

Merry Christmas and very Happy New Year to all of our tenants!

Abertay HOUSING ASSOCIATION

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Welcome to our Winter Edition of our Newsletter

t's been another busy year for the Association. As you can see on pages 8 & 9, we have provided an update on our planned maintenance programme, (spending 53p from every £1 from our rent payers money) on planned, cyclical and other maintenance. Over the last financial year, the Association has invested an estimated £2.2 million on planned and cyclical maintenance in your homes. Our ambitious programme has included kitchen and bathroom installations, boiler replacements, window replacements, close remedial works, close painting, roof works, smoke detectors, rewires and electrical checks. We are excited to announce a further £2.5 million will be invested in our properties in our planned maintenance programme for 2024/25.

We will be contacting you very shortly on our annual rent consultation. The long-term financial security and stability of the Association and the health and financial wellbeing of our tenants is at the forefront of the Association's decision making. Through consultation we will seek to understand what is important to you, so please have your say when you receive the survey, for the Association wants to hear your voice and ensure we achieve the right balance between affordability and investment.

Due to the continuing cost of living crisis there has never been a greater need to provide support for our tenants in relation to debt and energy advice. Our Income Management team can provide support and signpost tenants to much needed assistance and advice, benefitting our tenants at a time when they need it most. On page 21 we have provided you with useful money advice information, invaluable at this time of year.

A slightly later than planned Fintry Gala Day was held on Saturday 9th September, working in partnership with various volunteers and vendors from our local Fintry community. The event was free to all with local entertainment, face painters and lots of fun activities for the kids and what's more, on one of the hottest days of the year, all of which made for the perfect day. You can see some of the fantastic photographs of the day's events on page 25.

On a penultimate note, I would like to thank all our Board members for their time and commitment to the Association and for the dedication they provide in assisting us to continually keep moving the Association forward.

Finally, I would like to wish all our residents a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Barry Moore,

Chief Executive Officer

Annual Assurance Statement

As part of the Regulatory Framework for Registered Social Landlords, the Association has to submit an Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

The Board assessed the Association to be compliant with the Regulatory Framework.

A copy of the statement is available on the Association's website or from our office.

Looking forward to 2024 – get involved in Abertay!

Here at Abertay Housing Association we are committed to providing our tenants with plenty of opportunities to get involved and help shape, influence and improve our services. As one of our tenants you are the best person to share your knowledge and understanding of the issues and concerns you have for your families, neighbours and the communities you live in – this is invaluable in making sure we focus our attention on addressing the areas that concern you!

So if you fancy getting involved in one of these opportunities we would love to hear from you:-

2024 will see:

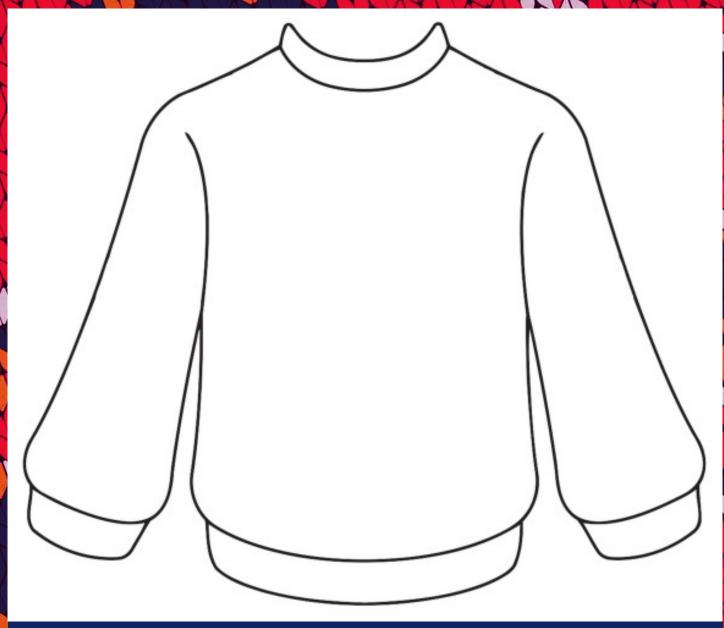
- ✓ Tenants Group in your area
- ✓ Register of Interested Tenants
- ✓ Communications Group
- ✓ Estate Walkabouts
- Responding to Repair Satisfaction Surveys

Get involved by contacting Clare, our Tenant Involvement Officer on (01382) 903545

or email queries@abertayha.co.uk

We look forward to hearing from you.

COMPETITION TIME Pesign a Christmas Jumper



It's time to get creative and design your very own Christmas jumper and be in with the chance to win a £50 voucher of your choice.

Get your creative thinking caps on and get your winning designs into us by Friday 8th January!

Don't forget to tell us your name, address and (age, optional)

Name:
Address:
Address:
Age (optional):

Return your entries to our office: 147 Fintry Drive, Dundee, DD4 9HE







What is not to love about our pets?

There is no doubt, we are a nation of animal lovers.

Alas, the headlines recently have reported the negative side of pet owning, demonstrating when things go wrong, with quite a few high-profile cases recently featuring vicious dog attacks.

The headline grabbing news has predominantly referred to XL Bully type dog.

The Prime Minister branded XL bully dogs a 'danger to our communities' vowing to bring in rules under the Dangerous Dogs Act to ban them, although, it is worth noting any 'pet' can potentially cause harm.

It is with this in mind we remind our residents of the rules within their tenancy agreement in relation to keeping pets within our properties.

KEEPING OF PETS.

If your house is within a multi-storey block (a tenement or block of flats more than four storeys in height) no pets are permitted without our written approval.

If your house is not in a multi-story block you may keep up to two pets. Any more than two pets will require our **written approval**. Permitted pets include dogs, cats and other domestic animals commonly kept as household pets.

Wild animals, reptiles or farm animals are not permitted as pets. You are responsible for the behaviour of **any pets owned by you or anyone living with you**. If your pet is causing nuisance damage or annoyance, then the Association is entitled to require removal of the pet.

Additionally, you must ensure that:

Keeping your pet is not prohibited by the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, or by any other law, and any cat is spayed or neutered.

You take all reasonable steps to supervise and keep such pets under control.

You take all reasonable steps to prevent such pets causing nuisance, annoyance, or danger to your neighbours including fouling or excessive noise or smell. You take reasonable care to see that such pets do not foul or cause damage to the house, your neighbour's property, anything belonging to us or anything we are responsible for, such as the common parts; and you clean up your pet's faeces.

