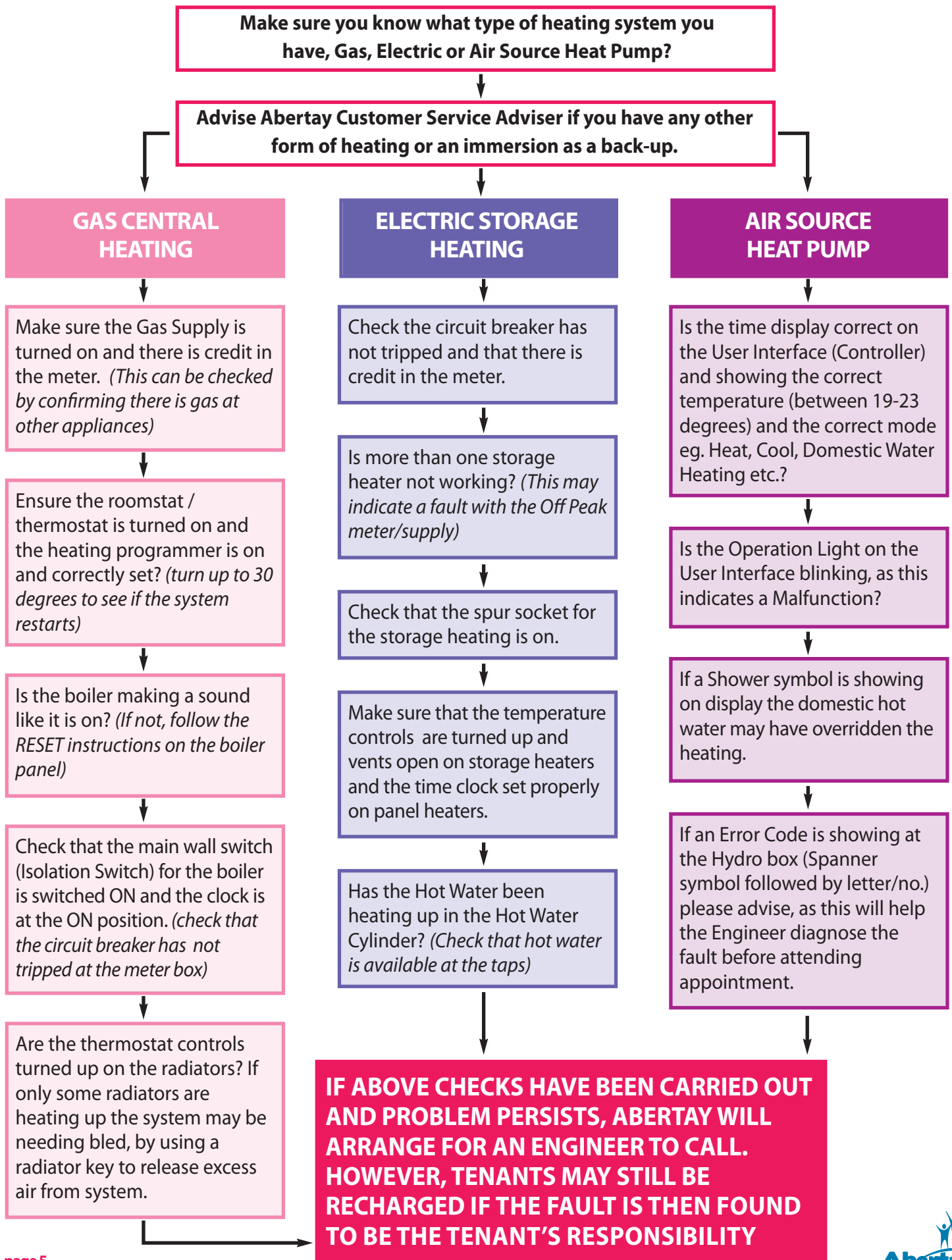
- Damage to fixtures and fittings caused by a tenant, family member or visitor to the tenant's property that is not attributable to fair wear and tear.
- Repairs that are the tenant's responsibility which Abertay carry out because of health and safety/emergency considerations or because of the risk of further damage to the property should the tenant fail to carry out the repair.
- Damage to the property caused by the Police during a lawful raid on the property resulting in an arrest. The cost of making good any damage such as repair or replacement of external doors will be recharged to the tenant.
- Misuse of the Repairs Service – where tenants misuse the Out of Hours Service, they will be recharged the cost of the call out fee.

Please be sure when you report a repair, that the repair is a genuine defect/fault for which Abertay are responsible. Our Customer Service staff will advise you as far as possible, but often responsibility is only apparent following a visit by our tradesman.



# WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE 'NO HEATING OR NO HOT WATER'

**Before you contact Abertay office to report 'No Heating' and/or 'No Hot Water'**





## *'Enhancing the quality of life in our communities'*



The pictures above, all taken from Abertay Estates, demonstrate, sadly a flavour of the visual result of anti-social behaviour.

## **A blot on the landscape**

In line with our mission statement, we utilise many methods to promote positive outcomes when dealing with a variety of breaches of tenancy issues.

We offer appropriate support and advice to enable tenants to sustain their tenancies, however when advice is not adhered to, it is sometimes necessary to take legal action for enforcement action..

Abertay Housing Association were recently awarded an anti-social behaviour order (ASBO) against a resident as a preventative measure to minimise risk of harm. We have also served several notices of proceedings for legal action on tenancy non-compliance issues.

Thankfully, this type of action is extreme, as most issues of breach of tenancy are resolved by working with our partner agencies, such as Community mediation service, Tayside police, social work, various external support agencies and victim support.

