

DOWN YOUR

Street

Tenants' Magazine



Phoebe
says hello to
National
Pet Month
P14

Spring
has
sprung!

Maspie Glen
Photo by Monarch Photography



#DYSFife

www.fifedirect.org.uk/housing



Supporting our tenants
p6-8

Useful Numbers

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Homeless (24 hr) | 08000 28 62 31 |
| Housing Repairs | 03451 55 00 11 |
| After hours and weekend | 03451 55 00 99 |
| Housing Information and advice | 03451 55 00 33 |
| Rent and Arrears | 03451 55 00 44 |
| Automated Payments | 03451 55 00 55 |
| Council Tax & Housing Benefits | 03451 55 11 55 |
| Recycling & Waste | 03451 55 00 22 |
| Births, Deaths & Marriages | 03451 55 00 77 |



Alternative Formats

Information about Fife Council can be made available in **large print, braille and audio CD** on request by calling

Alternative Formats line:

03451 55 55 00



British Sign Language

please text (SMS) 07781 480 185

BT Text Direct:

18001 01592 55 11 91

Language lines

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Arabic | خط هاتف اللغة العربية: 03451 55 55 77 |
| Bengali | বাংলায় আলাপ করার জন্য টেলিফোন লাইন: 03451 55 55 99 |
| Cantonese | 中文語言熱線電話: 03451 55 55 88 |
| Polish | Polskojęzyczna linia telefoniczna: 03451 55 55 44 |
| Urdu | اُردو زبان کے لیے ٹیلیفون نمبر 03451 55 55 66 |

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Get in touch

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Wellesley Road, Methil, KY8 3PA



01383 602220



tenantparticipation@fife.gov.uk

www.fifedirect.org.uk/tp



@fifecounciltp

Welcome!

"I know that everyone is glad we have reached Spring and are moving out of the most severe Covid restrictions. For Housing Service, it is about getting back on track to deliver services to our tenants and ensure that we pick up the pace of delivering new housing components to you, such as doors, windows, kitchens and bathrooms. We have a lot to do to make up the backlog. I would like to take this opportunity to thank staff colleagues who have worked hard during the last two years of lockdowns and covid restrictions.

As we move from purely home working to hybrid working between home and office, staff will be more supported to get out and about in housing estates to meet with you and provide much needed discussion opportunities to improve our local neighbourhoods. In early February, the Community & Housing Services Sub-Committee agreed to a revised Housing Estates Management Approach, putting more money into local improvements to estates and to flats. We need to invest in building back our estates to improve the places that we live in, as well as housing improvements and new build council housing.



We can only do this with your continued support, despite the increased costs of living that is affecting every one of us. To offer more support, the council and its partners are putting more resources into supporting tenants in fuel poverty as one of our key objectives in 2022. If you need help, contact your local Housing Management Officer to seek that help."

John

John Mills

Head of Housing Services

Demolition planned for Hillview lock ups!

Work is due to commence this year to demolish lockups in Hillview Cowdenbeath.

The area was identified by the Cowdenbeath Housing Team during a recent review of all lock ups in the area. Our aim is to improve areas for our residents whilst making sure all our lockup sites are in good condition and safe.

During the review we visited all sites and took into consideration the condition of the blocks as well as the occupancy rate. Any repairs identified were then raised.

Throughout this process we recognised that Hillview lockups had poor occupancy rates and that there were other free lock ups in the area that could be offered in place of these. From this it was decided that the Hillview lock up site would be demolished and revamped.

Currently Hillview has limited parking due to the makeup of the area. The plans are to remove the lock up block and cover the area with topsoil and grass



seed. Kerb edging will be put in place along with markings for parking bays. The hope is that this work will create a nice car parking section for residents.

Due to the pandemic and delays we have faced we are currently awaiting a start date. However, works are expected to be completed this year.

Look out for updates in future Down Your Street editions.

Do you have home contents insurance?