Being aware of the above excerpt from your tenancy agreement may prevent any preventable situation occurring, which could result in you losing your beloved pet.

Abertay Housing Association's Annual General Meeting 2023

The Association held a successful AGM on Wednesday 20 September at our Dryburgh Gardens Complex and on line.

Board Membership remains the same as the previous year. Ron Neave continues in his role as Chair with Kath Mands as Vice Chair.











Thank you to everyone who entered our Scavenger Hunt from our Summer Newsletter. Our lucky winner was

W Towns who won a £50 Smiths Voucher!



We also have a winner of our bi-annual prize draw for paying their rent by direct debit – well done to

Mr Jackson who won £50!



How-did we do?

We are working hard to improve our services to you and provide value for money. We thought you would like to have a look at how we are currently performing, compared to the previous year.

Performance update	Target	Quarter 1 Performance 2023/24	Quarter 2 Performance 2023/24	Year end 2022/23	Year to Date 2023/24	Target achieved?
Number of emergency repairs		240	247	1,443	487	
Emergency repairs completed on time	4 hours	2.81 hours	2.22 hours	2.58 hours	2.52 hours	
Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs	6 working days	7.6 days	8.9 days	7.94 days	8.6 days	
Satisfaction with the repairs service	98%	100%	99.4%	98.9%	99.4%	
Value for money						
Gross rent arrears as at the period end as a percentage of rent due for the end of the year	<5%	2.1%	2.1%	2.4%	2.1%	
Average length of time to re-let properties	<=21	26.1 days	24 days	27.2 days	25 days	
Percentage of tenants satisfied with the standard of their home when moving in	95%	100%	93.33%	93.64%	95.12%	· ·

Our performance in 2022/23 in comparison to other social landlords in Scotland can be viewed in our Annual Report, which was posted to all tenants earlier in October 2023. A copy of the report is available on our website and in our reception area, Main office, 147 Fintry Drive.

Complaints

The year to date, the Association received 101, Stage 1 complaints and 4 Stage 2 complaints. These related to a variety of issues. The Association records any expressions of dissatisfaction and we use these to improve our processes or procedures in the future.

Complaints	Target average timescales	2021/2022	
Stage 1 complaint	5 days	3.7	
Stage 2 complaint	20 days	31	

Sign up to our tenant portal today...

Welcome to





Don't miss out on all the benefits your MyHOME account has to offer!

If you don't already
have a My Home
account, our online
tenant portal, you could
be missing out!

The account provides the quickest and easiest way to report a repair, pay your rent and access a range of other services.

My Home also makes it easier to manage your tenancy and give you access to our services 24/7.

Once registered you can access the following tenant services:

- Manage aspects of your tenancy
- Log a repair
- Check your rent account and make payments
- Send us letters, photos, feedback, comments and complaints
- Access your tenancy letters and documents
- View and send us updates of your family details
- Have your voice heard as part of our Tenant Involvement
- Go paper-free and get a faster, greener and more cost effective service

Need help? Get in touch today and activate your $\mathcal{M}_{\mathcal{Y}}$ **HOME** account.



Planned Maintenance

We have been working on a number of projects this year, some of which are almost complete and others which have recently commenced. Below is an update on some of the contracts being carried out this year.



Roofs

We have completed roof replacements to 5 tenement blocks so far this year with another 2 tenement blocks due to be complete early in the New Year.



We have installed new uPVC triple glazed windows and doors to 34 properties and have another 12 scheduled.



Balconies

We have replaced the old metal balcony railings with new glass balustrades to 24 flats with another 12 scheduled.



Bathrooms

This year's kitchen replacement programme is complete, with 30 kitchens and 30 bathrooms being replaced.







70 new Worcester Greenstar boilers have been installed, which due to their wide power range will help to reduce gas consumption and lower energy bills for our tenants.

Electrical Testing – Electrical Safety is similar to Gas Safety and we must be able to demonstrate compliance with Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQS). Every Housing Association is required to have an electrical safety inspection carried out in every one of their properties every 5 years. Testing 370 properties every year means that we rely on tenants being safety conscious and getting in touch to make an appointment, as soon as they receive a reminder from the Association, or one of our appointed contractors. You MUST give access to allow this 5 yearly inspection, as continued access issues will result in us having to enforce entry into your home and we want to avoid that.

Air Source Heat Pumps

Our contractor is well on the way to completing a



Scottish Housing Day

Earlier this year we supported Scottish Housing Day, this year's theme was celebrating a career in housing. We want to celebrate the work of everyone in the Association who has made housing their career of choice and share some of their stories with you.

Introducing our team and the person behind the role...

Corporate Services Director

After completing a degree in Accountancy, our Corporate Services Director started off working life as an Accountant with the multinational professional services network, KPMG where a large focus



of her work involved carrying out audits for regional councils. From here, an opportunity to move to Stirling Council under the remit of housing and a secondment to aide with stock transfer from local authority to housing association. In addition to this our CSD has also worked with Raploch Urban Regeneration Company.

This vast amount of experience came to the Association in way of our Corporate Services Director back in 2013. With over 30 years' experience our CSD said 'she enjoyed the people element that comes with working in social housing, and no two days are the same' and when asked what advice she would give to anyone considering a career in housing; she said 'give it a go, there's something in housing for everyone'.

Senior Housing Officer

We asked our Senior Housing Officer to describe 'the how and the why' she chose the path into a career in housing.

'The how was quite simple, I came into housing, on a three month temporary contract, and, still remain here after 20 years!



The why, is because every day still differs from the day before, it's never boring and even after this length of time, every day is still very much a learning experience.

Working for a community-based housing association, I cannot think of any other career where you have the opportunity to meet such a tapestry of colourful and diverse characters than as a housing officer out on the patch.

There is a huge amount of job satisfaction knowing you actually can and do make a positive difference to people's lives, whether that be handing over keys to a lovely new property, or resolving a neighbour dispute with a practical solution for all involved.

I came into housing later in life, having worked in

banking and telecommunications prior to this.

I gained my postgraduate diploma in housing studies at Stirling University and this opened up a whole new world to me that I did not know previously existed.

The advice I would give to anyone coming into a career in housing would be people are always going to need houses -Start early!