We had reviewed how we deal with fly tipping across our estates, and the feedback received would suggest this has been a positive move to enable us to keep our estates tidier and reduce fire risk.

We rely on our residents to keep us informed of concerns that affect the enjoyment of their home.

## **Living with Urban Foxes**

We have had a marked increase in reports of dog fouling of late however it may actually be the cunning fox who is leaving his mark!

There has been an increase in sightings of these urban foxes across our property sites.

A few useful pointers will ensure their presence does not cause too many problems.

Never feed foxes and refrain from leaving out bird food and cat food.

Use your secure wheelie bin. Don't leave loose rubbish bags outside.

Scoot, is a fox repellent that fools a fox into not recognising its own scent markings, so it believes another fox is claiming its territory!

Put garden sheds on a concrete base so foxes cannot live underneath. (Remember to get permission)

If a fox nests underneath decking, remove one plank so the vixen no longer feels secure.

Using these tips can help us outfox the fox!!



## WAYS TO PAY

Abertay Housing tenants have access to a variety of rent payment methods. Depending on personal circumstances everybody can find their most suitable method.

**ALLPAY PAYMENT CARD** - can be used at any Post Office or outlet with Pay Point sign.

**DIRECT DEBIT** - can be set up for all bank accounts holders; this is the most convenient and simple method

**TELEPHONE** - can be used if you have a credit or debit card


**INTERNET** - you can make a payment at **www.allpay.net** using a credit or debit card (you need to have a valid Allpay card as well)

**CHEQUE OR POSTAL ORDER** - have to be payable to Abertay Housing Association Limited


**SMARTPHONE APPLICATION** - free app can be downloaded from **www.allpay.net/allpay-payment-app**

If you want to set up a new payment method or you have any questions our staff will be happy to assist.


If you are experiencing any difficulty in paying your rent or you would like some advice then please contact Alison (513809) or Jean (513807) in our Arrears Management Team immediately.




### Rent payments made easy!




**On a date that suits you**




Through the allpay Payment App  
allpay.net/allpay-payment-app



Over the phone, online or by text  
0844 557 8321 | allpayments.net  
allpayments.net/textpay



With cash over the counter



Choose your way to pay

## The way we deal with complaints has changed.

The **Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010** gave the **Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)** the authority to develop a simplified and standardised complaints handling procedure for organisations working within the Public Sector. This included Registered Social Landlords such as Abertay. The Act requires that the new standard procedure be adopted by these organisations.

### Why is this procedure being introduced?

The key aims are to ensure that there is consistency across the sector with how complaints are handled and that organisations learn from the complaints they receive and improve their services. It will also allow organisations such as Abertay to judge their performance against other, similar,

organisations and make them more accountable to their customers.

The new procedure was finalised by the SPSO in March 2012 and has now been introduced by Abertay.

In essence, the new procedure requires that all complaints, both formal and informal, and any other forms of dissatisfaction with the Association, now need to be recorded in a complaints log. Of particular importance is that the complaints process has been reduced to 2 stages;

- The first stage is for straightforward complaints where front line staff will seek to resolve the complaint, normally within 5 working days.
- If the complaint is more complex or cannot be resolved at the first stage, it will be

classified as a second stage complaint and may take up to 20 days to resolve.

- If you are unhappy at the outcome of the second stage investigation, rather than being able to appeal to Abertay's Committee, the appeal will have to be made directly to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman who will carry out an investigation.

The new Complaints Procedure is available on our website, or from our office on request.

We hope that the quality of our services will be such that you will be delighted with all that we do. However we are realistic enough to accept this won't always be the case. If you are unhappy about any of our services or how we deal with you, please don't hesitate to let us know.

# North Fintry Community Engagement Event

**Various local organisations converged on Saturday 15th June at the Families House in Fintry North to offer a plethora of information and support to the local community.**

The event, coordinated by Jim Gordon from the Dundee City Council Development Team included involvement from One Parent Families Scotland, Abertay Housing Association, The Community Safety Team, Tayside Fire & Rescue, The Police, Sports Development Team, The 101 project and Safer Cities to name a few.

Help was on hand to keep the children happy in the form of face painting, the playbus and a fire

engine on site and helping hands with bulb planting, wooden spoon decorating and lots more!

Advice on healthy eating initiatives and sensible drinking were available, along with welfare reform advice and information on adult learning. It was also an opportunity for Lynsey McLarty the new community police officer in the area to start to get to know the local residents. The weather remained dry throughout the day which was a huge bonus and an enjoyable and informative time was had by all who attended!



## GREAT DISCOUNTS TO REFRESH YOUR HOME

Did you know – Abertay tenants can get up to 28% discount on paint and decorating materials across the range. You only need to show proof of your tenancy to qualify for the discount.

Your nearest Dulux store is:

Faraday Street, Dryburgh Industrial Estate, Dundee. Or you can place your order by calling **0845 602 3128**.



**HAPPY TO TRANSLATE**

## How to Get Involved

Abertay is registered with the Scottish Housing Regulator (HAL 297), the Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1965 (2517R(S)) and is a registered Scottish Charity (SC 030152)

All tenants and owner occupiers are eligible to become members of Abertay at a cost of £1 for life

membership. Members can stand for, and vote in, elections for the Management Committee.

For more information about the Management Committee or Association membership please contact Elaine Moyes, Telephone 513821.

## Getting In Touch

Telephone:

**01382 903545**

Fax:

**01382 903575**

Email:

**queries@abertayha.co.uk**