Fife Council are responsible for the Buildings Insurance of Fife Council properties but we do not insure your furniture, belongings or decorations against theft, fire, flooding and other household risks.

Tenants are strongly advised to take out adequate insurance and ensure the value of insurance cover is maintained at a realistic level.

Fife Council offers tenants the opportunity to insure their home contents with a low-cost insurance scheme. Contact your Housing Officer for further information



or call the **Housing Advice Line** on
03451 55 00 33
(Mon-Fri, 8am-6pm).

LOOKING TO MOVE HOME WITHIN FIFE?

Have you thought about Mutual Exchange?
Register now on HomeSwap - Fife Housing Register's online exchange service. Register your property and search for other tenants looking to exchange. Not sure if it's for you? Check out the public register to see what's available.



To find out more,
visit: www.fifehousingregister.org.uk/homeswap-about/

Fuel Poverty Team

Ware currently going through a Fuel Crisis at present, Gas and Electricity prices went up in October 21 and unfortunately are due to rise again in April 22.

The new energy price cap has been announced by Ofgem (with effect 1.4.22) – the figure increasing from £1,277 (for those on a default tariff paying by direct debit) to £1,971, a whopping 54% rise.

The Council recently agreed to provide £0.5 million funding in 2022-23 to help tenants meet escalating energy costs. This will provide financial and other supports to tenants struggling with energy payments or unable to afford to heat their property. Get in touch with your local office if you need help to stay warm.

Prepayment customers will see an increase of £708 to £2,017.

This is due to the cost of wholesale Gas and Electricity.

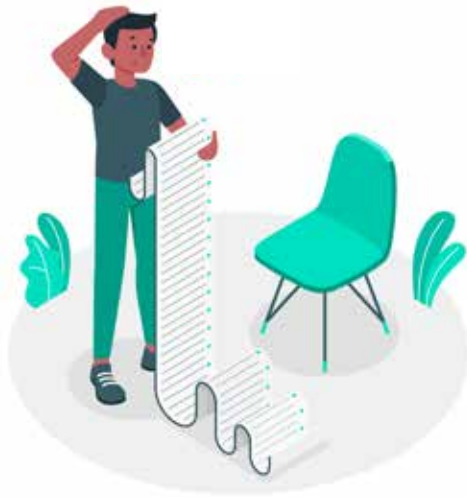
If the rise in fuel costs is affecting you there is help available. Please get in touch with our partner Cosy Kingdom or the Fife Councils Fuel Poverty team for help and advice.

Phone: 01592 807930

Text: Text 'COSY' and your name to 88440.

Email: info@cosykingdom.org.uk

Fuel.poverty@fife.gov.uk



What's happening to the energy market?

It's been described as a 'Perfect Storm'. Several small and unrelated factors have come together to cause a dramatic rise in wholesale energy costs (what your supplier pays before selling the energy onto you).

Wholesale gas costs alone have increased by over 400% last year and since the UK uses natural gas to produce a lot of our electricity, these prices have been affected as well.

Events in the energy market over September and August increased energy prices further, coming to a peak when one of our interconnectors with Europe, a cable that allows us to transfer power between the UK and France, caught fire.

Prices continued to rise through the Winter, leading to a record-breaking increase of 435% compared to the year before in November.

Failing energy suppliers

The rapid increase in costs has left many energy suppliers in a tough position and they have ceased to trade, with more expected to follow.

Customers are protected by Ofgem when a supplier goes out of business so there's really no need to worry. If your supplier fails, you'll be appointed a new supplier, known as the Supplier of Last Resort. They'll move you to their Standard Variable Tariff and ensure you have a continuous supply.

Save energy around the home

The price increases are a worry for many of us. The best way to pay less right now is to use less. That doesn't mean turning the lights off and sitting in the dark. There are plenty of practical actions you can take to help save energy around your home, reduce your energy bill and your carbon emissions too.

