



Spring 2025



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Readability

Can you read our other articles ok? If not, you can request that your newsletter be provided in large print format. Or, if you know of a tenant who does not have English as their first language and might struggle to read information from us, did you know that we can arrange to translate it for them?

Contact our newsletter editor, Alex Tweedie, on **07970 801007** or via **alex.tweedie@fifehg.org.uk** to request a large print copy or enquire about alternative copy formats.

New office opening hours

Last year, we reached out to you for feedback regarding our office opening hours - a big thank you to everyone who responded.

We were keen to hear your views on how you would like us to deliver our services going forward and to understand when you would like our colleagues to be available to respond to communications, other than emergency repairs.

Following this consultation, from January of this year, our opening hours are:

Monday - Friday - 9.00am - 4.30pm

Our out-of-hours service will still be available to take emergency calls out with these times.

Our HomeHub also remains available 24/7 and can be used to access services, including reporting repairs, making payments and viewing statements – scan the QR code and sign up today!



To comply with updated legislation, we're changing how we **take payments over the phone**. From **5 May 2025**, you will enter your card details yourself on your phone keypad during the call, rather than providing them to a member of our team. Otherwise, the process will remain the same.

Getting involved just got more rewarding

We're always looking for ways to recognise the valuable work our amazing involved residents do to help improve the services we provide and so we're delighted to announce the launch of our new rewards programme.

Whether you're a Tenant Member, Mystery Shopper, Resident Inspector or member of Resident VOICES, you will automatically be entered into a **prize draw to win £25 of shopping vouchers** as a thank you for your contribution.

The winners will be announced in April and October, with the number of entries received based on the amount of time committed in the six months preceding each draw.

We're also always looking for more volunteers to get involved with the work we do, with opportunities to participate requiring as little as 5-10 minutes of your time each month. If you'd like to find out more about these opportunities and the benefits they offer, please get in touch with our **Engagement Team** on freephone **08000 274 007**.

Congratulations to our first winner Lynn Courtnage, who is one of our Mystery Shoppers and Resident Inspectors. Thank you for getting involved – we hope you enjoy spending your prize!

Aggressive behaviour towards our colleagues

There has been an increase in incidents where our colleagues have been subjected to aggressive or threatening language and behaviours from tenants.

These behaviours can be written or verbal, during a visit or over the phone. They can also include threatening or hostile emails, text messages, posts or comments on social media. Aggressive behaviour or language could cause our team to feel afraid, threatened or abused.

Fife Housing Group does not tolerate this kind of behaviour towards our colleagues or our contractors.

We remind you that these behaviours are in breach of your tenancy agreement which could put your tenancy at risk.

Our colleagues work hard to provide you with safe, affordable and comfortable homes. We ask that you treat them with courtesy, kindness and respect.

Responsible pet ownership

Recently, there has been an increase in pet aggression towards our colleagues and some of our Housing Officers have even been bitten by dogs, which is frightening for anyone.

The safety and wellbeing of our colleagues is our top priority, so we remind those with animals to practice responsible pet ownership.

If you own a dog, please temporarily shut it in a separate room or out in your garden while our colleagues are in your home. Never open your door to our colleagues if your dog is not secured away.

Even the most lovable dogs can be unpredictable and cause danger to someone they don't know coming into their home. Even if they are a treasured member of your family,

they can be territorial and protective of their owners so please consider this before inviting us in.

Pet aggression also includes barking and jumping at people, therefore, it is better to separate your dog when one of our colleagues comes to your home.

Our team shouldn't have to worry about being attacked by an animal while doing their job so please be considerate of our safety to avoid incidents like this happening.



The Big House
Multibank

Our charity of the year offering essential support to those in need

Last summer our colleagues chose The Big House Multibank (formerly known as The Big Hoose Project) as our Charity of the Year.

This incredible charity operates from its main hub in Lochgelly and collaborates with over 900 partners to provide essential support to people in need. Their work makes a real difference to many individuals and families across Fife and we are proud to contribute to their cause.

So far, we have raised over £1,200 through various fundraising activities, including a Euros 2024 sweepstake, tombola and a 'guess the baby' competition – with lots more activities planned.

The charity helps those facing hardship through referrals and can provide people with

a variety of essential items, including bedding, kitchenware, towels, nappies, furnishings and much more.

We have also become a referral partner with The Big House Multibank. As part of this collaboration, the charity provides us with details of the items available each week. We can then use this information to assist tenants who could benefit from these resources, so if you or any of your fellow tenants need a bit of extra support, please get in touch with your Housing Officer.



Your Home Hub how to guide

This is your personalised how-to guide with all the information needed to sign up for your Home Hub.

The Home Hub is an application designed specifically for Fife Housing Group tenants just like you and it is here to make your life easier.

Using the Home Hub gives you 24/7 access to our services, so you can do things like pay your rent or report a repair even when our offices are closed.

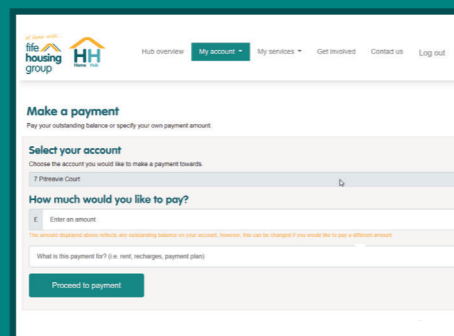
It gives you complete control and only takes a few minutes to sign up. To make it even easier, we have provided this guide to help you.

To create an account simply visit the Hub's homepage and fill in your details. Then click on the 'Create account' button. A 4-digit security code will be sent to your email. You just need to enter the code and that's you set up. It's as simple as that.

If you are having issues or simply want to ask us a question, please get in touch with our team at **08000 274 007** or via **engagement@fifehg.org.uk**

How to pay your rent

- Log into your Home Hub using your email address and the password you chose when registering
- You will then see your **Homepage**
- Click on **Make a payment**
- You will then be taken to the Make a payment page
- Select the account you wish to make a payment towards from the drop-down menu (your home address will usually be pre-populated as the first option) then fill in the amount you want to pay and tell us what the payment is for (i.e. rent, recharges, payment plan)
- Then click on **Proceed to payment**
- You will then be taken to a new page where you need to fill in your tenancy reference
- Click on **Cardholder details**
- You will then be taken to the next page where you need to fill in your details and click on **Review** before completing your payment
- A receipt for this payment will be emailed to you



But why should I sign up? What are the benefits?

1. **24/7 access to our services**
2. **Pay your rent and see your statements in seconds**
3. **Report repairs easily...even when our office is closed**
4. **Raise any issues...from claims to estate management to anti-social behaviour**
5. **You're in control – no more waiting for your call or email to be answered to get things done!**

How to view a statement

- Log into your Home Hub using your email address and the password you chose when registering
- You will then see your **Homepage**
- Click on **See a statement**
- You will then be taken to the **See a statement page**
- Select the account you want to see a statement for from the drop-down menu (your home address will usually be pre-populated as the first option) and then choose what type of transactions you wish to view – rent, repairs or legal
- Select your date range
- Click on either **View statement** or **Download statement**



How to report a repair

- **Please DO NOT use this system to report emergency repairs as it is only monitored intermittently during office hours. Emergency repairs should ALWAYS be reported by calling freephone 08000 274 007**
- Log into your Home Hub using your email address and the password you chose when registering
- You will then see your **Homepage**
- Click on **Report a repair**
- Click on **Start repair**
- You will then be taken to the **Report a repair** screen
- Select the type of repair you wish to report and then select which category from the two drop-down options that will appear below the images above. You will then select from the list of tick boxes the type of repair you wish to report
- Upload any images you have of your repair
- Click **Report a repair**



To access your Home Hub scan the QR code, type in **portal.fifehg.org.uk** or visit our website's homepage for the link

Rising Community Voices – empowering young leaders in our local schools and communities

Last year, we worked with pupils and teachers from Lumphinnans Primary School to plan and host an event as part of a new initiative called Rising Community Voices.