There are so many areas of specialism in Housing: Technical, Housing management, Finance, Governance etc. Literally something for everyone, and yet it still somehow remains a hidden gem as a chosen career.

Customer Service Team Leader

I started my career in housing having previously worked in customer service roles for WRB Gas and QAPM who are two of the Association's main repairs contractors. During these roles, I had an insight into the housing world working closely with the Association as well as various other Housing

Associations and Local Authorities all over Scotland. I felt social housing was a path I wished to follow due to my morals and values aligning with the ethos of the businesses.

After studying for my BSc (Hons) Psychology degree, knowing I always wanted to help people in some way, work closely with people, work in the community, and, help contribute to people in our society having a better quality of life, I came to work for the Association initially based in the office as Repairs Co-ordinator for QAPM. This role supported the Association staff helping answer repairs calls for 1 year during their restructure and transition from housing assistants and repairs assistants to one combined Customer Service Team who would provide a one stop service.

I really enjoyed my time based in the Abertay office, having even more of an insight into the world of social housing which naturally led onto directly working for Association. In 2013, I started my employment as Technical Admin Assistant, 9 months later moving onto the Customer Service Assistant role, and, then onto my current role as Customer Service Team Leader in 2016, a role which I still love to this day! At the start of this

year, I had my 10 year social housing birthday and overall have worked in Customer Service for 24 years.

Income Team Leader

A certain sense of deja vu for our Income Team Leader who ended up working in



the Association after carrying out her school work experience here years before, when we were known as Scottish Homes!

Having explored the world working on various cruise ships, including a stint with the Walt Disney Academy, our Income Team Leader came home to her roots and into the housing sector initially as a Customer Service Advisor with Home Group. Keen to explore other avenues in housing, she used every opportunity to find out as much as she could about other areas in housing and gained a wealth of experience from her time with Home Group in her role latterly as Housing Officer before coming to work with the Association back in 2015 as Income Officer and more recently as Income Team Leader.

Our Income Team Leader, by her own admittance feels her own life experiences have allowed her to relate to our tenants and their experiences and finds her role very rewarding when offering assistance and being able to 'make a difference'. When asked what advice she would offer anyone coming into the sector, she said if you are willing to look for opportunities and work hard, it's a great sector to learn so many different ways of doing things and an introduction to so many different roles.

Housing Officer

I've worked in social housing for around 25 years. Most of my time has been spent working for a number of different housing associations and councils across the South of England – London, Brighton, Kent, and the West Country.

I ended up on this career path completely by accident! My working life started as a commercial fisherman in Kent. I moved around the south coast of England before wanting to change when I lived in Brighton. Having no idea what I wanted to do next, I signed on with a manual labouring agency, and was hired doing a range of manual jobs including road-sweeping, binman and then caretaker for some multistory blocks owned by the council. This turned into a permanent position and my journey in social housing had started! Fast-forward 20 years and I am now relishing the different challenges of being a Housing Officer in Dundee.

Right from the start I learnt that no two days are ever the same, and I am always, always learning new things. I take great pride in my work and achieve much personal satisfaction by being able to help other people. It is by no means easy, but it's such an amazing opportunity to make a positive contribution to many people's lives. For everyone considering a career in Social Housing,

my advice would be 'GO FOR IT!'. There are so many





elements you wouldn't immediately think of, like repairs, asset management, finance and so on. So there are many different routes a career in social housing can take you on. For me, it's the pleasure of meeting new people from all walks of life, using my acquired knowledge & skills to help them wherever I can. Put simply, each day I come to work I want to make a difference...

Maintenance Officer

Our Maintenance Officer has been in employment with the Association for in excess of 18 years, starting off as a temporary Repairs Assistant. Over the months that followed it became a more generic role which included answering the telephones too.



During her time as Repairs

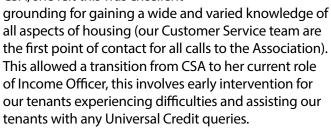
Assistant, she played a fundamental role in developing the appointment system, which still remains in place today. The beginning of the Customer Service team followed shortly after.

Fast forward to 2017 our then Repairs Assistant became a Maintenance Assistant, while working towards an HNC Built Environment, attending college one day per week for two years until ultimately succeeding in her current role as Maintenance Officer.

When asked 'what do you enjoy about your role?' The response (without hesitation) was 'I always wanted to be a Maintenance Officer, I love to see the transformation in properties when I have been involved in works being carried out. This comes from the girl who grew up wanting to initially be a hairdresser and years later swapped her hairdryer for a hammer!

Income Officer

From over 20 years in banking to a career in housing!
Initially starting off life in the Association as a part-time Customer Service Assistant, within 5 months this moved to a full-time, permanent contract. During her time as a CSA, she felt this was excellent



When asked what our Income Officer enjoyed about working in housing, she said she loved to be able to

help people and this job certainly lends itself ideally to this and what advice would she give to anyone looking to come into housing? The skills you learn in housing can be transferred to almost any environment and you get to meet some great people along the way!

Last but my no means least.....

Earlier this year The Association was involved in the Career Ready initiative, working closely with a young person from Harris Academy, providing the opportunity to complete an internship and insight into the many career opportunities available in housing.

This took place in June and July over a 4 week period, where our young person was involved in all aspects of the various housing services available within the Association. In addition to this our young person benefitted from one-to-one support and guidance from our very own Income Team Leader, who volunteered as a mentor to the young person over the 18 month period of the Career Ready Programme.

We asked our young person to provide us with an overview of their experience with the Association and this is what they had to say...

My work experience at Abertay Housing Association

During my time at Abertay, I learned and experienced many things. As Abertay was my first job working in a professional environment, I was nervous but very much excited. Upon my arrival, all the staff that I met were incredibly welcoming and made me feel comfortable.

Throughout my time I developed

my understanding of housing while working at Abertay. I first learned that there were Housing and Maintenance Officers who looked after tenants and the houses for Abertay, I got an insight into how hectic, yet interesting, customer service could be and many more things. But most of all I learned that Abertay wasn't just about the houses, it was about the tenants. Everybody who worked there worked to ensure the comfort of the people staying in those homes. I am proud to say that I was able to have my first work experience at Abertay Housing Association.

The Association were delighted to be involved in the Career Ready initiative and wish our young person well for the coming year with her studies and beyond.

WINTER IS COMING. Are you prepared?