Using your heating controls and finding ways to prevent heat loss around your home can help you keep warm for less. Try do the following:

- Reducing your thermostat by 1°C
- Using your thermostatic radiator valves correctly
- Keeping curtains and doors closed between rooms

In terms of your appliances and cutting down your electricity use, you could consider:

- Switching appliances and devices off at the plug rather than leaving them on standby
- Using a slow cooker or pressure cooker rather than an oven
- Using LED lighting and switching lights off when that room isn't being used

Please reach out to your housing officer should you be experiencing Fuel Poverty.

Here to help

Over the last two years we have all been badly affected by the pandemic. Hopefully the end is now in sight and we can start looking forward to a brighter more settled future.

If however you are continuing to struggle, remember that we are here to help and assist if we can. Detailed over the next couple of pages you will find a selection of support networks, both internal and external to Fife Council who can provide you with support and assistance, if you feel you need it.

Citizens Advice Rights Fife: CARF provide free and independent information and advice on a wide range of subjects. Including benefits advice, debt advice and housing queries.

Contact: www.cabfife.org.uk 03451 400 095

Covid Community Helpline: If you have struggled with Covid, isolation, or caring for loved ones, we can assist you with your needs.

Contact: www.fife.gov.uk/Covidassistance
0800 952 0330

Job Clubs: If you are struggling with benefit changes or are subject to sanctions, then our local job clubs may be able to help you. **To find out more info on job clubs then visit www.fife.gov.uk/jobclubs**



Scottish Welfare Fund: The SWF provides a safety net for vulnerable people on low incomes by providing Community Care Grants or Crisis Grants. These awards are not loans so you don't need to repay them. **www.fife.gov.uk/welfarefund 0300 555 0265**

Tax Credit Helpline: If you are struggling with your Tax Credit entitlement then contact us on **0345 300 3900**

Universal Credit Freephone: For information about claiming this benefit, then please visit **www.fife.gov.uk/universalcredit**

Fife Cares: Through Fife Council's safer communities team, it offers a range of free safety and home security visits **www.fife.gov.uk/safetyvisit 03451 55 15 03**

Disabled Person's Housing: Can provide full independent housing information advice and support for disabled people in Fife. **www.dphsfife.org.uk 01592 803 280**

Fife Law Centre 01592 786710 info@fifelawcentre.co.uk. Based out of Lochgelly, Fife Law Centre is a charity with a team of solicitors who can provide free legal advice and possible representation for residents in Fife.

HELP

Fife Women's Aid 0808 802 5555. www.fifewomensaid.org.uk Can offer advice and support to Women experiencing domestic abuse within Fife.

Fife Adult Support & Protection Committee (ASPC) 01383 602200. www.fife.gov.uk/adultprotection Is a partnership between Fife Council, Police Scotland and NHS Fife. These organisations work together to support and adults at risk of harm in Fife. If you feel someone is in need of our support, please contact us.

Foodbanks

People can require access to Foodbanks for many different reasons. If you find yourself in this position then foodbanks can provide short term access to emergency food. Foodbanks are non-profit organisations that receive publicly donated food.

You may require a referral to your local foodbank, you can be referred by:

- a Social Worker
- Community Education Workers
- Welfare Support Workers
- Fife Council's Welfare Fund Team 0300 555 0265
- Citizens Advice & Rights Fife
- Housing Management Officers

Foodbanks within Fife

East Neuk Foodbank, Anstruther Church, Crail Road 01333 310 156. Email: eastneukfoodbank@gmail.com

Glenrothes Foodbank (referral Only), Saltire Centre, Glenrothes 01592 631088

Inverkeithing Foodbank (referral only) Old Town House, Townhall Street, Inverkeithing 07580 231 286

Kirkcaldy Foodbanks 07784 639 355. For more information and to view the opening hours of our distribution points please visit www.kirkcaldyfoodbank.org.uk