The initiative's name highlights that children have their own opinions and beliefs, play an active role in our communities, and will soon take on important roles in society. This in-school project aims to empower young people by helping them to develop practical skills, encouraging teamwork and providing an opportunity to positively impact their local community.

We worked closely with P4-7 pupils on all aspects of the event, from brainstorming ideas to finalising plans and hosting the Big Thank You event. The event included an afternoon tea, where pupils invited local people who they felt had made a difference in the village. Attendees included the Minister, Community Council members, Councillors, residents from the local care home, and local emergency service workers. The Parent Council and Active Schools were also involved.

We are continuing the Rising Community Voices project this year and are looking to collaborate with more primary schools in our local communities. If you know of a school that would like to get involved, please reach out to us at engagement@fifehg.org.uk or give us a call on 08000 274 007.



Engagement Officers, Suzanne Hume (back row, far left) and Melissa Birrell (back row, right) pose with teacher Mrs Sullivan and pupils from Lumphinnans Primary School.

Look out for your chance to take part in our Tenant Satisfaction Survey

Your feedback is important to us as we seek to continuously improve the service we provide. So, to help us find out what you think about the home you live in, the services you receive from us and the opportunities that you have to get involved with what we do, we will be commissioning an independent market research company, to carry out a satisfaction survey on our behalf.

The survey will take place during June and July this year.

If you receive a visit or a call from one of our researchers, please help us by taking part. It should take no longer than 15 minutes to answer their questions.

This is an ideal opportunity for you to have your say in how we do things now and to influence how we shape our services in the future, so don't miss out!

Could you be entitled to additional financial support? Lightning

Rising bills, including food and fuel, can create a lot of unwanted stress and anxiety. That's why we've partnered with Lightning Reach to help you check if you could be entitled to additional financial support.

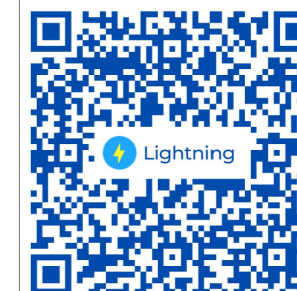
Lightning Reach provides access to a range of funds and assistance specific to you, including grants, benefits and help paying bills. Their goal is to empower you to build your financial resilience and wellbeing.

They do this by matching users to 2,500 financial support schemes from charities, other organisations and councils. Over £17m has already been awarded to individuals and households, with successful applicants receiving £1,070 on average.

There is a wide variety of support available, including help with:

- Energy and bills
- Home improvements
- Furniture and white goods
- Clothing and other essentials

Scan the QR code to sign up or to read about other people's success stories with Lightning Reach.





Get in touch today to see what you could be entitled to...

The Big IDEA Project is an initiative between ourselves, Cosy Kingdom and two other housing associations that can help you save money in these key areas:

- **Income** - Checking you are claiming everything you are entitled to
- **Debt** - Independent support to deal with unaffordable debt
- **Energy** - Practical help to reduce your usage and cut your bills
- **Advice** - Free and impartial

Since the project began, our Income Maximisation Officers (IMOs) have helped Fife Housing Group tenants claim an additional **£301,187** of benefits they were entitled to.

You could be one of these tenants. Get in touch now!

Benefit checks are free and available over the phone or in person, so get in touch today using the contact details below and on the next page.



Carolyn McAllister

07826 511875



Gillian McHale

07880 300683

thebigIDEA@fifehg.org.uk



Case study - Mr B

The Problem

Mr B is 65 years old and will start getting his pension soon. He still works part-time because of his health and age. He lives alone and rents a 2-bedroom house from Fife Housing Group. He previously had an accident that left him unable to work for a few weeks. This caused him to worry about paying his rent as he was only receiving £116 per week in statutory sick pay. Mr B called his Housing Officer who put him in touch with one of our Income Maximisation Officers (IMOs) who work as part of The Big IDEA Project.

What Happened

Our IMO checked Mr B's benefits on the phone and discovered that he could get Universal Credit (UC) to help pay his rent. Mr B could get this help, not only while he was sick, but also when he went back to work. The IMO helped him call the UC helpline to tell them about his sickness and made sure his fit notes were reported.

Since Mr B isn't confident using technology, our IMO helped him fill out his UC claim over the phone. She also visited his house to help him apply for a special payment from Fife Council to cover the extra bedroom charge on his rent. She came back again when Mr B got his first UC statement, to send the council proof of it. This special payment will continue even after he's back at work because of the small UC amount he gets.

The IMO also gave Mr B advice about his pension when he turns 66. She told him to contact her again for help when he starts getting his pension.

The Results

Thanks to the support he received, Mr B was able to pay his rent while he was off sick. He was happy to learn that he could still get some help even while working part-time. It's easier for him to manage his money now and he knows there is support available if he needs to reduce his working hours because of his health. Mr B also understands more about his pension and knows there's help for when he needs it.

As a result of the Big IDEA's help and advice, Mr B is better off. (Universal Credit + Discretionary Housing Payment until his state retirement pension comes into play).

If you would be interested in this service and wish to speak to one of our Officers, then please contact us via thebigIDEA@fifehg.org.uk or call Carolyn on 07826 511875 or Gill on 07880 300683.

Do you have £58,000 to spare? No? That's why you need contents insurance

According to a survey done by Aviva in 2024 the average household estimates the value of their possessions at a whopping £58,210. Could you afford to replace all of yours?

We understand that many people are struggling to make ends meet at the moment but contents insurance can cost as little as £2.54 per week (MoneyHelper.com) and could save you thousands of pounds in the long run.



In the last two years, Fife Housing Group tenants have had...

- **Three floods = £122,000 worth of repairs**
- **Five fires = £357,000 worth of repairs**

Although we had buildings insurance to cover the costs of these repairs, contents insurance is not our responsibility.

None of the tenants living in these properties had contents insurance.

It's easy to underestimate the cost of your belongings or the importance of insuring them but think about whether you have thousands of pounds saved to replace them should the worst happen.

Many of us think that 'it won't happen to me' – and perhaps it won't - but if you live in a flat, terraced or semi-detached house and a neighbouring property has a flood, you might be affected. Fires also spread quickly and accidents can happen at any time.

It is worth considering how affordable it would be to replace your belongings if you were the victim of a fire or flood.

Although contents insurance is not a mandatory requirement, we strongly encourage you to purchase contents insurance. Visit MoneySavingExpert, Compare The Market or a similar price comparison website to find a contents insurance plan to suit you.

Key updates on benefits and payments – what you need to know for 2025

Pension Age Disability Payment is a new payment from Social Security Scotland which replaces Attendance Allowance.

If you already get Attendance Allowance, your payment will change to the Pension Age Disability Payment later this year. Don't worry, you don't need to do anything:

- You will get the same amount of money
- There will be no breaks in your payments
- You will get a letter telling you when the change will happen

If you are under 65 and receive a disability payment, like Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Adult Disability Payment (ADP), you will continue to get that payment when you reach pension age.

