

FIFE HOUSING GROUP NEWSLETTER

at home with...
fife housing group

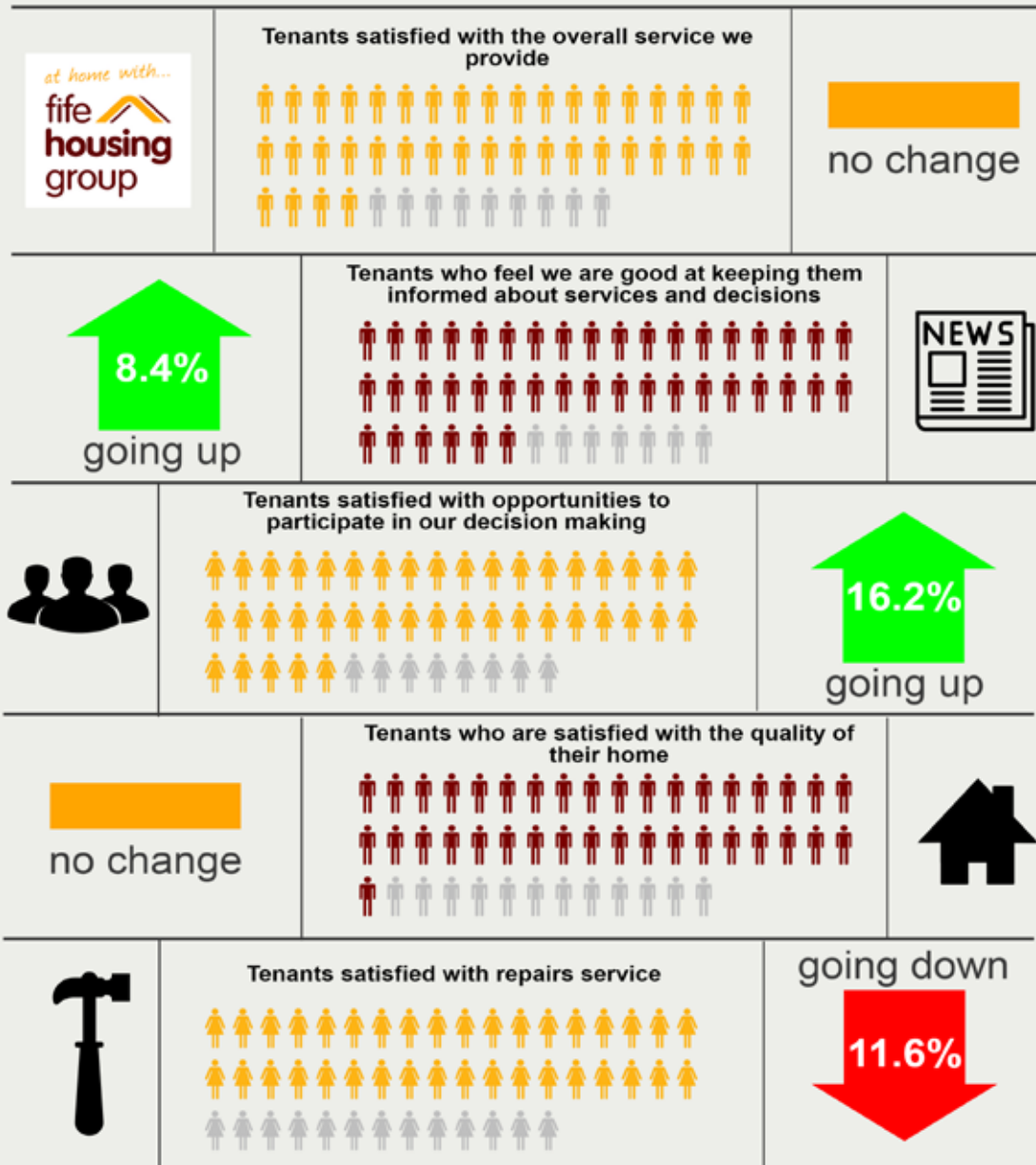
Issue 72 : Spring 2016

Customer Satisfaction Survey 2016

The results of our 2016 Customer Satisfaction Survey are in!

As the infographic below illustrates, there have been significant improvements over the past two years in areas such as our communication and engagement opportunities available, with little or no movement in terms of satisfaction with the overall service we provide and the quality of our housing stock, however, we are hugely disappointed to see a marked decrease in satisfaction levels with our repairs service.

Please be assured that we are already working hard to rectify this, as well as to make improvements in other areas, and hope you will begin to see the positive impact of the changes we are making to our structure and processes over the coming months.



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A message from our Chief Executive - Nicki Donaldson

The implementation of our Business Change Strategy continues apace in 2016, as we focus on restructuring our business to better meet the needs of our tenants and customers.