Viewforth Hub (Vieworth Church Hall)

Burntisland Salvation Army

Linton Lane Centre

New Volunteer House (East Fergus Place)

Link Living (Westbridge Mill, Bridge Street)

Levenmouth Foodbank (referral only), Methilhill Evangelical Church, Bowling Greent Street 01333 439202 For more information and to view the opening hours of our distribution points please visit levenmouth.foodbank.org.uk

Rosyth Foodbank (referral only), Parish Church, Queensferry Road 07580 231 286 email: foodbankinrosyth@gmail.com

St Andrews Foodbank (referral only), St David's Centre, Albany Park 01334 474 940

Taybridgehead Foodbank (referral Only) 01382 540682



Tenancy Assistance

Housing Management Officers (HMO) are justifiably proud of the advice and assistance they can offer tenants through the Tenancy Assistance service.

Tenancy Assistance is available for all Fife Council tenants whether a first-time tenant or further into an existing tenancy - HMOs are there to help. They work with the tenant to enable them to settle in or

to overcome challenges that might otherwise hinder them from sustaining their tenancy.

The service is tenant-led, mutually agreed with the HMO and is carried out over a 12-16 week period. During the period of Tenancy Assistance, HMOs will assess and agree any help and assistance that is required and where needed can make referrals to other agencies that can assist them further.

Here are just some of the areas that we can advise on:

Tenancy Assistance

Digital Skills

Heating your home

Furnishing your home

Budgeting & income maximisation

Anti-social behaviour

Housing Options

Garden issues

5 WAYS TO BETTER WELLBEING

The SAMH Information Service provides information and signposting for pathways to better mental health and wellbeing over the phone, through emails and through a range of online information.

www.samh.org.uk



Scottish Charity No SC008897.
Scottish Association for Mental Health.

The SAMH Information Service team can connect you with local mental health support and information. It operates from 9am-6pm Monday to Friday (except bank holidays). Email info@samh.org.uk or call 0344 800 0550. Find out more at www.samh.org.uk/info

We all have mental health, just as we have physical health, and it's important that we take the time to look after it. Yet YouGov research shows that around a quarter of us never do.

There are lots of things we can do every day to support our wellbeing. The New Economic Foundation suggests the following five ways to better wellbeing.



CONNECT

Staying in touch with loved ones can make us feel happier and more secure; and often just having a chat can help to lift our mood.

Put five minutes aside to ask someone how they are

Arrange to meet up with friends that you haven't seen in a while

Join a local group or club and meet new people in your community

1

BE ACTIVE

Being active isn't just good for our physical health; it's also proven to have a positive effect on our mental health and wellbeing.

Go for a short walk at lunchtime

Discover a physical activity you enjoy and one that suits you

Try the NHS's Couch to 5K programme

2

TAKE NOTICE

Whether you're spending time with friends or taking a moment for yourself, try to stop to take notice and be aware of the present.

Set aside time to practise mindfulness or take up yoga

Take notice of how your friends or colleagues are feeling

Spend time outdoors, enjoy the fresh air and notice what's around you

3

LEARN

Learning enhances your self-esteem and confidence, and can be a great way to meet new people.

Sign up for a class and learn something new

Rediscover an old interest, such as cooking or gardening

Take on a new challenge to make or fix something

4

GIVE

Giving can be very rewarding – in fact those who report a greater interest in helping others are more likely to rate themselves as happy.

Volunteer your time for a cause you are passionate about

Spend time with someone who you know has been having a difficult time

Fundraise for us and be part of Team SAMH!

5

New Council Care Housing Development at Bellyeoman Road

Housing Services are planning new Council housing at Bellyeoman Road, Dunfermline. It is proposed to purchase 44 newly constructed houses for social rent. These will be built for and retained by Fife Council. 30 of the properties will be part of an Extra Care Retirement Complex. The housing mix proposed for the additional units on site is based on local housing need and demand and includes 1 and 2 bedroomed amenity housing and 3 bedroomed townhouses.