However, if you require a disability payment after you start getting your state pension, you will need to apply for the Pension Age Disability Payment.

You can apply online at mygov.scot, or if you need a paper form, you can call Social Security Scotland at 0800 182 2222 (Monday to Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm).

Annual Benefits Increase: Most benefits went up by 1.7% on 7 April. For Universal Credit, it's more complicated. The increase will show up in the first payment made after 7 April. So, if your payment starts on 8 April or later, you'll see the increase in your May payment. If your payment starts from the 1st to the 8th, you'll get it in June instead.

Carers Support Payment: You can now earn up to £196 per week and still be entitled to this payment. This is a 33% increase, based on the new national living wage of £12.25 an hour for 16 hours of work each week.

Goodbye to Tax Credits: The Tax Credits service closed on 5 April. If you were getting Tax Credits, you should now be moved to Universal Credit.

If you need further guidance on the above or require any other financial support, contact our Income Maximisation Officers.

Call

Carolyn McAllister – 07826 511875

Gillian Haldane – 07880 300683

Email

thebigIDEA@fifehg.org.uk



RESIDENT VOICES

Could you help shape the future of Fife Housing Group?

Do you have opinions and ideas you want to share? Do you have a voice you want to be heard?

We are committed to providing our residents with meaningful opportunities to get involved, influence decisions, and help shape the services we provide. One of the best ways you can make a difference is by joining our Resident VOICES panel.

Becoming a Resident VOICES member allows you to share your opinions and influence positive change within Fife Housing Group. It's a way to contribute to positive change within your community and, on a social level, it's also a great way to get out of the house and meet your fellow tenants.

For those seeking employment, being a member of Resident VOICES can enhance your CV and improve skills that are attractive to potential employers. This, and all of our other volunteer opportunities, encourages you to build your confidence and empower

you in ways that you can apply in other areas of your life.

A key focus of the group is an annual scrutiny project, where members choose a service within Fife Housing Group to review and improve. Over several months, they work together to research the topic and develop recommendations, which are then presented to the Fife Housing Group Board for consideration and possible implementation.

This year, the group are focusing on Anti-Social Behaviour Complaints and have already made excellent progress. They are supported by Tenant Information Services (TIS), which provides valuable guidance to help them achieve meaningful results.

To be part of Resident VOICES, we ask for a commitment of just one three-hour meeting per month, with transport provided if needed. Come along and try it out with no further obligation. If it's not a fit, but you still wish to get involved, we can speak to you about our other tenant opportunities.

If you're interested in joining the panel or would like more information, please contact our Engagement Team at engagement@fifehg.org.uk or call 08000 274 007.



"You get a lot of self-worth and satisfaction out of it being able to make a real difference in your life and the life of your fellow tenants."

John Bell – Chair



"I like giving an opinion and I like to give back. It feels like I am doing something positive. Plus, it's fun! We all get along so well."

Heather Duffin – Vice Chair

A quick catch-up with some of last year's Giving Something Back Grant recipients

Last year's Giving Something Back Grants were a massive success. We had 21 applications and were able to support ten incredible projects doing inspiring work across Fife.

We caught up with some of them recently to see how the grant they received has helped their projects.

Central Park Community Trust Received £2,400

Central Park Community Trust, who also operate under the name Cowden in the Community, deliver football-based programmes to the communities of Cowdenbeath, Lochgelly, Benarty and Cardenden. They aim to make sports accessible to everyone, breaking down barriers that include cost, access, and ability. We caught up with them six months after they received their grant funding...

Thanks to the funds from the Giving Something Back Grant, we've been able to offer free football sessions for young people aged 8-16 with Additional Support Needs (ASN). These sessions are designed for individuals who may have learning, physical or other additional needs. By making the sessions free to attend, we've eliminated financial barriers, allowing more children and families to participate.

Held outdoors at Lochgelly High School, the sessions provide a safe and fun environment where participants can develop motor skills, physical literacy and social skills. The school's familiarity helps reduce anxiety for those already attending while providing a smooth transition for younger children who may eventually move to the ASN department.

Looking ahead, we plan to expand the program by creating separate classes for younger children (ages 5-10) and older children (ages 11-16), both running at the same time on separate pitches. This will help ease the transition as younger children move into the older group. We're also exploring the possibility of extending the program to Cowdenbeath/Beath High School and working more closely with their ASN department.

We're always looking for new volunteers to join our team. Whether you're interested in coaching ASN sessions or other football programs, we offer opportunities for casual and part-time work. After completing the PVG process, volunteers can assist our lead coaches and receive free training, including First Aid and coaching qualifications.

If you're interested in volunteering or learning more, please get in touch!

New4U Children's Clothing Bank Received £3,810

New4U Children's Clothing Bank are a Fife-based charity entirely run by volunteers. They provide essential clothing packages to hundreds of families in West Fife and handle each request with dignity and compassion.

We are incredibly grateful for the support we received from the Giving Something Back Grant. This funding has had a significant impact on our work at New4U Children's Clothing Bank.

Thanks to the grant, we were able to purchase much-needed new underwear for children. Now, every referral we provide includes new pants and socks, alongside the donated clothing. Over the past six months, we've continued to support families across West Fife, and the demand for our service remains high. On average, we provide a week's worth of clothing to around 40 children each month.

One of our primary goals is to launch a dedicated website to streamline our referral

process. This will make it easier for families and partner organisations to access support, while also helping us track requests more efficiently and reduce the administrative time spent on reporting. Securing additional funding is a key challenge, but we are actively applying for grants to make this vision a reality.

If any of your West Fife tenants need help with children's clothing, please encourage them to reach out to us. Similarly, if anyone is interested in donating clothing, we would love to hear from them. Get in touch by visiting our Facebook page (New4UChildrensClothingBank) or emailing new4uclothingbank@gmail.com .



Our Giving Something Back Grants are back!

In 2021, we launched our Giving Something Back Grants to support and recognise organisations and local projects doing fantastic work across Fife.

These grants are made possible by the generosity of the contractors who sign up to our charitable framework, donating 2% of their invoiced costs to benefit good causes.

Last year, we supported nine local projects working to improve their communities with over £20,000 worth of grant funding. The grants are back this year and we are delighted to be able to support even more local charities and projects with the fantastic work they do.

To apply, all you have to do is fill in the application form provided and return it to us at 7 Pitreavie Court, Pitreavie Business Park, Dunfermline, Fife, KY11 8UU or complete the equivalent version on our website by scanning the QR code provided.

You must apply before the deadline of Friday 4 July.

Applicants will then be invited to pitch their projects to Fife Housing Group colleagues and representatives at our Dragon's Den-style

event in September (exact date TBC). **Please note that you must make yourself available to attend this event to be eligible for the grant funding.**

The grants are part of our ongoing commitment to making a difference in our local communities and we cannot wait to see what this year brings.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the contractors who have helped to make this possible – Graham Hygiene, Rogerson Plumbing & Heating Ltd., Shine Cleaning Services (Edinburgh) Ltd., Eurojet (Scotland) Ltd., City Technical Services (UK) Ltd., Ritchie Builders, Mitie Property Services (UK) Ltd., Kingdom Maintenance (Fife) Ltd., HL Tree Services, Sureserve, Saltire Facilities Management, Consilium Contracting Services and Intona Ltd.



Application Form (located on the next two pages)

If you are involved with a local project or charity that could do with some extra investment, please apply for our Giving Something Back Grants using the form overleaf.

We encourage new applicants and are keen to support a variety of different projects.