Leaks and how we can work together to prevent them

If you live in a flat, you may have problems with leaks or flooding from neighbouring flats. We find the most common source of water ingress into the flat below is when someone leaves a tap on at the bath, wash hand basin or kitchen sink which results in it overflowing. We would ask that you double check all taps are off before you leave your home, even if you are only popping to the shop or going on the school run.

Washing machines can also be a common cause of leaks so ensue that you regularly check connections and always ensure new machines are plumbed in correctly.

For top floor flats and main door properties storm damage and heavy rain can lead to water ingress into your home. During spells of incessant rain gutters and downpipes can become overwhelmed which may cause water to find its way under the roof tiles into your home.

Please report all incidents of leaks and water ingress to the Association as soon as you become aware so that we can quickly diagnose and rectify the issue to avoid further damage to your home and the fabric of your building.



Frozen Pipes

As winter approaches it is important to be aware of the risk of burst pipes in cold weather. When temperatures remain below 0c freezing for 2-3 days there is a possibility that pipes will freeze and burst which will cause leaks as the temperature starts to rise again.

To help with the prevention of frozen pipes we ask where possible that you keep your home as warm as you can as warmth offers the best protection against frozen pipes. Keeping your heating on at low can help with this.

In the event of a burst pipe, carrying out the following can minimise damage to your home:

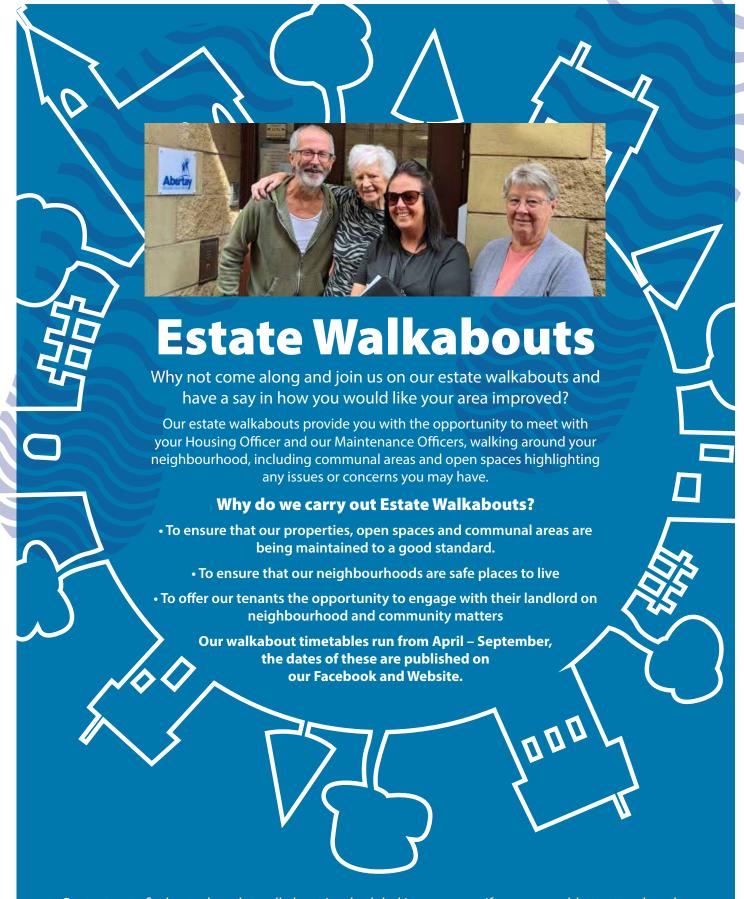
- 1. Turn off the main stopcock, if you are able to.
- 2. Switch off any water heaters or boilers.
- 3. Turn on all taps to drain your storage tank.
- 4. Contact the Association ASAP

or if out of hours call the emergency contact number.

- 5. Warn any neighbours who may be affected.
- 6. Use buckets, containers etc to collect as much water as you can. This water can be used to flush your toilet at a later stage if necessary. Please note that any water collected from a burst pipe is NOT suitable to drink or cook with.

Going away or on holiday over the winter months?

If you are going away from home over the winter months you may wish to consider leaving your heating on a low setting to help prevent your pipes freezing while you are away. If you intend being away from your home for an extended period during the winter months we ask that you contact us on (01382) 903545 to advise of this and to leave a contact number or access arrangements in the event of an emergency.



Contact us to find out when the walkabout is scheduled in your area. If you are unable to attend on the proposed date, don't worry you can still be involved by giving us a call on (01382) 903545 or why not email us at queries@abertayha.co.uk – you can highlight any improvements you think would enhance your estate and have an influence in any decisions we make.

We look forward to seeing you there!



Fast forward to September when we had a bus trip for tenants and guests to Callander followed by a lovely meal at the Invergowrie Inn, a great day had by all.

November soon arrived, meaning a social night in our complex lounge with buffet and refreshments, entertainment provided by Rab Clark. Pie and Beans is on the menu in December followed by our annual Christmas raffle. All leading up to the big one; our Christmas party night on 14th December, a three course meal served by Jacques Catering and festive entertainment by Mike Lees.





of annual Burns Supper in January 2024, with Mike Lees entertaining us and it wouldn't be a Burns Supper without haggis, neeps and tatties!

Dryburgh Gardens

Summer in Dryburgh Gardens was busy with a Summer Time Buffet in the lounge followed by a quiz, we had a busy lounge with everyone having a fun afternoon!

A bus trip to Pitlochry with tenants, friends and family with a pit stop for High Tea at The Red House Hotel in **Coupar Angus. The dismal weather** didn't dampen our spirits, we had a great day among family and friends.









August was Cabaret Night, with pie, beans and a raffle with all proceeds going to the complex funds, another great night had by all.

Another month and another bus trip, this time we headed off to Brechin Castle Centre followed by tea at The Bellrock, Arbroath.

Autumn brought with it the usual fun at our Halloween/ Guy Fawkes party with a delicious buffet of pies, sandwiches and cream cakes and a great night's entertainment provided by Rab Clark.



The festivities are well underway in the build up to Christmas starting with our Christmas cake and candy event, stalls of festive home bakes along with warm mince pies and a cuppa amongst friends!



Our annual toy collection is underway to assist those families in the community struggling at Christmas time.



We've had a busy time in Fintry Mains since the Summer Newsletter...