75% of the properties will be built specifically for Specific Needs applicants. Subject to receiving planning permission and the satisfactory conclusion of ongoing negotiations, it is anticipated that work will start on site during Summer 2022.

It is hoped that the development (if approved) will be completed within 2 years and will help significantly to satisfy demand from housing applicants, who require specific needs housing in the Dunfermline Area.



Servicing your Gas heating system

If your property has gas central heating it is essential that we carry out a gas service every year to ensure your appliances are safe and working correctly. It is also a legal requirement that a new gas service certificate has been issued before the previous year's certificate expires.

When your service is due

We will write out to you with an appointment. If the date given is unsuitable, please contact us as soon as possible. In most circumstances we can reschedule the appointment within 3 weeks of the date of the letter.

What if I'm not home for my first appointment?

The gas engineer will leave a card asking the tenant to contact us to arrange another appointment. If we do not receive a response from the tenant, we will send a second appointment letter. Again, if this date is unsuitable the appointment can be rearranged. However, this date can only be brought forward.

What if you are not home for the second appointment?

If we still cannot gain access after the second appointment. We will then arrange an enforced access visit. This is to ensure that we meet our legal requirement to carry out the service within the year. This appointment cannot be changed. If the tenant is unable to provide access, we will have no other option but to gain entry to the property to carry out the service. The locks will be changed and there will be a charge applied for the cost of these works.

What can I do before my appointment?

If you could make sure that there is credit in your gas and electricity meters for the service. If you could also ensure that the engineer can easily access the boiler, gas meter and heating controls when visiting the property. The Gas Service is carried out to keep you and your property safe, please contact us if there are any issues with your gas appliances or access for the annual service.

Contact Details

Email BS.mobileworking@fife.gov.uk

Live chat www.fife.gov.uk/contact-us

Tel: 03451 550011 Option 2 for repairs

Appointments available

All day call (Mon – Thurs 8am – 4.30pm, Friday 8am -2.30pm)

AM appointment 8am – 1pm (Friday 8am – 2.30pm)

PM appointment – 12pm - 4.30pm (Mon – Thurs)

9.30am – 2.30pm (Mon – Fri)



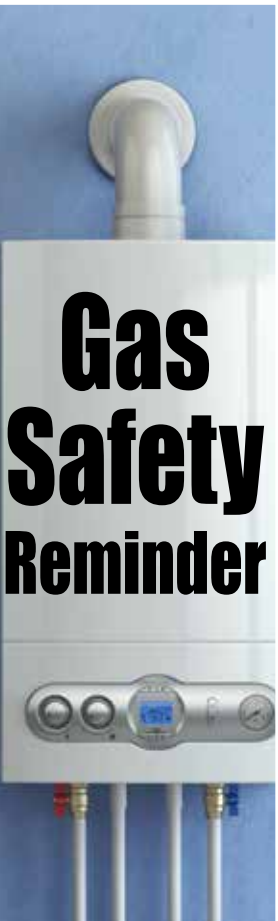


It's important to make sure that your gas boiler, gas fire and gas cooker are working safely and correctly.

Gas Safe Register is the only official list of gas engineers who are legally allowed to do work on your gas boiler, gas cooker and gas fire. By law, all gas engineers must be on the Gas Safe Register. This list is there to help protect you from unsafe gas work.

As your landlord, Fife Council will annually service your gas boiler and gas fire. If you have a gas cooker you will need to get it serviced and safety checked every year. Annual servicing not only helps keep your heating and hot water working properly, it helps keep you safe.

All Gas Safe registered engineers carry a Gas Safe Register ID card. Always check the card and make sure the engineer is qualified for the work you need. To check an engineer go to www.GasSafeRegister.co.uk or call free on 0800 408 5500.