We are now operating with a more focused approach on service delivery, tenant centric services, tenancy sustainment, factoring, income management and estate management and require an organisational structure which reflects these priorities. In addition, the structure needs to support the Group's aims as we strive to provide value for money with a strong emphasis on performance, stakeholder engagement, taking responsibility and operating an efficient and effective organisation.

As such, we have begun the process of streamlining our business into four distinct, but interlinked, teams with responsibility for the areas you see detailed below:



Chief Executive

Director of Finance and Governance	Director of Housing	Director of Property and Commercial Business	Head of HR and Business Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance • Treasury Management • Risk Management • ICT • Governance • Insurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Management • Engagement • Factoring • Complaints Handling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reactive Maintenance • Planned Maintenance • Trade Health and Safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Resources Activities • Frontline Service for Housing and Repairs • Communication and Engagement • Office Facilities Management • Office Health and Safety

This restructure will also see the redevelopment of our Pitreavie office so that all colleagues can be accommodated in one location, with a view not only to improving our operations and internal communication, but also to reducing our costs through the closure of our Lochgelly office.

Please note that our Pitreavie office will be closed for several weeks in order to facilitate this renovation, with all colleagues relocating to Lochgelly during this time - exact dates for this move are still to be confirmed, but tenants will be advised as soon as this information is available.

Our recent Customer Satisfaction Survey (detailed on the front page) indicates that you are already beginning to see the positive impact of our commitment to 'getting the basics right' and I am confident that the changes detailed above mean that you will continue to do so.

2016/17 Rental Review

Following lengthy discussions at our January meeting, the Fife Housing Group board approved a rent increase figure of 2.1%, representing the Retail Price Index for November 2015 (RPI) plus 1%.

Our extensive consultation process in advance of this meeting included two Housing Information Sessions at Pitreavie, four drop-in sessions out in the communities, newsletter articles and a written consultation to every home. Overall, we had a good response from tenants, with a large number of votes favouring a rent increase of 2.6% or above, however, taking into account the current environment and our financial plans, the board decided that they would keep the increase to the lower figure of 2.1%.

The board also recognised that, as a result of historical factors, our average rents have been higher than other social landlords and that a rent increase which was generally below what other local providers were planning on charging would help towards addressing this issue.

Within the forms returned from the rent consultation, there was an opportunity for tenants to make comments or raise issues of concern. The board was also made aware of all the comments that were made and, where these raised issues of either housing management or disrepair/poor condition, colleagues from the Housing or Property teams were asked to make contact to try and help resolve the matter.

We would like to thank those tenants who took the time to either come to one of our events or complete the rent increase survey; your contribution is very much appreciated.

With rents increasing on 1 April 2016 and shortly after, for those who are affected by the introduction of Universal Credit, it is vital that, if you are unsure of your financial position or your entitlements, you take advantage of the information and advice services offered by the Money Advice Service (contact details below) or, if you are in debt, by asking your Housing Office to refer you to Wise2Welfare.

Money Advice Service
Tel: 0800 138 777
Tel: 01592 583123
Email: money.advice@fife.gov.uk

Team news

Farewell

A fond farewell to our Finance Director, Andrew Clark, who retired in March, having been with the company for over 19 years.



Best wishes also to others who have moved on during the past four months - Darren Albury, Steve Gow, Douglas Steele, Chris Harrower, Norman Inglis, Scott Hunter, Alanna Wallace, Amanda Wilson and Craig Mclean

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Welcome

A warm welcome to Neil Morrison, who joins us as Interim Finance and Governance Director.

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Congratulations

Congratulations to all of the colleagues listed below on their new permanent roles/promotions:

- Karen Gilruth – Housing Officer
- Fiona O'Neil – Business Support Advisor
- Yuxue Payne – Financial Accountant
- Audrey Cameron – Housing Officer
- Heather McIlroy – Factoring Officer
- Tressa Van Schie – Property Officer
- Adrian Lister – Trade Supervisor
- Ross Hughes – Roofer

Readability

Can you read our other articles ok? If not, you can ask for your newsletter to be provided in a large print format – or if you know of a tenant who does not have English as their first language and is unable to read their information from us then please ask them to get in touch with us.

Just contact our Communications and Engagement Assistant, Melissa McManus, on 01383 608105 or via Melissa.McManus@fifeha.org.uk to request a large print copy or to enquire about alternative copy formats.

Foodbanks in Fife



People can struggle to afford food and end up going hungry for many different reasons, from losing their job to getting an unexpected bill.

Should you find yourself in this position, foodbanks can provide access, not only to short-term, emergency food, but also to other forms of support.

Foodbanks are non-profit organisations that receive publicly donated food which is then sorted by volunteers and distributed as food parcels. The simple service of providing enough food for a few days can relieve stress, and prevent crime and family breakdown.

Several charitable organisations have set up food banks in Fife. If you wish to access a foodbank, please contact your Housing Officer, who can provide you with more information and make a referral for you.