Priority will be given to local groups and projects working within the towns and villages in Fife where we have homes.

Giving Something Back Grants cannot be used to fund employment opportunities or expenses, including those for volunteers. It also cannot be used to buy gifts or other tokens of appreciation.

Please fill out **ALL** of the following sections of the application, giving as much detail as possible and return it to us by **Friday 4 July**. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

If you need more space, feel free to include additional information on paper or in an email. Thank you.

| Giving Something Back Grants 2025 Application form | |
|--|--|
| Name: | |
| Contact no: | |
| Email: | |
| Name of group: | |
| Charity no. (if applicable) | |
| Size of grant requested: | |
| Please tell us about the work your group does (continue on a separate page if necessary): | |
| Please tell us what you would like to use the Giving Something Back Grant for (continue on a separate page if necessary): | |
| Please tell us who would be the beneficiaries of the project should you receive the grant: | |
| How many people does this project currently benefit and how many people do you expect to reach should you receive the funding? | |

Please provide additional details on a separate piece of paper.

| | |
|---|--|
| Where is your project/ organisation based and how far is your reach? For example, if your project is based in Dunfermline but also serves Rosyth, Crombie, Culross and Oakley | |
| How easy is it for people to access your project? Are there good transportation links? | |
| Please provide details of any barriers or limitations that your project faces. Are there any reasons that your project may not go ahead?: | |
| Please provide a specific breakdown of how the funds requested will be spent: | |
| Will the money you are applying for cover the entire cost of the project? If not, how much additional funding do you require? | |

Please note that we will contact you six months after you receive the funding for an update on your project so that we can share your progress with our tenants and other stakeholders.

If you do not use the funding for the project outlined in your application within a 12-month period we may ask for the funding to be returned to be used in another area of need. Thank you.

Calling all gardening enthusiasts

Entries for our 2025 Garden Competition are now open, with up to £100 of gardening vouchers to be won!

Whether you have a private garden, a shared outdoor space or a balcony adorned with plants, we'd love to see your hard work in bloom.

This competition rewards tenants who take pride in the presentation of their outdoor spaces and recognises the positive impact these attractive garden areas have on the broader community. We are blown away by the entries each year and are sure 2025 will be no different.

This year, we have three categories, with judging taking place between **Monday 28 July and Wednesday 30 July**. The competition is open exclusively to Fife Housing Group tenants.

The categories are:

- Best individual garden
- Best communal garden
- Best balcony, window box or small space garden

To enter, just contact our Engagement Team on freephone **08000 274 007**, email **engagement@fifehg.org.uk** or complete and return the application form below.

The deadline for entries is Thursday 17 July 2025.



2025 Garden Competition - Entry Form

Please talk to your Housing Officer or contact our Engagement Team on **08000 274 007** or via **engagement@fifehg.org.uk** to register your interest.

Alternatively fill in your details below and return this form to Fife Housing Group, 7 Pitreavie Court, Pitreavie Business Park, Dunfermline, KY11 8UU.

Judging will take place on 28-30 July, with prizes awarded to the top three gardens.

Name:.....

Address:.....

Phone:.....

Email:.....

☐ Best individual garden

☐ Best communal garden

☐ Best balcony, window box or small space

Closing date for entries - 17 July 2025

Good Neighbour Competition 2025

We are excited to launch our Good Neighbour Competition.

This is a chance for tenants to recognise the amazing people in their street or community who go the extra mile to help others. Whether it's through small acts of kindness, offering a helping hand, or making the neighbourhood a friendlier place, we want to celebrate the neighbours who make a real difference.

The competition is open for nominations until **Friday 16 May**. There are great prizes to be won, including a **£60 shopping voucher** for the winner and a **£40 shopping voucher** for the person who nominates them.

Need some ideas? You can nominate anyone in your street or community who has had a positive impact on your life or the lives of others. Perhaps they have helped someone in need, or they are known for putting others above themselves? Maybe they are a positive influence on those around them or have done something inspiring. There is no limit to what makes a good neighbour.

We have made it easy to take part. You can nominate a neighbour by filling out the form, emailing **engagement@fifehg.org.uk**, speaking to your Housing Officer or contacting us at our office or on Facebook.

A panel of Fife Housing Group colleagues will carefully review all nominations and choose the winners.

We will contact the winners by phone before announcing their success in our May e-magazine and on Facebook.

We know our communities are full of unsung heroes, and this is our chance to celebrate them. If you know someone who makes a real difference, don't miss your chance to nominate them before **Friday 16 May**.

Let's celebrate the fantastic people who make our communities stronger!

Good Neighbour Competition 2025 – Entry Form

Thank you for taking the time to recognise a neighbour who makes a difference in your community! Please complete the form below to submit your nomination and return to Fife Housing Group, 7 Pitreavie Court, Pitreavie Business Park, Dunfermline, KY11 8UU.

Your details

Name:.....

Address:.....

Phone:.....

Email:.....

Nominee details (The Good Neighbour)

Name:.....

Address:.....

Phone:.....

Email:.....

Why are you nominating them?

Please tell us why this person deserves to be recognised as a good neighbour.

.....

.....

.....

.....

Come along to one of our community events

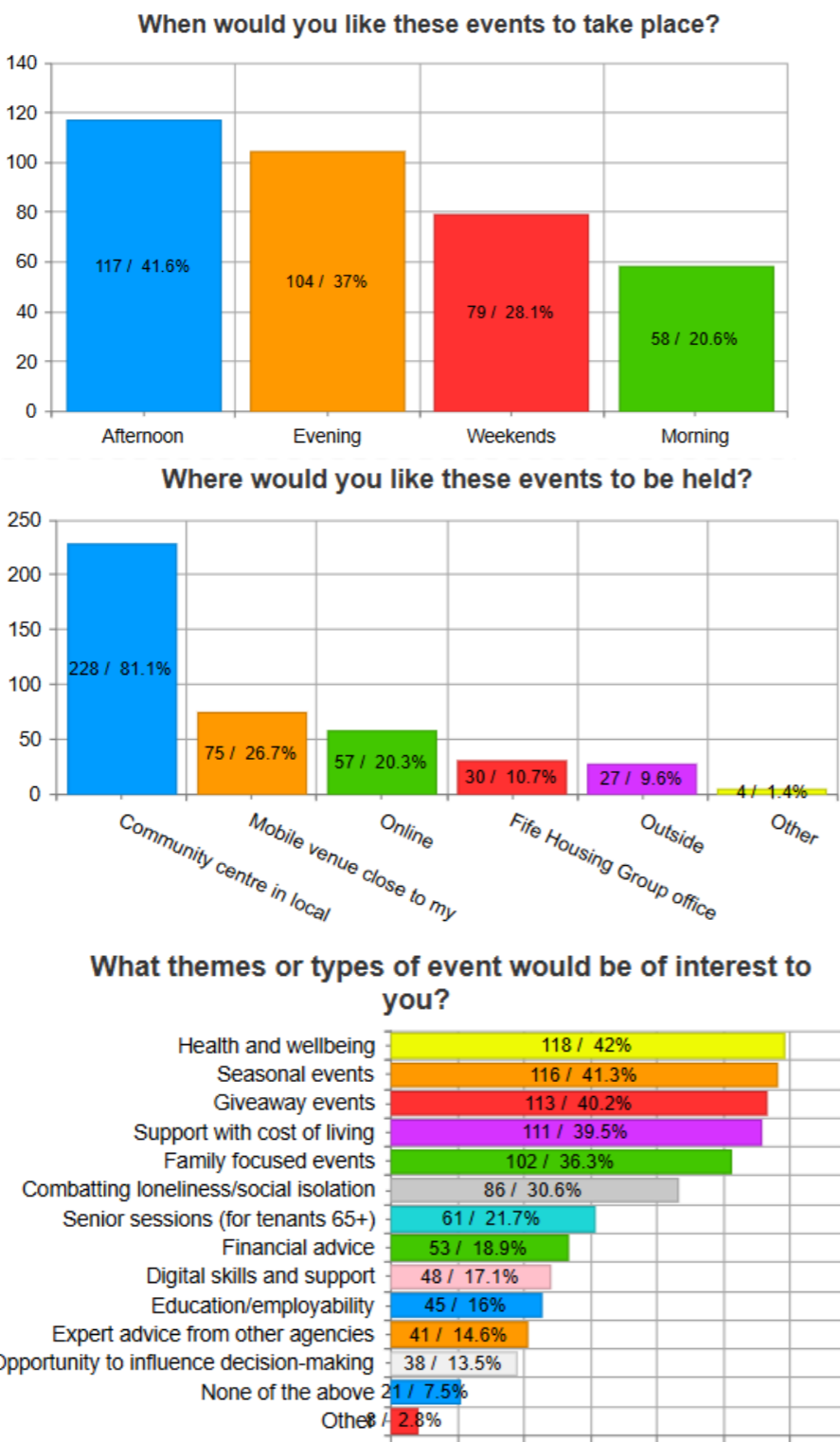
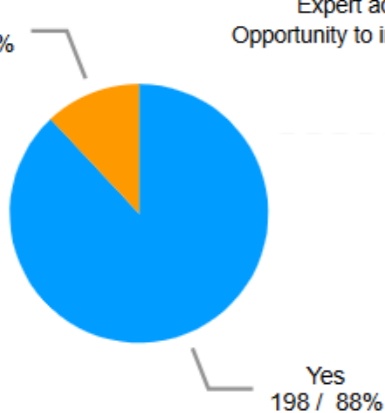
We want to put on events which will benefit both you and your local community and we recently sent out a survey asking for your thoughts on how best to do this.