Gas Safety Reminder

Allocations Focus

How to apply for Housing

This might be your first Down Your Street magazine in your new home and if it is, we hope you're settling in well and feel at home. For many, you may have been housed a number of years ago.

To be where you are today, at one point in the past, you will have applied for housing.

Since moving in things may have changed - you might be thinking about moving again as your home is too small, or too big, or you may have family members thinking about applying on their own. This article will give you some useful information and tips to prepare if you or others need to move again.

In Fife we have a Common Housing Register, this is called the Fife Housing Register (FHR). Fife Council and many of the Housing Associations in Fife have agreed to use one application form and a single Common Assessment of Need, this means all those who apply are assessed the same way. It is a needs-based assessment, with those in the greatest need having this reflected through their points awarded. The FHR Partnership have a website and we continue to develop this to include information that is useful if you want or need to move.

I'm thinking about moving, what should I do first?

- Visit the Fife Housing Register Website: www.fifehousingregister.org.uk
- Complete a Housing Option Plan to get advice and information tailored to your personal situation
- Take time to consider and explore the range of housing options available to you
- Think about a mutual exchange, it gives you control in deciding where you stay – HomeSwap will be useful in finding an exchange
- Use our FHR website to find out useful information on Housing options, advice, stock locations and numbers

There are currently over 14,000 applicants on the Fife Housing Register.

How can I apply for housing?

If you want to apply to the Fife Housing Register you need to complete an application form.

Many applications are now completed on-line. At the end of the application you will be advised what proofs you need.

Before you start to complete an application for housing have available;

- Your 3 year address history and landlord details. This is needed for any joint applicant too.
- If you plan to join households with someone who lives elsewhere, they need to complete a separate application as well. This ensures all of your housing circumstances are taken into account when your assessment is completed
- Have to hand the names and dates of birth of everyone that is moving with you, and if you are living with others that are not moving with you, we need their details too

If you need to move in an emergency call 03451 55 00 33 in office hours.

Out with office hours call 0800 028 6231. If you need emergency assistance with your housing situation, you will be supported through the process.

Is my application always LIVE?

If your application is incomplete when you first apply it's unlikely we'll be able to carry out the assessment, so it's essential you complete the application in full. Your application will be delayed if it's incomplete.

Your assessment is based on your current circumstances, if you change address **you will need to complete a new application form** so it reflects your new housing situation. If we're aware that you've moved and your application is inaccurate, we can't actively consider you for housing.

If you don't tell us about any changes when they happen, this may also affect and delay any likelihood of being housed.

Applicants may also temporarily be suspended from the housing list. There are several reasons a suspension may be applied, including tenancy related debt or anti-social behaviour.

How do I update my application?

Once you have submitted your application you may need to change some details;

- a new phone number or email address. It is important to keep these up to date so that we can get in touch with you.
- If you have moved you need to let us know, as we need you to complete a new application form to ensure any letters are sent to the right address and that your application is assessed correctly.
- If you want to add a new joint applicant or household member we will ask you complete an application form for them too.
- Any other change can have an impact on points so we would reassess your application with any new information

You can update your application by

- Submitting an update on-line
- Calling 03451 55 00 33
- Emailing FHR.team@Fife.gov.uk
- Visiting one of the FHR partner offices
- Writing to FHR Team, Housing Service, Fife Council, New City House, 1 Edgar Street, Dunfermline, KY12 7EP

Between all FHR partners there are over 39,000 properties in Fife.

How are points calculated?

Points are awarded for a number of reasons based on your current circumstances. This includes if your property is too small or too large, if your home is missing essential facilities, you have medical needs, or on-going neighbour harassment. These are just some examples and they all fall under four main categories:

- Urgent Housing
- Poor Housing
- Social and Medical Needs
- Lack of Security

You could have points under different categories, but you are placed in the category which holds your highest level of need.

For some points to be added proofs are needed, these will be requested during the completion and assessment of your application. Proofs may also affect your bedroom entitlement. If you do apply for housing, it's essential you supply any information we ask for.