Foodbank and free hot meal locations can also be found on our website - fifeha.org.uk/foodbanks-in-fife

Beating the 'Bedroom Tax'

We have recently received confirmation that the Scottish Government will continue to provide funding to help people affected by the so called 'Bedroom Tax' from April 2016 to March 2017.

If you don't already have an arrangement in place, all you have to do is apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) and the full cost of the 'Bedroom Tax' will be paid back to you. The application is quick and easy and there's no financial assessment.

If you wish to discuss making an application, please contact your Housing Officer on 01383 606162.

Alternatively, you can apply online at www.fifedirect.org.uk/dhp or by calling 03451 551155.



Universal Credit is coming

Universal Credit is a single, monthly benefit payment for both working and out-of-work people. It will replace all means-tested benefits for people aged 16-65 including:

- Jobseeker's Allowance
- Housing Benefit
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support

Universal Credit is being introduced in stages from 11 April 2016, with the first claims being processed affecting **single people only**.

Universal Credit is usually claimed online at gov.uk/universalcredit, allowing claims to be made at a time that is convenient for you.

If you do not have internet access at home, support is available to help you get online. Your Jobcentre can provide access to the internet or tell you about local places where you can use the internet for free.

Further information on how Universal Credit will affect you is available on the website above or by calling their helpline on **0345 600 0723**.

Could you be eligible for Attendance Allowance?

Attendance Allowance is payable to people over 65 years of age who have a physical/sensory disability or mental disability (or both) and who need help caring for themselves, or need someone to supervise them for their own safety.

If you think you, or someone you are caring for, may be eligible to apply for this benefit, please check online at gov.uk/attendance-allowance or phone the Attendance Allowance helpline 0345 605 6055 for further details.

Want to join us on a walkabout?

Our popular Estate Walkabout events give you the opportunity to join your Housing Officer, and other colleagues from Fife Housing Group, on a tour of your local area, giving you the chance to learn about what matters to your neighbours, our plans for improvement, meet other stakeholders and see for yourself the issues we are managing in your area.

Please find our walkabout schedule for the next three months detailed below:



Date	Time	Location	Lead Officer
May 2016			
Wednesday 11 May	2pm	Dunearn Drive, Kirkcaldy	Alison Young
Wednesday 18 May	2pm	Kennoway	Greg Turner
June 2016			
Wednesday 8 June	10am	Hill of Beath	Audrey Cameron
Wednesday 22 June	2.30pm	Inverkeithing	Angie Munton
Wednesday 29 June	2pm	Methil	Greg Turner
July 2016			
Wednesday 13 July	2pm	Cairnwell Place, Kirkcaldy	Alison Young
Thursday 21 July	1.30pm	Abbeyview	Stephanie McCulloch

If you would like to participate in any of the walkabouts detailed above, please give us a call on 01383 606162 or e-mail info@fifeha.org.uk.

Walkabouts scheduled for later in the year will be listed in coming newsletters. Alternatively, the full schedule for 2016/17 can be viewed on our website <http://www.fifeha.org.uk/news-events/events/>

Gardeners - get those green fingers at the ready!

Last year's 'Fife Housing Group Garden Competition' was hailed by all involved as a great success, with the quality of entrants of an exceptionally high standard and everyone who took part thoroughly enjoying the experience.

Winners of 'Best Overall Garden', Mr and Mrs Spence of Cameron Drive in Dysart, were delighted to receive the top prize of a £100 Dobbies voucher, having built their garden from nothing over a period of six years. Judge, Claire Ross from Fife Housing Group, was particularly impressed with the mature oasis of plants, shrubs and flowers they had created and inspired by the fact that many of them had been cultivated with love and care from small cuttings.

Building on last year's success, we are delighted to confirm that we will be holding another garden competition later in the year and anticipate that it will be even bigger and better than last year. So, if you're a keen gardener who would like to take part, we advise starting your preparations now in order to ensure that your garden is in full bloom when judging commences.

Full information on how to enter our garden competition will be included in our summer newsletter and posted on both our website and social media channels as soon as it becomes available.





A Scrutiny Success Story

The Resident Scrutiny Group is a team of 15 local residents who meet on a monthly basis to review the services that Fife Housing Group delivers.

The group, who have been together since 2013, recently completed a scrutiny exercise compiling a study entitled: 'To what extent do rents, from a tenants' perspective, represent value for money?'

Keen to ensure that Fife Housing Group deliver services that tenants want and to identify ways to improve the services they receive from the Association, the group reviewed the following three service areas:

- Service charges
- Planned maintenance contracts
- 'Getting it right first time'

The study took approximately five months to complete; with the Group making 19 recommendations for improvement in a report presented to the Board in March of this year, when all but one of these recommendations were approved.

