

OWNERS FACTSHEET

May 2021



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 £105, 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 £105. If your share of the cost of any item of work is likely to exceed £545, 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.

SHARE MEMBERSHIP

If you are interested in becoming a Member, application forms are available on our website 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 so you have the option to pay your invoice by debit or credit card over the internet at <http://www.abertayha.co.uk/owners/payment-methods/>

If our office is still closed to the public and you would like to pay by cash please call 01382 903545 and we will order you an Allpay card so you can pay at the post office or any shop displaying a pay point sign.

PRIZE DRAW

If you pay your invoice within 30 days and have a clear account you 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 October 2020 to 28 February 2021.

Any repairs carried out in March 2021 will be included in the bill you receive in November 2021.

DATA PROTECTION

Our Fair Processing Notice is available on our website at <http://www.abertayha.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Fair-Processing-Notice.pdf>

LANDSCAPING

The landscaping you have been charged for in this bill covers the period 11 May 2020 to 31 March 2021. You will receive your next landscaping charge in May 2022. 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/>

MANAGEMENT FEE

We have frozen our fees for 2021/22. Our fixed Management Fee will remain at £135. The minimum variable management fee will remain at £8.10 and the maximum variable Management Fee will remain at £135. The late payment surcharge will remain at £17.30. This will enable us to cover the costs of providing this service.

ESTATE WALKABOUTS AND FLATTED PROPERTY INSPECTIONS

Some of the work carried out in your Estate is identified through our Estate Walkabouts and Flatted Property Inspections. For Estate Walkabouts, residents and staff walk the estate together, looking for anything that might make the estate look untidy or unsafe, and make a note of it. An action plan will then be developed to resolve any issues. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, residents are not able to join our Officers walking the estates. However owners are welcome to contact Abertay with any repairs or issues they identify in relation to the environment or safety of the estate. The outcomes of our walkabout / inspections and any reported issues can be viewed in the owners section on our website.

SHARED REPAIRS

If you own a flat in a tenement, or 4 in a block, as well as maintaining your own home, you and your fellow owners are responsible for the upkeep of the common or shared areas in or around the building. As a responsible factor we try to plan and arrange to complete major replacements such as roofs or render at a time close to the end of their expected lifespan but before failure occurs. Owners need to plan for these works as it is a shared responsibility.

CLOSE CLEANING

Close cleaning will continue to be carried out by **S&S Cleaning Services Ltd** until 31 March 2022. The charge will remain at £7.40 per month.



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.

The first year of our contract with Ground Control Ltd has now completed. The start date was delayed due to the national lockdown in March. The contractor re-mobilised in May and managed to make up for lost time and achieve the set targets for the year

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 contractor carries out the work. A contract, which commenced on 1 April 2020, was awarded following a competitive tendering process. This contract is for a three year period, with an option of a maximum of two years extension to ensure value for money. The contractor is Ground Control.

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 or flatted property inspections, 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 have after exhausting Abertay's complaints procedures, the right to apply to the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland (Housing and Property Chamber).

The Chamber's contact details are:

Housing and Property Chamber First-Tier Tribunal for Scotland
20 York Street, Glasgow G2 8GT
hpcadmin@scotcourtribunals.gov.uk Tel 0141 302 5900