A big thanks to the 281 of you who responded and congratulations to James Henderson of Leven, who won a £25 shopping voucher for taking part.

Taking the feedback we received below into account, we have developed a calendar of seasonal events which will focus on health and wellbeing, encompassing elements of financial, social and family support and including our usual great giveaways. These will take place at local community centres in the afternoon/early evening and we are also planning to trial drop-in sessions in three more of our communities – Rosyth, Oakley and Methil.

We hope to see you at one of our community events soon!

Do you think it would be helpful to have a drop-in session in your area?



Community Events Calendar

We are delighted to share our Community Events Calendar for the next six months.

Please note that some of the dates may be subject to change but the events themselves will also be promoted individually, so keep an eye on our monthly e-magazine, website and social media channels for further updates.

| Month | What | Where | When |
|-----------|--|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| April | Workwise - Employability workshops | FHG office (Dunfermline) | 27/04 30/04 |
| | Drop in sessions | Rosyth, Templehall, Oakley, Methil | See page 25 |
| May | Health and wellbeing event | Kirkcaldy | 08/05 |
| | Skip day and litter pick | Lochgelly | 22/05 |
| | Drop in sessions | Rosyth, Templehall, Oakley, Methil | See page 25 |
| June | Tenant satisfaction survey | In-person | Throughout June |
| | Health and wellbeing event | Dunfermline | 25/06 |
| | Skip day and litter pick | Oakley | 18/06 |
| | Rising Community Voices event | Kirkcaldy | TBC |
| | Drop in sessions | Rosyth, Templehall, Oakley, Methil | See page 25 |
| July | Garden competition judging | Various | 28/07 - 30/07 |
| | Drop in sessions | Rosyth, Templehall, Oakley, Methil | See page 25 |
| August | Skip day and litter pick | Dunfermline | 22/08 |
| | Drop in sessions | Rosyth, Templehall, Oakley, Methil | See page 25 |
| September | Skip day and litter pick | Kirkcaldy | 17/09 |
| | AGM Member event | Dunfermline | 16/09 |
| | Giving Something Back Grants celebration | Rosyth | TBC |
| | Drop-in sessions | Rosyth, Templehall, Oakley, Methil | See page 25 |
| October | Rent consultation | Print/Online/In-person | TBC |
| | Digital event/workshop | East Fife | TBC |

Drop in and see us at one of our new sessions

Last September, we launched our drop-in sessions to bring important support and advice directly to some of our local communities.

Initially running for six months across four locations - Buckhaven, Kennoway, Lochgelly and Templehall - these sessions were held in community hubs close to where you and your neighbours live.

Each month had a different theme, including financial and benefits advice, keeping warm in winter and managing Christmas on a budget. We also had partner agencies such as Cosy Kingdom and Fife Gingerbread there for extra support.

In October, as our Templehall session aligned with Challenge Poverty Week, we brought together great local organisations such as Greener Kirkcaldy and Salvation Army Employment Plus for a pop-up event. We also had a damp and mould expert and one

of our Income Maximisation Officers on hand to provide personalised support. The event was a huge success, with many tenants attending, receiving free damp and mould kits and benefiting from Aldi vouchers to help with household costs.

These drop-ins aren't just about practical advice. They also offer the chance to pop in for a cuppa and a chat, meet your Housing Officer and discuss any issues or ask any questions you might have.

Following the success of the first round and having listened to your feedback in our recent community events survey, we're excited to launch the next series of drop-ins in April, expanding into new locations in Methil, Oakley and Rosyth and continuing the existing session in Templehall.

We look forward to welcoming even more tenants and continuing to provide valuable support within our communities.



Here is the full list of dates and locations for these drop-in sessions –

| | Rosyth | Templehall | Oakley | Methil |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|
| | Rosyth Parish Church | Linton Lane Centre | Oakley Pantry | St Agatha's Church Hall |
| | 1-2pm | 2-3pm | 11-12pm | 4.30-5.30pm |
| April | Wednesday 2nd | Thursday 10th | Wednesday 16th | Thursday 24th |
| May | Wednesday 7th | Thursday 8th | Wednesday 21st | Thursday 22nd |
| June | Wednesday 4th | Thursday 12th | Wednesday 18th | Thursday 26th |
| July | Wednesday 2nd | Thursday 10th | Wednesday 16th | Thursday 24th |
| August | Wednesday 6th | Thursday 14th | Wednesday 20th | Thursday 28th |
| September | Wednesday 3rd | Thursday 11th | Wednesday 17th | Thursday 25th |
| | Rosyth Parish Church Queensferry Road, Rosyth KY11 2PQ | Linton Lane Centre Linton Lane Kirkcaldy, Fife KY2 6LF | Oakley Pantry, Oakley Community Centre 15 Station Rd, Oakley, KY12 9QF | St Agatha's Catholic Church 160 Methil Brae, Methil, KY8 3LU |

Being well

You are invited to our *FREE* health and wellbeing event!

Join us for a special community event, all about feeling good - inside and out!

Discover how to strengthen the foundations of your financial health, mental health, physical health and social wellbeing.

Take a break, relax and enjoy self-care activities designed to help you feel your best.