Unfortunately the recommendation that our trades colleagues call the tenant directly to advise of their arrival or of any delay was felt to be unworkable with the potential to lead to further delay. As such, the Board were of the opinion that the current scheduling system remained a better option, however, a huge well done goes to all the Scrutiny Group members who were involved in this successful study.

If you would like to find out more about Scrutiny, or how to become involved, please contact Melissa McManus, Engagement Assistant, on 01383 608105, or via email at melissa.mcmanus@fifeha.org.uk

I've reported a repair – what happens next?

Chloe Lawson



Following on from our article in the last newsletter covering the options available for reporting repairs required in your property, Business Support Advisor, Chloe Lawson, talks us through what you should expect to happen next.

Emergency repairs

If you report an emergency repair, where there is a genuine risk to health, safety, security or the structure of the property, you should expect an operative to attend within four hours and will be asked to remain available to provide access during this time.

Right to Repair

Small, urgent repairs which are covered under part one of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 'Right to Repair' scheme should be attended to within 24 hours. In this instance you will be given an appointment within this timeframe and asked to be available to provide access.

A full list of the repairs covered under this scheme can be found on the Scottish Government website - <http://www.gov.scot/resource/doc/46737/0028749.pdf>

Urgent repairs

We aim to attend to all other urgent repairs within five working days of them being reported. Again you will be given an appointment and asked to be available to provide access.

Routine repairs

Appointments for repairs which are classified as 'routine' should be scheduled within 15 working days of the report being made.

Scheduling appointments

- When booking a repair or pre-repair inspection we will agree a date and timeslot AM (8-12) or PM (12-4), which is convenient for you, however, if a more specific appointment is necessary we will do our best to accommodate this.

- You will then receive a text message confirming the agreed appointment as well as a reminder the day before and on the day of the repair. If the appointment is no longer suitable, then you can reply to the message and reschedule. These text messages will advise a two hour window for the appointment, but we do ask that you remain available for the full four hour slot in case the operative arrives early or is unexpectedly delayed at a previous job.
- If we are unable to contact you to schedule an appointment, then we will leave voicemails/send text messages asking you to get back in touch with us. If we do not receive a response to these, then we will send a letter or visit the property in a further attempt to make contact.
- If you are not available to provide access for an agreed appointment, then a 'no access' card will be posted through your door and you should get back in touch to arrange another suitable appointment.
- If the contractor cannot complete a repair on their first visit, then they will advise the office accordingly and we will call to arrange another appointment.

Please note that no specific appointments are made for external work unless access is required via the property.

You can find more information on the repairs service we provide via our website -

<http://www.fifeha.org.uk/tenant-area/repairs/> or by calling our repairs team directly on **08000 274 007**.

Fife Housing Group celebrate completion of community regeneration project in Abbeyview

In April we were joined by our partners, Persimmon Partnerships (Scotland), tenants, local councillors and former MSP/current Labour candidate Cara Hilton to celebrate the completion of their £17.5 million regeneration project in the Abbeyview area of Dunfermline.



The event marked the end of a redevelopment programme which saw 207 new, high quality, energy efficient properties built as part of a tripartite agreement between Fife Housing Group, Fife Council and builder, Persimmon Partnerships (Scotland).

A mixture of flats, cottages, townhouses and disabled bungalows have replaced the old tenement style flats which were demolished in 2004, making a significant improvement to both the quality of housing available and the local area itself.

Nicki Donaldson, Chief Executive of Fife Housing Group, explains 'Delivering this development was part of our commitment, not only to providing quality, affordable homes for our tenants but also, to improving the environment of the neighbourhoods in which they live.

'As such, we are delighted to have had the opportunity to be involved with this regeneration project and to have been a part of the positive impact it has had in the community. '

Abbeyview Regeneration – Interview with the Reverend Elizabeth Fisk

Reverend Fisk has been the minister at St. Ninian's Church in Abbeyview for the past 19 years and has seen first-hand the impact projects such as our regeneration programme have had on the area. So, as part of the celebrations to mark the completion of our redevelopment, we took the opportunity to sit down with her and discuss the effect investment like this have had on the local community.

Have you noticed a difference in Abbeyview since the regeneration project began?

Yes, I certainly have. When I first arrived from Glasgow some of the flats were already being emptied and the area looked very sad and derelict. Even after the flats were demolished the land looked run down and sat empty for years. As such people were concerned about coming into the area and we often had visitors to the church asking if their cars would be ok, which was a real shame as the community used to be so vibrant and family orientated. There was a lot of uncertainty amongst the older residents who remained, however, once the new houses started being built things began to improve very quickly and new young families started moving back into the area. Now there is a feeling of growth, that people do want to come to Abbeyview again, so the shops are filling up as well and there is a really big sense of community, which I think the regeneration played a big part in developing.

What would you say has been the biggest change?

Definitely the housing itself. These new homes have had a really positive impact on the community with a mixture of social housing, private rentals and owned or part-owned properties. It's great to have a swing park for the kids as well.