A day out in June to the Riverside Inn, Dundee for a meal, a nice change of scenery outwith the complex. Later in the month we went along to the performance of Summer Holiday by the Dundee Youth Theatre at The Caird Hall. A brilliant evening of entertainment.



Our festive plans are well underway, planning our Christmas Celebrations in the complex with a Christmas meal to be provided by Jacques Catering, music from Rab and perhaps Santa may make another appearance!

Our twice weekly Bingo sessions still prove popular raising money for the funds, along with our weekly bacon roll mornings.

Beauty and Massage Therapy Sessions are also a firm favourite in the complex. These sessions would not be possible without the OPEN grant funding obtained from Dundee City Council.

provided by Mike Lees, and delicious buffet supplied by Clarke's.

Caldrum Street & Rosebank

Our Caldrum Street Estate walkabout was well attended, with Melanie our Housing Officer.





Always popular, our fish supper nights with entertainment by Alex was enjoyed in September, a firm favourite in our complex.

A 'Spooktacular' Fancy Dress Halloween Party with bobbing for apples and a tasty buffet, followed by entertainment by Rab Clark. Bingo, beauty therapy, rolls/games, massage therapy to name but a few of the regular activities enjoyed by our Caldrum Street retirement tenants.

Our craft class have been busy making quilts which were donated and presented to staff nurse Toni Anderson for the Neonatal Unit, Ninewells.



A lovely sunny garden party was thoroughly enjoyed in July with the lovely Mike Lees entertaining everyone. Our tenant, Sandy Joiner made delicious chicken wraps and a summer punch as well as a selection of home baked cakes by our tenants.







Our festivities are all planned and we're looking forward to a whole host of fun times throughout. They started with a Christmas shopping trip to Livingston and everyone had a great day and 'shopped till they dropped', with mini bus driver Dave (a Caldrum Street tenant), providing an excellent service!

Our Christmas party night is planned for 22nd December, including a dance performance from Tori Barclay Academy. Our festive meal will be catered for by Jackie McKenzie, rounded off with entertainment from Mike Lees.







We have started our annual toy collection for the local Maxwell Centre benefitting children/families in our surrounding area at Christmas time.

A luxurious Festive Hamper has been donated by Coupar Angus Junior Football Club for one of our lucky tenants, a lucky winner before Christmas. In addition to this various raffle hampers have been put together by tenants, all proceeds are for their Comfort fund.

Looking to 2024...our traditional Burns Supper Night is already in the calendar with a caterer and Alex for entertainment.

Always good to have something to look forward to in the New Year!

lan Soutar led our Rosebank Walkabout back in September, which was well attended by tenants.









Jean Petrie

16/01/1934 -09/09/2023

Jean Petrie our Rosebank retirement tenant sadly passed away earlier this year. Friends and neighbours from our Rosebank Retirement Complex wanted to pay tribute to remember their much loved friend and neighbour.

Jean was a tenant with the Association for over 19 years, and loved nothing more than help organise and join in all occasions held not only in Rosebank but also our neighbouring retirement complex of Caldrum Street too.

Jean is fondly remembered by everyone and missed by all those who had the pleasure of knowing her.

A gorgeous afternoon in June, Patons Lane held an afternoon tea in the beautiful grounds at Baltic Gardens with a lovely buffet and entertainment from Lori. Fast forward to July and any excuse for a fish supper night held in the complex.

September and Patons Lane tenants and friends took part in MacMillan's Biggest Coffee Morning arranged by Patons Lane

Tenants held in the complex lounge in aid of cancer support. A very successful event, raising a very healthy £229.36 which was rounded up by Abertay Housing Association

to a final donation amount of £300.00.



Palons Lane

Plans are now well underway for our St Andrews Day Celebrations in November. A day of Bingo and a hot roast beef meal supplied by Yorke's of Dundee is the plan of action.

We love nothing better than a good pamper session and we continue to enjoy our Beauty Therapy sessions with Elaine in the complex lounge.



2023 done and plans start all over again, with our customary Burns Supper planned for January 2024!

With the Festive Season around the corner our Christmas
Party celebrations are on 12th
December, a two course meal will be served by Jacques Catering and entertainment by Alec Mills and not forgetting our annual toy collection is well underway, supporting local families/children in the community at Christmas.

Should you find yourself struggling with your finances over the Festive season, we have included some useful contact details for your information.

How to contact and access services

(CT) Connect Team

The Connect Team can help you access benefits, deal with any benefit issues and support with income maximisation (including identifying in-work benefits and any benefits you may be entitled to). We can also help you to complete benefit claim forms and challenge decisions and we work alongside the Welfare Rights Team to ensure you can get help with longer term problems. We offer face to face appointments across Dundee and can discuss issues over the phone. Please call to make an appointment. phone. Please call to make an appointment.

Tel: 01382 431188 (select option 2) Mon - Fri 9.30am – 4.30pm

(CAB) Citizens Advice Bureau

CAB gives free, confidential and impartial advice on a wide range of topics, including

benefits, energy, housing, employment, NHS

complaints, debt and income maximization, including budgeting. We can help with applying

for benefits and challenging benefit decisions,

including representation at tribunal and we offer FCA registered debt advice and support including

We can also help with energy grants, discounts,

disputes and reducing fuel debt, and we have

dedicated Armed Services and Older Persons

. . . Appointments are available Monday - Saturday

by phone, email, video or face to face. Tel: 01382 214633

Mon - Fri 10.00am – 4.00pm
Saturday is advice appointments only
E: Bureau@DundeeCAB.casonline.org.u

statutory debt options.

WR) Welfare Rights

The Welfare Rights Team can help Dundee residents sort out a wide range of benefit and tax credit problems. We can identify what benefits you may be entitled to, assess the merits of your case may be entitled to, assess time merits or your case if you want to challenge a decision, and represent you at tribunal if you have a case - e.g your claim for benefit or tax credits may have been refused, your benefit may have stopped, you may want to see if benefit can be backdated or report a change in circumstance.