All fully assessed applications are sent a points letter.

Application journey

- 1 Complete Online Housing Options Plan
- 2 FHR Application completed
- 3 Application assessed – proof may be requested
- 4 Live on the FHR Register -Points letter sent out
- 5 Something changes? You need to tell us & we'll reassess your situation.
- 6 Waiting for a home suitable to your needs.



The Future's Looking Brighter at Sunnyside Court

Some of the tenants at the Sunnyside Court Retirement Housing, had a few issues that they wanted Fife Council to address. Rather than raise them individually, a few people thought about forming a Tenants Association, so they could have a collective voice and support each other in the process. One of the tenants contacted the Tenant Participation Officer, for the Cowdenbeath area – Rab Clark.

Rab was able to explain the process. The tenant then passed this information onto other tenants and pretty soon a public meeting was arranged, when Covid restrictions permitted. At the meeting Rab explained the process in more detail and answered all of our questions. We learned, amongst other things, about the Sheltered Housing Forum, The Scrutiny Panel, The Fife Tenant Federations and the Fife Tenants Forum.

We voted unanimously to form a Tenants Association and a committee was elected.

We had our inaugural meeting, of Sunnyside Court Tenants Association, on Monday 6th December 2021. We invited Debbie Ford, Lead Officer, Jane Howell, Retirement Housing Officer (RHO) (Older Persons Team) and Craig Brown, Lead Officer from Housing, as no Housing Management Officer's were unable to attend. Unfortunately, Craig gave his apologies on the morning of the meeting, which was disappointing, however, it was so exciting to have Debbie and Jane there. They listened to our complaints and concerns and we felt that we were being heard, treated respectfully and taken seriously.

We know that it was only our first meeting but we now have the confidence, that we can work together with Fife Council to have our issues addressed.

We agreed to affiliate to our Tenant Federation (FFOTRA) and are getting an invite to the Sheltered Housing Forum meeting too.

We understand that things take time to happen but are looking forward to our next meeting, to hear the updates from Fife Council, to see what improvements can be made.

If you would like to find out how to get involved in, or set up a Tenants and Residents group, for the area you live in, please contact:

Cowdenbeath – Rab Clark – rab.clark@fife.gov.uk – 07525 392637

Dunfermline – Rab Clark – rab.clark@fife.gov.uk – 07525 392637

Glenrothes – Colin Whyte – colin.whyte@fife.gov.uk – 07525 392728

Kirkcaldy – Jillian Robb-McMahon – jillian.robb-mcmahon@fife.gov.uk – 07872 420510

Levenmouth – Jillian Robb-McMahon – jillian.robb-mcmahon@fife.gov.uk – 07872 420510

North East Fife – Colin Whyte – colin.whyte@fife.gov.uk – 07525 392728

South West Fife – Rab Clark – rab.clark@fife.gov.uk – 07525 392637

Debbie Ford – Lead Officer - I am pleased that the Tenants Association is up and running and I look forward to working with the group to see the benefits, for all the tenants at Sunnyside Court.

Mrs Gale – Chair - I am happy that we've been able to get the Tenants Association going and that all the tenants are keen to get involved.

Jane Howell – RHO - It was nice to be invited and to be able to contribute to the meeting.

Laura – Committee Member – The Tenants Association a good idea and everybody gets their chance to have their say.



New Houses for Guardbridge

The development by Persimmon Homes at Seggie Farm in Guardbridge is well under way. Currently we have 30 homes in Seggie Drive, Classic Crescent and Eden Grove being occupied. In addition to this we have approximately a further 14 homes expected to be handed over by the end of February and approximately an additional 23 homes to be handed over by summer 2022.

The completion of the development will mean that Fife council will have increased its stock of 4, 5 and 6 bedroom properties dramatically as well as developing 3 and 4 bedroom bungalows to improve life for disabled families. Adding these properties is a welcome addition for the Guardbridge area where there is a low stock of affordable housing.