Have you had any feedback from your congregation regarding the regeneration project?

Yes, they are all really happy with the redevelopment that has been done and encouraged by the positive changes it has affected. They enjoy the fact that the shops are now a real hub and the sense of community they generate, where people like the local butcher know everything that is going on in the local area and people care about one another.

Is there anything further you think could or should be done to help further develop the Abbeyview area?

The only real problem now is the lack of parking for everyone at the shops which is something I think does need to be given more consideration.

Spring Community Café



Fife Housing Group invited the residents of Dunfermline along to our most recent Spring-themed Community Café which was held at St. Ninian's Church, Abbeyview, in April.

Offering the opportunity to find out more about everything from the work we are doing to improve our services, to repairs and maintenance, the housing allocation process, community engagement and resident involvement, our community cafés are proving to be increasingly popular with tenants and other local residents alike.

As well as the chance to chat to Fife Housing Group colleagues over a free cuppa and a cake, visitors to our cafés are also able to meet representatives from partner agencies, such as the police, fire service, community wardens, mediation services and victim support, all of whom have an array of information available on local issues such as tackling anti-social behaviour, environmental and recycling problems, the impact of welfare reform and energy efficiency advice.



Spring Community Café



Our Abbeyview café boasted an Easter themed 'Kids Corner' with free face painting, Easter crafting activities, an Easter egg hunt, snacks and games to keep the little ones entertained, as well as a free raffle for the adults, with prizes generously donated by local businesses.



Many thanks to everyone who came along and helped to make this event so successful.

Look out for more information on our next Community Café appearing on our website and social media channels soon.

Make sure you remember to get your dog microchipped

The new law for dog owners came into effect from 6 April 2016. All dog owners must now ensure that their pet is fitted with a microchip by the time it is eight weeks old, or face a fine of up to £500. If a local authority comes across a dog without a microchip, owners will have up to 21 days to comply with the law, or be fined.

Microchipping offers owners peace of mind, allowing pets to be tracked if they are lost or stolen, cracking down on the dog black market and also helping to tackle the problem of strays.

The microchip is about the size of a grain of rice and will not cause any pain or discomfort to your dog. The procedure is quick and easy and usually costs around £20 to £30, however, some charities, such as the Dogs Trust, and some vets will microchip dogs for free.

If your details change (e.g. you move home) you must ensure that the microchip is updated. In public places all dogs will also still have to wear a collar and tag stating the name and address of the owner.



Planned Maintenance Programme 2016/17

As a not-for-profit organisation, we are committed to investing the money generated from your rent into improving both our business operations and your homes, spending more than £2 million each year on repairs and maintenance to ensure that the condition and energy-efficiency of our housing stock meets the appropriate standards.

Unfortunately, as funding is limited, we cannot do everything we might like and do have to prioritise which work is undertaken each year. As such, we are keen to make tenants aware of the maintenance we plan to undertake over the next 12 months, as detailed in the table below:

Work Planned	Area(s)	Approximate Investment
Roofing	Rosyth Kirkcaldy	£1,000,000
Surveys	Various	
Dampness / Ventilation	Various	
Component replacements – kitchens/bathrooms	Various	£450,000
External / Internal painterwork - gutters	Various	£100,000
Bin stores	Various (Flats)	£10,000
Pathways / Steps	Inverkeithing Cowdenbeath Rosyth	TBC
Rewiring	Various	£50,000
Artex ceilings	Various	TBC
Heating systems (14 x back boilers)	Various	£75,000
Flooring	High Valleyfield	TBC
Facia boards	Cowdenbeath	£11,000
Smoke alarms	Various	TBC
Geo-thermal heating upgrades	Various	£50,000
Electrical testing	Various	£10,000
Balcony repairs	Various	£50,000
	TOTAL	£1,806,000 +

Please note that works will not necessarily be undertaken in all properties within the areas listed.

It's also worth highlighting that, while we do hope to undertake all of the works listed above, circumstances may change during the year meaning, for example, that works originally scheduled to take place in the first half of the year need to be moved into the second part of the year or, occasionally, even into the following year.

We will be talking to those impacted by the maintenance detailed above over the coming months and, if a change in business priorities does result in this schedule being altered, we will get back in touch immediately to explain the situation and confirm our contingency plans.

Condensation concerns

Our recent tenant satisfaction survey highlighted a number of concerns with regard to the perceived 'dampness' within some of our housing stock.

While we understand that, unfortunately, there may be instances where damp issues do arise, often the mould our tenants identify is actually caused by condensation.

That said, condensation itself is an extremely underestimated cause of damage to homes and their contents so, it remains important to establish whether this the underlying cause of any dampness as quickly as possible in order to deal with it appropriately or escalate the repair accordingly.