Tel: 01382 431188 (select option 2) Mon - Fri 9.30am — 4.30pm E: welfare.rights@dundeecity.gov.uk

BC) Brooksbank Centre

We can help you with a range of issues, including benefit checks and challenging benefit decisions We also offer various debt solutions and can help people complete a range of forms and access housing, legal and energy advice. We host drop-in sessions on Tuesdays (9.30am to 3pm) and Thursday afternoons (1.30pm to 4.30pm) at the Brooksbank Centre. In addition to drop-in sessions, we have a range of bookable appointments, please call us to arrange. We also have advisers co-located at the arrainge. We also have advised conditioned at the following GP surgeries: Terra Nova, Hillbank Health Centre, Newfield Surgery and Coldside Medical Practice and we can offer debt & benefits advice to inpatients at Carseview Centre as needed

Tel: 01382 432450 Mon - Fri 9.00am - 5.00pm Brooksbank Centre, Pitairlie Rd, Mid Craigie Rd

Dundee Law Centre provides free, accessible, confidential and quality legal advice and representation to Dundee residents. We support people with debt, benefits, housing sissues, including proposessions, evictions, rent homeless, council tax and disrepair issues, as well as welfare, housing and care needs relating to disabilities. We can appeal cases when appropriate and advice clients of the process along the way, and work in partnership with other support services. Please call to make an appointment or fill in our online anouncer of the property of the province of the property of t

Dundee Law Centre (DLC)

Tel: 01382 918230 Mon - Fri 9.00am - 5.00pm Online enquiry form: www.dundeelaw.org/need-help/

Energy Advice

Dundee Energy Efficiency Advice Project

DEEAP provides advice on fuel tariffs, how to reduce bills, energy efficiency measures, benefit checks, advocacy work resolving debts with energy suppliers, and other advice and referral work.

Scarf (Home Energy Scotland)

Scarf delivers the Home Energy Scotland (HES) service, which offers free and impartial advice on a variety of energy saving matters, including help with accessing financial assistance, lowering fuel bills, and making your home more energy efficient.

Christians Against Poverty (CAP)

We provide free advice and support for local people in Dunder who are struggling with unmanageable debt. We also have a betiending sevice and emergency aid fund (only aciditor those receiving support from our Dundee Debt Centre). Please phone the CAP team to book an in-person appointment with centre and find more information and advice on our velosite.

Tel: 0800 328 0006 www.capuk.org/get-help

Funeral Link

Tel: 01382 458800 www.funerallinkdundee.org

What's the problem?

I suddenly have no money

- Emergency (lost money or unexpected expense)
- Disaster (such as flood or fire)
- Relationship breakdown
- Money stopped (sanctioned / failed a
- Lost Joh



I'm waiting on a payment /

- · Made a new claim for benefit
- Benefit is delayedWaiting for a benefit decision to be

SEE OPTIONS: 1

My money doesn't stretch far enough

- Deciding between food and fuel
- Change of circumstances (e.g new baby / bereavement / illness)

SEE OPTION: 5

I have debt

- Benefit repayments

SEE OPTION: 6

What are some options?

Financial advice and support



Scottish Welfare Fund - Crisis Grant

WHO CAN HELP: BC (18 (17 (DLC)



Hardship Payment

Hardship payments of Universal Credit need to be paid back, but hardship payments of JSA or ESA

WHO CAN HELP: BC GB GT



f someone has made a new claim for benefit but has not yet been paid, they may be able to get an advance Advances are typically paid within 3 working days but you can ask for it to be paid the same day you apply. Benefit advances must be paid back, and the money will be taken from your future benefit payments (a loan). It's important to get advice from one of the services before taking out an advance.

WHO CAN HELP: BC (AB) (T) WR (DLC)



Challenging a decision

ifit decision if your benefit has been stopped/sanctioned/reduced and you believ st benefit decisions need to be challenged within one month.

WHO CAN HELP: 📧 😝 WR 👊



Benefit check

Some people may need support to make a claim and may not be getting all of the benefits they are entitl to. A benefit check can ensure that they are receiving their maximum entitlement.

WHO CAN HELP: BC (AB) (T) WB (DC



Debt Advice

ice and support to reduce outgoings to creditors and consolidate and manage repayments for all type

CAN HELP: BC (AB (WR (DLC) (AP

Who can help?



Brooksbank Centre

Tel: 01382 432450



Citizens Advice Bureau

Tel: 01382 214633



Team

Tel: 01382 431188 (select option 2)



Tel: 01382 431188 (select option 2)

Please turnover for full details of these services and others, including Dundee Law Centre (DLC) and Christians Against Poverty (CAP)

Garden Compelition 2023



A huge thank you to those of you who took time to enter our Garden Competition 2023. As always, it wasn't an easy decision for our competition sponsors - QAPM, our Chair and Vice Chair of the Board.

The winners of this year's Garden Competition 2023 are:-

BEST GARDEN CATEGORY





BEST VERANDA/BALCONY





BEST COMMUNAL GARDEN AREA

Gordon Street Retirement Complex



OPERATION COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP

A Take Pride in Your City Community Clean-Up has taken place in the city's North East ward as part of Dundee's ongoing environmental campaign.

The clean-up which took place in Mill O'Mains, Fintry and Whitfield back in September is part of the wider Take Pride campaign which aims to make a difference to Dundee's neighbourhoods, parks and open spaces.

The three-day initiative saw council teams carry out additional works such as the removal of litter and debris, strimming from buildings, general tidying of communal areas where required and further sweeping to path & street areas.

Also in attendance were the Council's Environmental Compliance Team who carried out a Day of Action to take steps to reduce littering, litter resulting from poorly presented waste, and fly-tipping.

Climate, Environment & Biodiversity Committee Convener Heather Anderson said: "Under our Take Pride in Your City umbrella campaign, there are so many different initiatives taking place to make positive differences to neighbourhoods and for communities around the city.

"Through the Community Clean-Ups, Council staff continue to work with the local community to improve the condition and appearance of places based on the direct feedback the Service receives from the public.

"This collaborative approach is exactly what Take Pride is all about. There are many ways of working together to tackle issues such as litter, dog fouling, fly-tipping, graffiti and discarded chewing gum in our open areas."

The initiative has previously taken place in several areas of the city, with further Clean-ups planned for the future.

Information about upcoming Community Clean-ups is communicated directly with residents in the areas prior to taking place.



Buying presents, sending cards, adding new decorations to the tree, there's no doubt about it, Christmas is a very expensive time for most of us. But there's a good reason to put paying the rent at the top of your Christmas to-do list.

Paying the rent over the Christmas period can sometimes be a problem for tenants. Some tenants feel that the Christmas period shifts their priorities to presents and parties.