Thursday 8 May
3:00pm - 5:30pm
24th Fife Scout Hall
(beside Linton Lane Community Centre)
Dunearn Drive
Kirkcaldy
KY2 6AT

WELLBEING

financial health

mental health

physical health

social wellbeing

Become a member for just £1 and help shape the future of Fife Housing Group

Have you ever thought about becoming a member of Fife Housing Group?

Our members are important as they help us shape the organisation's future and the services we provide for you as tenants.

If you are interested in the work we do and want to make a difference, why not sign up today? Membership costs just £1 and it only takes a few minutes to apply.

Being a member entitles you to exclusive invites to events such as our Annual General Meeting, giving you the opportunity to interact with our Board, Chief Executive and Directors and ask them questions on specific topics that interest you. It also allows you to vote on important issues and have your voice heard.

Additionally, it is an excellent first step to becoming a member of our Board or other tenant groups, such as Resident VOICES, where you have the chance to be involved in the decision-making process and address key areas for improvement within the business.

We want to make sure that our members represent the communities that we serve, so membership is open to all tenants over the age of 16. We also welcome applications from Yourplace tenants and representatives from tenants' and residents' organisations that operate in these areas.



Just **scan this QR code** to complete the online application or complete and return the form below.

Alternatively, if you want to find out more about any of the opportunities we offer to get involved, please do not hesitate to contact a member of our team directly on freephone

08000 274 007 or via **engagement@fifehg.org.uk**.



Soup and a scroll with some of our seniors

Last year, we hosted another of our 'Senior Sessions' with a fun-filled, digitally-focused event in Rosyth.

These events are aimed at tenants over the age of 65 and provide a fun day out, combining entertainment with practical advice, support and giveaways. They also address some of the loneliness and isolation that some of this group can face.

This particular Senior Session, aptly named 'Soup and a scroll,' emphasised digital education in several areas, including surfing the web safely, shopping online, paying bills, researching hobbies and interests and using our Home Hub, which provides 24/7 access to our services.

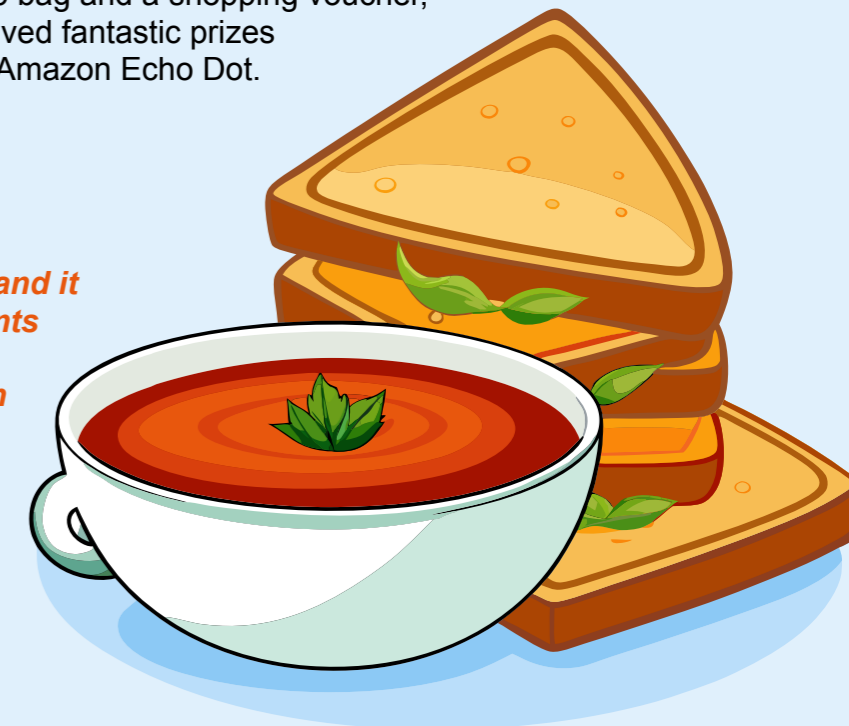
Our guests were treated to soup, sandwiches and refreshments at EATS Rosyth Community Hub and Living Room Café. Local partners Police Scotland and AbilityNet were also there to offer advice and support on digital safety.

Each tenant went home with a soup bag and a shopping voucher, while lucky raffle winners also received fantastic prizes including a soup maker, tablet and Amazon Echo Dot.



"The event was a huge success and it was lovely seeing all of our tenants coming along with their phones and tablets, ready to brush up on their digital skills. It allowed us to chat with people about their tech needs, which will help us tailor the services we offer our tenants."

Suzanne Hume,
Engagement Officer



According to a recent study by AgeUK, more than 1 in 3 over 65s (4.7 million) lack the basic skills to use the internet successfully and 1 in 6 (2.3 million) don't go online at all.

We live in a predominately digital world with fewer and fewer tasks and activities available to complete offline. This means those unable to adapt could face isolation and missed opportunities as they cannot complete simple day-to-day tasks that allow them to thrive in a digital society.

We believe in encouraging and supporting our tenants to get online, which is why we offer events like this. All of our colleagues are here to help you overcome any obstacles you face to getting online so talk to your Housing Officer, give us a call or drop us an email at **engagement@fifehg.org.uk** if you feel you could do with some extra support.

Christmas in our communities

In December, we held two Christmas events, which gave us the chance to catch up with some of you before the holidays and deliver a little bit of festive joy.

During the first three weeks of December, we counted down the *12 Days Of Christmas* with a very special advent calendar on our Facebook page. Hiding a festive surprise behind each door, gifts for lucky winners included an Amazon Echo Dot, a £70 shopping voucher and a luxury food hamper.

The second event was our Great Gift Giveaway, which saw us visit another 250 of your homes across Fife, delivering shopping vouchers and cosy Christmas gifts. Presents

included fleecy blankets, hot water bottles, afternoon tea, cheese and cracker sets and selection boxes for the children.

Our elves had a fantastic time delivering these gifts and meeting some of you lovely tenants. Chatting with you all really put us in the Christmas spirit and we also got to meet some adorable children and pets along the way – always a highlight of our year.

To ensure you don't miss out on future events and gift giveaways, follow us on our Facebook page (@fifehg), give us a call or log into your Home Hub to check we have an up-to-date email address for you.



Important update for our Rosyth tenants: Housing Officer changes

From 1 April, Kerrie Muir will be the new Housing Officer for tenants on Fairykirk Road, Selvage Place, and Selvage Street in Rosyth.

These areas were previously managed by Greg Turner.

Please see below for the full list of Kerrie and Greg's allocated areas. Don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions.



Greg Turner

07811393822 | greg.turner@fifehg.org.uk

Kirkcaldy (Pentland Place, Valley Gardens, Cheviot Road, Morven Grove, Cairnwell Place, Findhorn Place, Sidlaw Street, Lomond Gardens, Carnethy Crescent, Redcraigs, Dunearn Drive, Fair Isle Road).

Rosyth (Newton Crescent, Craig Street, Parkside Street, Harley Street, Newton Place, Crossroads Place, Hillwood Terrace, Parkside Square).



Kerrie Muir

07350 379833 | Kerrie.Muir@fifehg.org.uk

Dunfermline (Allan Crescent, Duncan Crescent, Dunn Crescent, Islay Road).

Rosyth (Castlandhill Road, Booth Avenue, Gillway, Cromwell Road, Fairykirk Road, Selvage Place, Selvage Street, Primrose Lane, Leslie Road, Whinnyburn Place, Brankholm Crescent, Syme Place, Webster Place, Primrose Avenue, Primrose Court, Forker Avenue, Kings Road, Daniel Place, Brankholm Brae, Carson Place, Caledonia Court, Alexander Place).