In order to help facilitate a swift diagnosis, our Housing Officers will shortly be undertaking specific training on the identification of dampness caused by condensation and the steps which can be taken to prevent it, allowing them to provide on-the-spot advice to tenants. This training will also put them in a position to flag any dampness from other sources directly to our Maintenance Team who can immediately instigate further investigative action.

Whichever outcome, we believe that providing our Housing Officers with these skills will help to speed up confirmation of the issue, identification of a remedy and the completion of any repairs necessary.

A leaflet on the subject of condensation was distributed with our Winter newsletter and is supplied as part of any new tenancy information pack. Copies can also be requested from our offices or downloaded from our website – <http://www.fifeha.org.uk/tenant-area/repairs/making-home-safe/preventing-condensation-home/>

Calendar Error

We have been made aware that there is an error with the repairs number listed on the free calendar issued with the last edition of our newsletter. Please accept our apologies for this mistake and note that the Freephone number for repairs and emergencies is **08000 274 007**.

Sprucing up our stairwells for spring



Following concerns regarding the deteriorating condition of some of our communal stairwells, raised both by tenants living in the flats and our Housing Officers following site visits, we took the decision to add the deep cleaning and redecoration of these areas to our planned maintenance programme for the last financial year.

As such, all of the communal areas in blocks where we hold majority ownership, throughout High Valleyfield, Kennoway, Kirkcaldy, Lochgelly, Rosyth, Inverkeithing, Lumphinnans, Cowdenbeath and Hill of Beath have now been deep cleaned and fully redecorated – sprucing them up nicely, just in time for spring.

Not only is this a significant step in improving the overall appearance of these areas, it should also be instrumental in addressing some of the estate management problems that occur in our tenement flats.

Feedback from residents on the results has been fantastic with tenants, such as Ms Johnston of Allan Park in Hill of Beath, commenting that the communal areas are now 'much brighter and fresher', while her neighbour Mrs Bathgate adds that they are 'much more pleasant to look at, as well as brighter and smarter when visitors call around', and we are hopeful that this will encourage everyone to keep the stairwells clean and clear going forward.



Keeping your stairwell fire safe



Fife Housing Group take the safety of our customers seriously. As such, we would like to remind tenants residing in flats that it is an offence, under the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, to store flammable goods inside your common stair/close and that anyone found doing so could be fined up to £200.

Residents have a duty to keep common areas, such as stairwells, landings and areas near close doors, free of any refuse bags, combustible materials, bikes, prams, motorbikes, furniture or other flammable items. Keeping these areas clear both protects escape routes and reduces the risk of deliberate fire-setting.

The Fife Housing Group tenancy agreement clearly states:

2.12 No property belonging to you or anyone residing with you, including bicycles, motorcycles or prams, should be stored in any of the common parts except in areas set aside for such storage. You must not do anything that causes inconvenience or danger to anyone using the common parts.

2.13 You must put all your household rubbish for collection in the bin store or other proper place allocated for it. You must take reasonable care to see that your rubbish is properly bagged. If rubbish is normally collected from the street, it should not be put out earlier than the evening before the day of collection. Rubbish containers should be returned to their normal storage places as soon as possible after the rubbish has been collected. You must comply with the local arrangements for disposing of rubbish.

Please also note that refuse bins should be stored in the bin stores or drying areas to the rear of the building, not inside the building and that block/close doors should be kept closed and are not propped open at any time.

Although our colleagues are in your area regularly, they cannot be there every day and it is, therefore, up to each occupier to take responsibility for ensuring that their block is fire safe. If you notice anything in your common areas which constitutes any form of hazard, please contact our office immediately on 01383 606162.

In the meantime, we will be working with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to carry out close safety checks and will take whatever action is necessary against anyone breaching these regulations and their tenancy agreement. In addition to a fine, putting your neighbours at risk in this manner could lead to court action to end your tenancy. If FHG has to uplift items to make the block safe, the person/s responsible will also be re-charged the cost of this work.

Rosyth residents plant community orchard to help celebrate centenary

On Sunday 6 March, Rosyth residents planted a community orchard on a piece of land owned by Fife Housing Group, to help celebrate the town's centenary as Scotland's only garden city.

The Community Council, along with people of all ages, came together to plant over 50 native Scottish fruit trees, with a further 12 planted by pupils from the town's four primary schools the following day. Some dedicated trees to their mums on Mothering Sunday with others in memory of loved ones.

Local Councillor Sharon Wilson commented:

"What we want to achieve with this orchard is primarily aimed at the children of Rosyth. I want them to have the experience of being able to pick an apple from a tree, eat it and to see how delicious it tastes. I extend heartfelt thanks to all the members; to Fife Housing Group, Fife Council, Rosyth Community Council and to everyone else that has worked so hard to make this project happen."