Putting a plan in place to prevent rent arrears will help to ease some of the financial stress associated with the Christmas and New Year period.

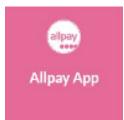
3 easy money tips to help you relax this Christmas

- **1. Get Ahead.** Where possible, try to pay an additional week/month's rent early in December so you're not caught out as Christmas draws closer. The festive season carries us away at the best of times, but if you've paid an extra week/month of rent in advance, it removes the burden of extra financial pressure.
- **2. Pay extra.** Could paying an additional week/month's rent in advance be a struggle? Continue paying your rent as normal, but consider adding a little extra each week/month in the lead up to Christmas. That way, you'll be up to date, or even a little ahead when the festive season rolls around.
- 3. Communication is key. It's important to stay in touch with us if you feel you might be under some financial pressure towards the end of the year (or indeed any other time of the year for that matter). Are you already worried about being able to pay your rent? You can contact our Income Team for advice, who can also signpost you on to specialist agencies who can also help.

If you are experiencing rent arrears or have any concerns with rent payments it is important that you engage with our Income Team to agree a payment plan. They can also signpost you to other agencies who can assist with budgeting, benefits and maximising your income.















In addition to this, they can provide rent statements on request and discuss the most suitable option for you to pay your rent. Please contact our Income Team should you wish to discuss your rent and the easiest way to make payments.

You can contact them by calling (01382) 903545 and asking to speak to one of the Income Team.

It was as if the weather was specially 'on order' to welcome back Fintry Gala Day, (the first one since the Pandemic), held in the grounds of Fintry Church in the blazing sunshine. Everyone who came along enjoyed a range of activities, food stalls, locally made crafts and various fairground rides...all free!

It was great to see so many families and people of all ages from the community enjoying themselves in the sunshine. A huge thank you to all the volunteers who plan and organise the event and make it the successful event it is. Here's to next year...













Suggestions

Complaints

Compliments

We are seeking your feedback following all routine repairs.

As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, we ask our tenants to complete a short questionnaire to advise if the repair has been completed to their satisfaction or otherwise.

All completed questionnaires will be entered into a quarterly draw for the chance to win a £50 voucher of your choice.

Well done to Mr Lamond, our latest winner (pictured below).



Your views are very important to us and we would encourage all of our tenants to complete our questionnaire and help improve the services we provide to you.

Here are some of the comments and feedback you've already provided us with...

"VERY POLITE AND NO FURTHER ISSUES" "QAPM GUYS WERE GREAT" "JOINER WAS ABSOLUTELY BRILLIANT. ALSO FIXED THE SQUEAKY GATE"

"NEVER ANY ISSUE WITH ANY TRAPESMEN WHEN COMING OUT" "VERY POLITE MAN, NO ISSUES AT ALL" "ABERTAY IS GREAT"

Staff News



After 12 years' service as a Maintenance Officer, Russell hung up his tool belt in June and is enjoying his well-deserved retirement.

His knowledge and experience will be sadly missed but we all wish him well for the future.

We bid a fond farewell to Helen when she retired from the Association in September.

After 15 years cleaning the offices, it was time for Helen to enjoy her well -earned retirement. She will be sorely missed.



We were delighted to welcome Skye to the Association. Skye joined us in September as one of our office cleaners and has settled in very quickly.

Equalities Survey

At Abertay Housing Association we believe in the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion. In order to make sure we're meeting everyone's needs we regularly send out reminders to ensure our records we hold are current and up-to-date. This includes asking you about your ethnic or national origin, gender, sexuality, religious belief and disabilities.

Please take a couple of minutes to complete the short online survey, by scanning the QR code below. Alternatively, you can also access the survey via your My Home account, our online tenant portal.

Should you prefer to complete the survey in paper format, please contact the office and we can send a copy out in the post with a pre-paid envelope for return.

All equalities questions are voluntary. All personal data collected will be treated as strictly confidential and disposed of in line with the Data Protection Act (1998).





- 1. What did the other reindeer not let Rudolph do because of his shiny red nose?
- 2. The film Miracle on 34th Street is based on a real life department store in America. Which store is it?
- 3. Elvis isn't going to have a white Christmas he's going to have a.....
- 4. In the classic Christmas film, How the Grinch Stole Christmas, the Grinch was described with three words. What are they?
- 5. What words follow "Silent Night" in the song?
- 6. In Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol, what was the first name of Scrooge?
- 7. What did Frosty the Snowman do when a magic hat was placed on his head?
- 8. Which Christmas song contains the lyric "Everyone dancing merrily in the new old-fashioned way?"
- 9. According to the song, what did my true love give to me on the eighth day of Christmas?
- 10. How many gifts in total were given in "The Twelve Days of Christmas" song?

Answers 1 Join in any reindeer games 2 Macy's 3 Blue Christmas 4 Stink, stank, stunk 5 Holy night 6 Ebenezer 7 He began to dance around 8 "Rocking Around The Christmas Tree" 9 Eight maids a milking 10 364



INGREDIENTS

- 397g tin condensed milk
- 100ml/31/2fl oz Irish cream liqueur
- 400g/14oz white chocolate, broken into squares with 3 squares reserved and roughly chopped
- 200g/7oz dark chocolate, broken into squares with 3 squares reserved and roughly chopped
- sea salt flakes, for sprinkling

METHOD

- 1. Line a 20cm/8in square cake tin with baking paper. Set aside.
- 2. Pour the condensed milk and Irish cream into a microwave-safe bowl. Add the white chocolate (setting aside the 3 roughly chopped squares for later). Stir to combine. Cook in the microwave on high for 2–3 minutes, stirring every 30 seconds, until the mixture is glossy and all the chocolate is melted.
- 3. Remove from the microwave and add the dark chocolate (setting aside the 3 roughly chopped squares for later). Stir gently until the mixture is smooth and thick. Scrape into the prepared tin and level the surface.
- 4. Sprinkle the chopped white and dark chocolate and a good pinch of salt flakes over the surface of the fudge. Chill for at least 3 hours, or until the fudge is firm enough to cut without the knife getting stuck.
- 5. Cut the fudge into small squares, roughly 36 pieces. Serve after dinner or with drinks.