Team news

New starts

We want to welcome the following new colleagues to Fife Housing Group:

Steven Kane - Joiner
Liam Gillies - Joiner
Sam Morris - Electrician
Owen Griffiths - Electrician
Christine Dolan - PA and Governance Officer

Farewells

We also say goodbye to the following colleagues and wish them the best of luck in their new roles:

Scott Patterson - Electrician
Tony Allan - Joiner
Stevie Cracknell - Electrician
Laura Grieve - Chief Executive and Governance Assistant

Annual Assurance Statement

Each year, we need to tell the Scottish Housing Regulator if we meet their regulatory standards and requirements by submitting an Annual Assurance Statement.

You can see a copy of the current Annual Assurance Statement from our Board below.

17 September 2024

Dear Regulator,

The Board confirms that we have reviewed and assessed a comprehensive bank of evidence to support this Statement that Fife Housing Group is compliant with:

- All relevant regulatory requirements as set out in Section Three of the Regulatory Framework
- The Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management
- The relevant standards and outcomes of the Scottish Social Housing Charter
- Our statutory obligations in respect of tenant and resident safety, housing and homelessness and equalities and human rights

We can confirm that Fife Housing Group has met its duties in relation to tenant and resident safety and we as a Board have obtained appropriate assurance with regard to our compliance with:

- Gas Safety
- Fire Safety
- Asbestos
- Water Safety
- Lift Safety
- Damp and Mould

However, our review showed that we are not fully compliant with regard to Electrical Safety, at the time of submission we have 9 Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR's) outstanding (out of a total required of 406). We have kept the regulator informed of our progress regarding EICRs over the course of this year. The completion of these outstanding EICRs is being treated as a priority, however, completion timescales will be directly affected by partners and tenants, and we will continue to keep the regulator informed on progress.

The assurance statement is supported by an evidence bank that combines reports, policies, advice and information which the Board monitors and oversees on an ongoing basis throughout the year to provide continuous assurance that Fife Housing Group is compliant with the regulatory framework. Additionally, the evidence bank incorporates relevant documents and information that contribute to our assurance and which form the structure of Fife Housing Group's business and governance activities.

The evidence bank was reviewed by our Audit & Risk Committee who have provided assurance to the Board that it meets the regulatory requirements.

We are assured that Fife Housing Group has the necessary arrangements in place to identify any risks to compliance in the course of the conduct of our business and governance arrangements.

As Chair, I was authorised by the Board at a meeting held on 17 September 2024 to sign and submit this Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Chair

On behalf of the Board of Management

Fife Housing Association

Making your home safe - Electrical Installation Condition Reports

Conducting an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) every five years is not only essential to ensuring the safety of your home's electrical systems, it is also a regulatory requirement.

Issues such as faulty wiring, outdated electrics, improperly installed outlets and other potential fire hazards may be highlighted during these inspections. Each of these could pose a real risk to you and your family's safety, but an EICR can help to identify and address issues like this before they result in a dangerous incident.

Additionally, the inspection may uncover where energy is wasted due to inefficient wiring or circuits, highlighting cost-saving improvements which could lower your electricity bills.

We have appointed Consilium Contracting Services to conduct these inspections and ask that you provide them with access to carry out the EICR inspection and any follow-up work identified. Your cooperation is essential to ensure your home is safe, well-maintained, energy-efficient and compliant with regulations, giving you peace of mind and ensuring that you and your loved ones are safe.

Please remember it is a condition of your Tenancy Agreement that you allow access to carry out these critical health and safety checks.

After three failed attempts to access your home and undertake these works, we will start proceedings that can result in forced access. You will be responsible for any costs incurred if this action is required. We urge you to assist us with this essential safety programme and work with us to arrange appropriate access.

If you have any questions about this programme or need further assistance, please contact us on freephone **08000 274 007**.

How to keep your home safe from electrical failure

To keep your home safe from electrical failures or potential fire risks, follow these five essential rules:

1. Don't overload sockets

Plugging too many things into one socket can make it too hot and even start a fire. Always spread out your plugs and don't use too many extension cables at once.

2. Use the correct light bulbs

Lamps and lights are made for certain types of bulbs. If you use a bulb that's too strong, it can overheat and potentially even cause a fire. Always check the correct wattage for your lights.

3. Be careful with your appliances

Leaving things plugged in all the time isn't always safe. Some appliances, like fridges, are meant to stay on, but even they can be dangerous if not used correctly.

4. Follow these simple safety tips

- Keep the area around plug sockets and switches clear
- Always use the right fuse for each appliance

5. Never

- Use anything with a broken wire or plug
- Use an electric device if it's broken or not working properly
- Hide electric cables under rugs or carpets
- Cover electrical items with clothes or anything that can catch fire
- Leave phone chargers plugged in overnight or when you're not home

And don't forget - check your smoke alarms regularly to ensure they work, and if there's a problem, tell us right away.