Local residents, community groups, members of Rosyth Community Council and EATS Rosyth at the orchard site. Photo credit – Eric Duncan, Dunfermline Camera Club

Stephen Lynas, chairman of Rosyth Community Council added:

"It was a fantastic sight with lots of volunteers and families in attendance today. Many thanks to the hundred-odd people who pitched up over the course of the day to help. There was a real buzz of excitement in the Orchard as we create a sustainable legacy for Rosyth's future through our Edible and Tasty Spaces - EATS Rosyth projects."

For more details on EATS Rosyth visit www.facebook.com/EATS.Rosyth

Offenders to fall foul of new fixed penalty fines

Dog mess can carry disease-causing germs and parasites which are a potential health threat to the public.

Under the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003, it is an offence for any person who is responsible for a dog not to remove any excrement after their animal has fouled, and to dispose of this appropriately into a dog waste bin, general litter bin or domestic wheelie bin. We would also encourage our tenants to remove dog excrement from their gardens.

Poop scoop bags or any other suitable sturdy plastic bags can be used for this purpose. The local Environmental Service offices, local council offices, libraries, etc., vets' surgeries and some pet shops provide free poop scoop bags and Fife Council are also planning to put dispensers in popular dog walking areas to provide these bags free to the public.

There are specially trained new Environmental Wardens who will work with the existing Dog Wardens to patrol community areas throughout Fife. As of April this year, they can legally hand out fixed penalty fines of £80 to offenders and anyone who does not provide their name and address could face a fine of £500 upon conviction in court.

We would encourage our tenants to report any offenders (anonymously if you wish) by contacting the Environmental Enforcement Team at Fife Council on 03451 55 00 22, or via environmental.enforcement@fife.gov.uk



Local News and Views

Dunfermline

With spring now well and truly underway Housing Officer for the Dunfermline area, Stephanie McCulloch, would like to take this opportunity to remind tenants that you are responsible for maintaining your own garden and recycling garden waste appropriately in your brown bin.



Last year's garden competition saw three winners from the Dunfermline area including a Certificate of Excellence winner for Best Creative Garden, the runner up for the Keep Scotland Beautiful Award and Best Sustainable Garden. It would be great if we could get more tenants involved this year and now's the time to get an early start on your project. If you are interested in entering, please contact Stephanie directly to let her know - Stephanie.McCulloch@fifeha.org.uk

April also saw the official launch of our Abbeyview Regeneration Project, with a celebration to mark the completion held in conjunction with one of our popular Community Cafés – thanks to everyone who came along and helped to make both events so successful.

Central Fife

Local residents and Fife Housing Group colleagues came together in February to take part in a clean-up of the bin stores and communal areas behind the flats at Grainger Street, Russell Street and Union Street in Lochgelly.

As part of our ongoing commitment to improving tenants' homes, Housing Officer for the area, Audrey Cameron, arranged the delivery of two large skips and encouraged both residents and Fife Housing Group colleagues to get involved in a community effort to remove all the rubbish which was littering the area.

Audrey explains 'On my regular estate visits, I became aware of an ongoing issue with refuse and bin storage behind some of the blocks, so I decided to tackle the

problem head on by arranging for some skips to be installed and engaging with residents in an effort to generate a sense of community responsibility and involvement in the clean-up'.

'We had a fantastic turnout and I'd like to thank everyone who took the time to get involved – I hope they're all as pleased with the results as I am!

Any tenant who does not currently have a bin should call **Fife Council** free of charge on 03451 55 00 22 to arrange delivery of a replacement.

Audrey has also been attending Lumphinnans Community Council meetings and is now working with them to revamp an old garage site which we are hoping to turn into community gardens.



West Fife Villages

High Valleyfield - Internal painting of the closes here is now complete and, as a result, the communal areas look much cleaner and brighter. Noticeboards have also now been fitted in all of the blocks here so keep an eye on them for all sorts of useful information.

Housing Officer, Angie Munton, would also like to make you aware that Fife College are running a number of community-based learning courses at the High Valleyfield Learning Centre covering subjects such as communication skills, numeracy skills and information and communication technology. Call them directly on 01383 602372 or pick up a booklet from the Community Centre for more details.

Crombie – Our new development in Crombie is still at planning permission stage, however, we do hope to have started construction on the site by summer.

New Primrose, Rosyth – The communal areas in blocks where we hold majority ownership have all been nicely spruced up in time for spring.



Rosyth

Local Housing Officer, Lynn Mather, would like to encourage tenants in Rosyth to become involved in the Estate Walkabouts, which give you the opportunity to speak directly to Lynn and have an input into which improvements you would like to see in your area. Please contact the office on 01383 606162 or via info@fifeha.org.uk to confirm your attendance if you would like to take part and help make a difference to your area.

This year also sees Rosyth's centenary as Scotland's only Garden City, which will be marked with a number of celebrations including the planting of the community orchard (see page 9 for further details) and a Centenary Gala on 28 May. You can keep up-to-date with this and everything else that's going on in Rosyth via the Community Council's Facebook page - facebook.com/RosythCommunityCouncil

Levenmouth

The internal and external painting of the blocks in New Road and Leven Road, Kennoway is now complete, with roofs, walls and railings all getting a coat of paint to help make them brighter and fresher and Housing Officer, Greg Turner, now asks that you help us maintain this improvement by reporting any vandalism or damage which occurs.