Anti-Social Behaviour



Don't Sit Back and Suffer

We are asking our tenants to be considerate of each other by thinking about how noise from your home could be causing problems and upset to others. We ask that you are considerate of your neighbours and respect each others safety and right to live in a peaceful home.

If you are experiencing any problems of continuous anti-social behaviour we would urge you to contact the Association and we will make every effort to assist you.

All complaints received will be dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner. Not reporting anti-social behaviour can make it look like there are no issues. Where we are able to gather sufficient evidence where someone has breached their Tenancy Agreement, we will be able to take action to resolve the issues. To assist us in investigating, please be sure to:

- Where practical, discuss the problem with your neighbour first and try to resolve it with them (there may be reason why this is not always possible).
- Keep a clear written account of all incidents including dates, times, and the names and addresses of any witnesses (we can provide diary logs).
- Phone the Police if the matter is serious and request a Police incident number.
- Provide as much detail as possible in any complaint, of what happened and importantly how it affected you.
- Contact the Police at the time of the anti-social incident and thereafter report it to the Association.

We will aim to:

- Keep you up to date regularly with the progress of your complaint.
- Take appropriate action as quickly as possible in line with our policy.
- Where we cannot resolve the complaint, we will help to provide you with the appropriate advice/support and assistance.

If you have been threatened or feel unsafe in your home please call Police Scotland on 101 or if it's an emergency 999. You can also report crime anonymously on 0800 555 111, or use the anonymous form available on their website www.crimestoppers-uk.org

Reminder for all those struggling at the moment and stressing over Christmas

- You don't need matching Christmas pyjamas to be happy.
- You don't need 100 Instagram photos with santa at different venues to have a good Christmas.
- You don't need a Christmas Eve box to have a magical Christmas Eve.
- Children need presence more than presents family and friends are everything!
- A Christmas movie night does not have to be in a picture perfect home on a 65"TV

- Colour co-ordinated decorations mean nothing to
- The size of your present pile isn't a reflection of you as a parent, whatsoever!
- Your kids will grow up and only remember the love and laughs at Christmas! Not what they got!

YOUR CHRISTMAS IS PERFECT, STOP LETTING SOCIAL MEDIA MAKE **YOU THINK OTHERWISE!**

Now that the longer winter nights are well and truly upon us, it's time to review your home security and remind yourself of how to stay as safe as possible when out and about.

al home

- Keep front and back doors locked at all times and keep keys and valuables out of sight and reach from cat flaps, letterboxes, downstairs doors and windows.
- If you're out in the evening make sure you leave a light on and draw the curtains. If it's dark before you get home, use timer switches on energy-saving lights.
- Light up your front door with appropriate lighting – make sure it's visible from the street.
- Don't forget about garages, sheds and outbuildings – make sure they are locked and secure too.
- Try not to leave your house in silent darkness. Just leaving a radio on could make a potential burglar think twice.
- Never leave a spare key outside your house, burglars know all the usual hiding spots.
- Keep bins away from windows when they're not being used as they can be used as a climbing aid for burglars.
- Please ensure you have the relevant insurance to cover your personal possessions and home contents should the worst case scenario occur.

out and about

- Plan ahead before you go out. Know where you're going, how you'll get there, and how you'll get back. Let someone know where you're going, and be prepared for a change of plan.
- Keep your purse/wallet and keys close and secure. Only take out essential items, and if you can leave valuables at home, do.
- When you're out, always walk with confidence, and stick to well-lit, busy areas, using the route you know best.
- Avoid quiet or badly lit alleyways, subways or isolated carparks. Walk down the middle of a pavement if the street is deserted.
- Remain aware of your surroundings don't walk along texting, making a phone call or listening to music. As well as being distracted, this advertises your valuable to criminals.
- Trust your instincts if you don't feel safe then change your route, remembering to stay in well-lit and busy areas. Don't be tempted to take short cuts.
- Stay safe by sticking together. Always avoid walking alone at night.
- If you regularly walk home in the dark, get a personal attack alarm – they are widely available and inexpensive.
- If you regularly jog or cycle, vary your route and times you
 go out, particularly if you go alone. Try to avoid wooded or
 remote areas and stick to well-lit roads, or main paths and
 open spaces. Stay fully alert of your surroundings and don't
 use headphones.

YOUR RENT...



RENT CONSULTATION 2024/25

We are committed to consulting with our tenants on the issues which affect our tenants.

We will therefore be consulting with you in the coming weeks on the proposed rent increase, and we want to hear your views on what a fair and consistent rent increase would look like.

The rent setting consultation will include information on how your rent money is spent, what the costs of delivering housing services are, and the impact the rising costs and inflation, as well as sharing with you our extensive planned maintenance programme and details of works carried out to date.

The consultation exercise will be carried out from mid December 2023 – Monday 8th January 2024. You will be able to provide your feedback in a variety of formats; either digitally or by returning the paper consultation form in the pre-paid envelope.

This also includes responding via My Home, our online tenant portal. Should you wish to provide your response in this way and you've still not activated your My Home account, please get in touch with us on (01382) 903545 and we can action this on your account.









Tell us your good news stories...

Perhaps you've lived in the same Abertay property for many years or you may have just moved into one of our properties? Have we any local heroes in the neighbourhood you want to tell us about?

We want to hear from YOU and tell us your stories!

We are always on the lookout for contributions to our Newsletters. If you have any interesting articles, good news stories or want to let us know about anything happening in your local area, please let us know and we will include it in our future newsletter.

Get in touch and have a chat with Clare:

Telephone: **01382 903545**Email: **queries@abertayha.co.uk**



Want to keep up to date with all our latest updates, news and stories? Pop on to the Abertay Housing Association Facebook page, give us a like or why not leave a review for us?!



Opening Hours	Phones	Office
Friday 22nd December	08:30-12:00	CLOSED
Monday 25th December	CLOSED	CLOSED
Tuesday 26th December	CLOSED	CLOSED
Wednesday 27th December	CLOSED	CLOSED
Thursday 28th December	10:00-16:00	10:00-16:00
Friday 29th December	08:30-12:00	CLOSED
Monday 1st January	CLOSED	CLOSED
Tuesday 2nd January	CLOSED	CLOSED
Wednesday 3rd January	CLOSED	CLOSED
Thursday 4th January	10:00-18:00	10:00-18:00
Friday 5th January	08:30-14:00	CLOSED

Should you require urgent assistance please call 01382 903545

Wishing all our customers a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!