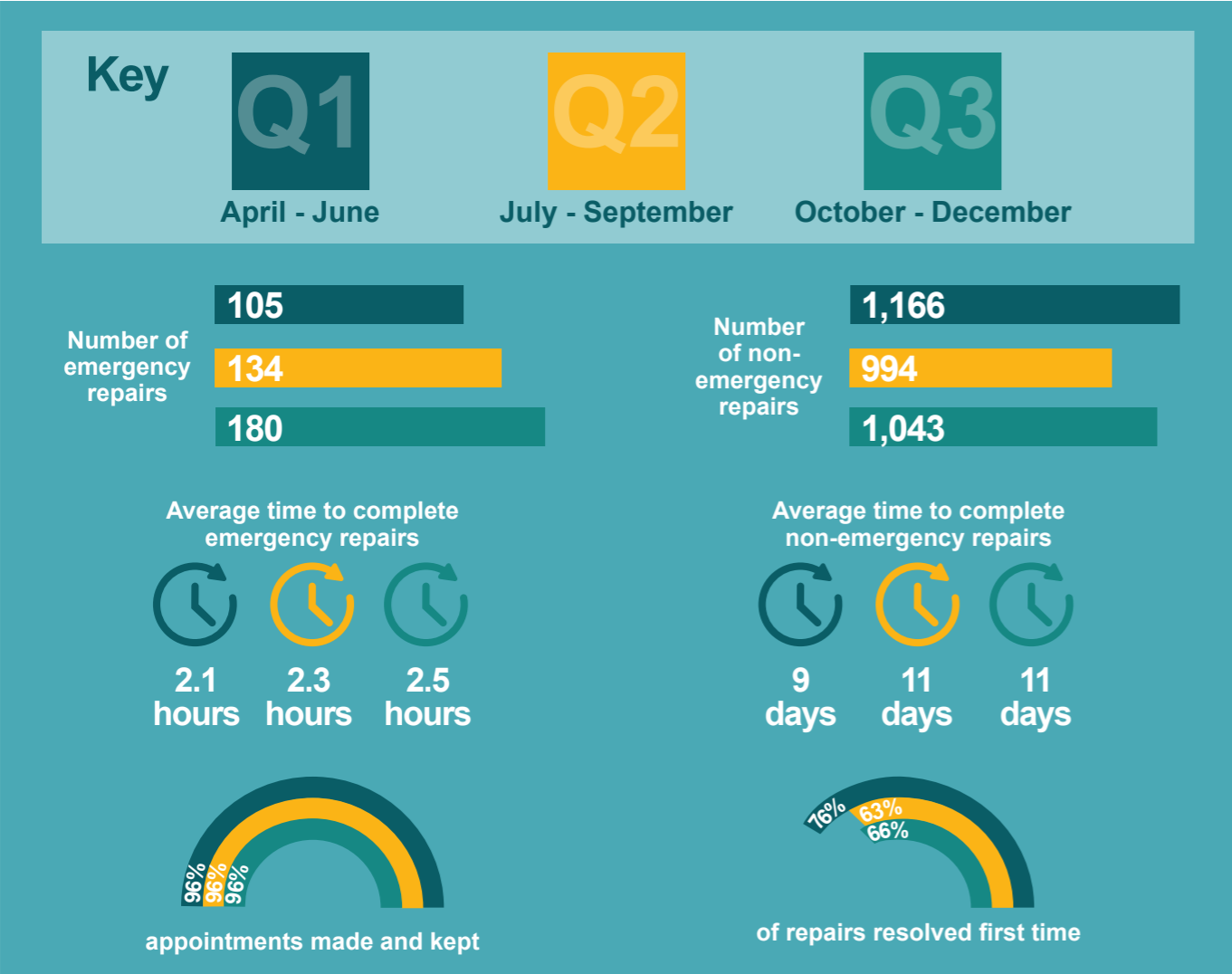
Repairs in your home

Our repair targets are monitored regularly to ensure we meet our minimum standards. For emergency repairs, we aim to respond within 4 hours. For all non-emergency repairs, we aim to achieve an internal target of 10 days (our regulator would expect these to be completed within 20 days).

We aim to make and keep 95% of all appointments (keeping some appointments can be challenging due to issues like severe weather).

We also aim to resolve 95% of all repairs on the first visit.

Below is a comparison of our repair statistics for the first three quarters of 2024/25.



Our goal is to achieve a 95% success rate in the ‘resolved first time’ category. Right now, we are falling short of this target. Due to being significantly below our target, we conducted some investigations and analyses.

We concluded that one of the main reasons for this is that we’ve had labour shortages, especially with electricians and joiners. This made it more challenging to keep up with demand and meet our targets. However, as of April 2025, we have recruited a full team, and we are determined and in a good position to meet the 95% target this year.

Another finding was that a couple of our contractors have also struggled to reach the target set. We recognise this has had an impact, so we’ve had open and honest conversations with them about what our expectations are. From now on, we will be keeping a close eye on their performance to ensure things improve.

Does your electricity meter need upgraded before June 2025? Act now!

By 30 June 2025, the Radio Teleswitch Service (RTS) will be permanently switched off, which will impact thousands of households across Great Britain.

RTS has been used since the 1980s to control multi-rate electricity meters, allowing consumers to benefit from off-peak tariffs for heating and hot water. However, as the system reaches the end of its operational life, energy suppliers are transitioning customers to smart meters.

For those of you affected, we encourage you to contact your energy supplier now to schedule a smart meter installation in plenty of time.

How to check if you’re affected

You might have an RTS meter if:

- You use storage heaters or electric heating
- You live in a rural area or high-rise building without a gas supply
- Your electricity tariff offers cheaper rates at specific times, such as Economy 7 or Economy 10

What to do if you think you might be affected

If your electricity supplier hasn’t contacted you already, we recommend getting in touch with them directly to schedule a smart meter installation.

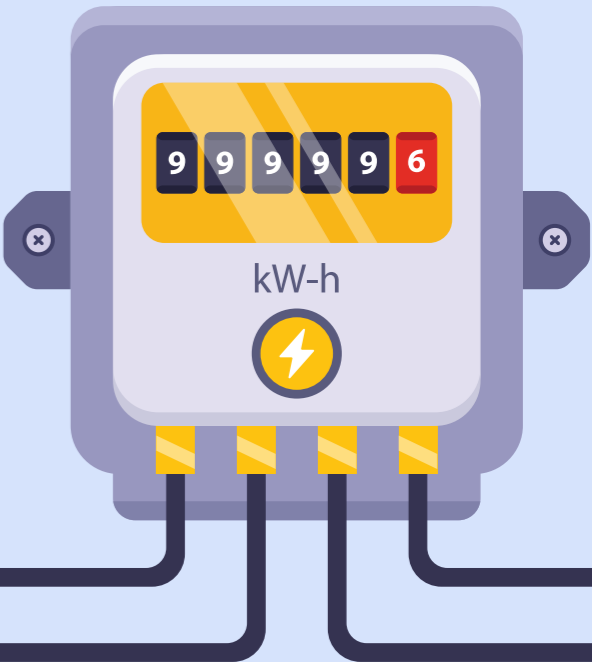
Smart meters offer the same benefits as RTS meters, plus additional advantages:

- Automatic meter readings - no more manual submissions
- Accurate bills based on real usage
- Insights into your energy consumption to help you save money
- Access to exclusive smart meter tariffs

Why you need to act now

- To avoid disruptions and ensure your heating and hot water continue to function correctly
- Failing to upgrade could lead to inaccurate billing, increased energy costs, and disruptions in heating schedules
- Failing to do so could also potentially result in a loss of power

Don’t wait – act now to avoid potential disruptions and increased energy bills! Call your energy supplier today to make the switch.



Considering complaints

When we receive complaints, our goal is to thoroughly investigate each one and provide a fair and reasonable outcome as quickly as possible. We also regularly review and analyse any trends we identify, taking steps to address them.

Over the past 12 months, we’ve made some important changes to improve our complaint handling. In line with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, we’ve updated how we record complaints. We’ve also introduced child-friendly complaint processes, making it easier for young people to share their concerns. These changes help us investigate issues more accurately and ensure we follow up when necessary.

Complaints April 2024 – March 2025

Total number of complaints
210

Stage 1 - 181

Upheld - 55

Partially Upheld - 20

Not Upheld - 62

Resolved - 44

Stage 2 - 29

Upheld - 9

Partially Upheld - 6

Not Upheld – 14

99.5% of all complaints during this time were closed within the timeframe

What we’ve learnt

Complaint

A former tenant contacted us to dispute their liability for remedial work identified following the termination of their tenancy and the recharges subsequently placed on their account.

Investigation

The complaint was thoroughly investigated through our full Complaints Handling Procedure, during which time our financial process for recharge invoicing continued, meaning that the complainant was repeatedly asked to make payment.

Outcome

The tenant’s feedback regarding this highlighted the need to temporarily suspend our financial recharge process during the investigation of this type of complaint. This change has now been implemented.



WORDSEARCH

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

Enter our SPRING competition and you could WIN a **£25 gift voucher**.

To enter: Complete the wordsearch, cut along the dotted line and send your entry to the address below by **Friday 6 June 2025**

EASTER SPRING DUNFERMLINE BULBS SNOWDROPS LAMBS FIFE BLOOM
TULIPS FRESH BREEZE SHOWERS BEAUTIFUL NATURAL CRISP

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
_____ TEL: _____

Return this form to Fife Housing Group, 7 Pitreavie Court, Pitreavie Business Park, Dunfermline, KY11 8UU.

Contact us

Freephone: 08000 274 007
For gas repairs and emergencies please contact -
East Fife (WRB) - 01382 204030
West Fife (City Technical) - 0333 202 0708

Text: 07520 632 740 Email: info@fifehg.org.uk
Our opening hours are:
Monday to Friday 9am - 4:30pm

at home with...

fife 
housing
group

fifehg.org.uk



7 Pitreavie, Court Pitreavie Business Park, Dunfermline KY11 8UU