As spring has now officially sprung, Greg would also like to give tenants an early heads up to start preparing for this year's garden competition and wish everyone in the Levenmouth area the best of luck with their entries.



Last year was a major success and we are hoping to build upon that by getting more residents and streets involved, which will ultimately improve the areas that we all live in. Please contact Greg directly via Greg.Turner@fifeha.org.uk if you would like to get involved.

Kirkcaldy

The residents of Cairnwell Place are delighted with the work which has been done painting their close stairs, which not only makes the entrance to the flats more appealing but also light and airy.

However, despite this and Housing Officer Alison Young's best efforts to maintain a clean and tidy living environment for residents, she has noted an increase of illegal dumping and wishes to remind all tenants that, not only is it unsightly to other residents living in the blocks/street, but also a potential fire hazard. Anyone who is unsure of how to recycle their waste and/or household items should contact Alison directly (Alison.Young@fifeha.org.uk) or call Fife Council on 03451 55 00 22.

Alison is also in the process of organising a joint venture between Fife Housing Group and Fife Fire and Rescue Service to help address this issue. The date is still to be confirmed, but it is likely to be sometime in May – keep an eye on our website and social media feeds for further details.

Spring Mediterranean Chicken with Herb Infused Tagliatelle

This edition's spring themed recipe has been provided by the newest member of our Resident Scrutiny Group, Martin Toshney, and should cost just £2.27 per portion when prepared for four.

Ingredients

- 1 x tbsp of olive oil
- 1 x garlic clove (or 1 x tbsp. of garlic paste)
- 1 x 400g tin of chopped tomatoes
- 50g parmesan (or similar) cheese
- 25g flour seasoned with salt and pepper
- 1 x beaten egg
- 25g butter
- 4 x chicken breast (or 8 x chicken thighs)
- 150g sliced mozzarella cheese
- 1 x 500g bag of tagliatelle
- 1 x tsp of Italian seasoning herbs
- Salt and pepper to taste



Method

1. Dip chicken in beaten egg and coat lightly in seasoned flour.
2. Add oil to pan, ensure it is hot, then add coated chicken - cover and cook for approximately 20 mins.
3. Once the chicken has cooked add half of the garlic, tomatoes, salt and pepper - recover and simmer on a low heat while cooking the pasta.
4. Bring water for tagliatelle to the boil (add a small amount of oil to prevent the pasta sticking together).
5. Add tagliatelle to boiling water and cook for approximately 10 mins.
6. Drain pasta once cooked then return to pan and stir through butter, garlic, parmesan and Italian seasoning herbs.
7. Meanwhile, add slices of mozzarella to the chicken and allow to melt. Alternatively, to obtain a slightly toasted, look you can transfer the chicken to an oven-proof dish and place under a hot grill for 2-3 minutes.
8. Once cheese has melted, serve both chicken and tagliatelle on warmed plates.

Hint: For extra flavour and texture try adding some green pesto and lightly toasted pine nuts to your tagliatelle.

Wordsearch Winner

Thanks to everyone who entered our winter competition and congratulations to our lucky winner Mrs Sneddon of Sir George Bruce Road, Oakley, who receives a £25 Asda gift voucher.

Enter our SPRING competition and you could win a £25 ASDA gift voucher.

To enter: Complete the wordsearch, cut along the dotted line and send your entry to the address below by 31st June 2016.

D R P S U N T A N I C E C R E A M
 Z F C H U S U N B U R N F N J E N
 Y I A H G H B O A T C O U S U G B
 W R U E F F I S H I N G O I N L E
 M K G U T I B I K I N I C W E O A
 N Q U B E E W A T E R M E L O N C
 A N S W I M M I N G J L W G B B H
 Y Q T A C I P Q Y O U Q N J D O H
 V R N N G X S G T W L X X G R L Y
 A L T F C M F Q D P Y S D A P C D
 C O L O A O A X G C M A I T P C E
 A T W S M S N S U N G L A S S E S
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Name

Address

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..... Tel.....

August	hat	shorts
beach	hot	sunburn
bikini	ice cream	sunglasses
boat	July	suntan
camping	June	swimming
fan	lotion	tent
fishing	mosquito	vacation

Our opening hours are:

Monday - Thursday 8.30am - 5.00pm Friday 8.30am - 4.30pm

General number 01383 606162

For any repairs and emergencies contact us on Freephone 08000 274 007

For Gas emergencies contact WRB Gas directly on 0800 281 856

Electric heating emergencies, Ochilview, Lumphinnans 0845 241 5513

Text us on 0771 771 3666

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