

OWNERS FACTSHEET 2017



Abertay
HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Abertay Housing Association aims to provide all property owners with as much information as possible about the invoices which are sent out periodically. In order to do this we have produced this factsheet with some information and frequently asked questions which we hope will answer the majority of your enquiries.

If you still have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the office on 01382 903545.

SHARED COSTS - OWNERS LIMIT

If your share of the cost of any item of work is likely to exceed £100, we will advise you in advance of instructing the work, unless it is an emergency. We will not contact you in advance of work being carried out if it is unlikely to exceed £100. If your share of the cost of any item of work is likely to exceed £510, we will obtain consent from the required majority of owners before proceeding with the work. We consulted with owners on these limits in February and March 2015. Some owners rejected the increase from the previous limits, and for their properties, the limit to inform remains at £50 and the limit for consent remains at £250.

MANAGEMENT FEE

Our Management Fee and Late Payment Fee will remain at the same level from 1 April 2017.

SHARE MEMBERSHIP

If you are interested in becoming a Member, application forms are available on our web-site or by contacting Roz Clark on 01382 513821. Membership of Abertay costs £1 for life. Members can stand for, and vote in, elections to the Management Committee and are invited to attend the AGM.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Information on payment options is provided on your invoice and your prompt payment will be much appreciated. Remember, you have the option to pay your invoice by debit or credit card over the internet at <http://www.abertayha.co.uk/tenants/ways-to-pay-your-rent/online/>. Please note: You have the option of paying your invoice at a post office until 31 December 2017. After this date the bill payment paper service will no longer be available at the Post Office.

PRIZE DRAW

If you pay your invoice within 30 days (ie by 23 June 2017) and have a clear account will be entered into a draw for **one of four £25 vouchers**.

REPAIRS

If we carry out repairs for you, the repairs you have been charged for in this bill cover the period 1 September 2016 to 28 February 2017. Any repairs carried out in March 2017 will be included in the bill you receive in November 2017.

LANDSCAPING

The landscaping you have been charged for in this bill covers the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017. You will receive your next landscaping charge in May 2018. Estate plans are available on our website to help you to identify which areas in your estate are covered by the open space maintenance work you have been invoiced for. These are available at <http://www.abertayha.co.uk/owners/grounds-maintenance/>

ESTATE WALKABOUTS

Some of the work carried out in your Estate is identified through our Estate Walkabouts. Residents and staff walk the estate together, looking out for anything that might make the estate look untidy or unsafe, and make a note of it. An action plan will then be created, determining what actions need to be taken to solve the problems. Owners within our estates are welcome to join these walkabouts. A timetable is available on our website or from our offices.





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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the Open Space Maintenance charges?

The open space maintenance charges are the costs involved in maintaining all the common landscaped areas owned by Abertay Housing Association within the estate where you live.

Why am I charged?

Contained within your legal deed of conditions and our 'Statement of Factoring Services', it is your legal responsibility to pay a share of all maintenance costs. Your Solicitor can provide confirmation of this.

How are the charges calculated?

The total cost for maintaining each complete estate is divided amongst the number of houses in the estate, this includes every tenant. Every owner-occupier is then charged the appropriate share. For example, 400 houses in total, each owner and tenant is responsible for 1/400 of the costs. For tenants this is included in the rent we charge. For owners this is sent as your annual invoice.

Who carries out the work?

An external landscaping contractor, our current landscaping contract was awarded, following a competitive tendering process for a three year period with an option of a two year extension to ensure value for money. (Our current contractor is Land Engineering), they will carry out the service until March 2019.

What work is carried out?

The majority of the regular work includes grass cutting approximately 16 times during the growing season, the number of cuts may be increased or decreased slightly depending on the weather, (you are only charged for the number of cuts that take place), shrub beds are maintained, weeding, litter collection in the landscaped areas where needed and an annual tree pruning programme is completed.

Why am I charged when there are no grassed areas beside my house?

You are responsible for a share of the cost for the whole scheme, not only for the area outside your house. You can see the estate plans for where you live on our website, www.abertayha.co.uk.

Why is this charge not covered by the Council Tax that I pay?

Your Council tax bill includes charges for maintaining specific adopted roads and footpaths. It does not include the cost of any management services for areas owned by Abertay such as cutting the grass and maintaining shrub beds and the common areas.

Adopted areas are the responsibility of your local authority and are paid for out of Council Tax. Unadopted areas on your estate are maintained by Abertay and you contribute to the maintenance through our system of shared charges.

I want extra work carried out?

If the work is not being attended to, our Landscape Architects who oversee the contract will pursue the contractor. However, if this work is outwith the agreed terms of the contract it will only be carried out if it is deemed as essential by the Landscape Architect. This ensures that costs do not escalate due to unnecessary extra work and this in turn keeps your invoice as low as is possible.

Why am I charged an admin fee?

The admin fee is to cover our costs for –

- Appointment and continuing supervision of contractors
- Contract tendering/negotiation and annual renewals
- Meeting with owners on request
- Corresponding with owners
- General administration
- Annual preparation of accounts
- Dealing with owners telephone queries
- Answering correspondence
- Credit control

How can I get involved in helping to look after my estate?

You can join in on our estate walkabouts, for more information visit our website or contact our office on **01382 903545**.

Homeowners who feel that Abertay has failed to carry out its factoring duties or comply with the Property Factors code of conduct had after exhausting Abertay's complaints procedures, the right to apply to the Homeowners Housing Panel. As of 1 December 2016, this was replaced by the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland (Housing and Property Chamber).

The Chamber's contact details are:

First-Tier Tribunal for Scotland (Housing and Property Chamber)
Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service
4th Floor 1 Atlantic Quay 45 Robertson Street Glasgow G2 8JB
hpcadmin@scotcourtribunals.gov.uk Tel 0141 302 5900