The overall development will consist of a mixture of 100 2-6 bedroom houses, 2-4 bedroom bungalows,

and 2 bedroom cottage flats with all properties currently expected to be handed over by the end of the year. This will help contribute to Fife Councils Housing target of developing new homes.

"Our North East Fife consultation with tenants and residents in October 2021, highlighted 'lack of family housing' and lack of 'specific needs housing' as key issues in our communities. The delivery of the new build project in Guardbridge, has provided larger family homes and homes for those with specific needs, supporting our commitment to increase tenant involvement in setting local priorities and influencing decision making." – Gordon Binnie Area Housing Manager



Right Choice for Rolland Avenue

In September of 2020 the Housing Manager Officer for Rolland Avenue, East Wemyss began consultation with the tenants and residents, about what they would like to see done to improve the lock ups in the area. Most of these were either damaged or unused and were not only a financial drain, but an eyesore, in a space that could have a much more productive use.

It was decided the space could be used for parking, as there are blocks of flats and houses which surround the area. This would help to alleviate excess vehicles from the road, making it safer for pedestrians.

Work by Transportation Services began in April 2021, and it was noticed that there could be a section for communal bins. Residents were consulted, as well as Waste Operations, and a communal bin store was added to the plan for the area.

The work on the bin store and new parking area was

completed in July 2021. The general appearance of the street is much improved. Bins are no longer kept kerbside, cars are off the street and the untidy lock ups are gone.

Thank you to all the residents of Rolland Avenue. Your voice can make a difference in your area.

"The transformation to the area is incredible with not only better parking facilities and a new bin compound area, but it has also really opened up the area and has maximised available space. Funding for the project was secured as part of an ongoing approach to improving the areas along with very good collaborative working together whereby Area Housing staff, Estates Housing staff, Roads & Transportation service all worked together. This project is an excellent example where the needs of the area with input from the residents have made a significant difference" - Peter Nicol Housing Manager





Housing survey

A huge thanks to everyone that took part in our area housing survey for North East Fife, and South West Fife. Your feedback is really important and helps us develop future housing plans for your area.

If you live in the **Cowdenbeath area** or **Levenmouth area**, now it's your turn to have your say.

To we want to understand what you think the main housing issues are in your town/village, and what we can do to resolve them. These can be things like:

- parking in your street
- anti-social behaviour
- new build housing / lack of affordable housing
- repairs & maintenance / condition of your estate/street
- homelessness
- rent arrears

Your opinion will help support our area housing team with the development of our action plan. The survey

will only take around 4 mins to complete and you can access this using the QR codes below or you can find it on our Tenant Participation facebook page. The survey will be available until Sunday 1 May 2022 so don't delay and have your say.

Surveys for Glenrothes, Kirkcaldy and Dunfermline areas will be available in the coming weeks.

If you have difficulty filling out the survey online, please contact your HMO who can do this with you over the phone

<https://www.fife.gov.uk/levenmouthsurvey>

<https://www.fife.gov.uk/cowdenbeathsurvey>



Levenmouth



Cowdenbeath



Callaloe View before



Greenmount before



Callaloe View after



Greenmount after

The improvements on these pages were carried out thanks to opinions and ideas from the community.

We need your voice to influence the projects that Housing Services plan for your neighbourhoods. These should be changes that are important to you



Bishops Court before



Bishops Court after



Langside Drive before



Langside Drive after

**35% OF WOMEN
DO NOT
FEEL SAFE
WALKING ALONE
IN THEIR
NEIGHBOURHOOD
AFTER DARK.**



**MEN CAN HELP
WOMEN FEEL
SAFER**



#DontBeThatGuy





Phoebe says hello to national pet month

National Pet Month 2022 is held from the 1st of April to the 1st of May. National Pet Month aims to promote responsible pet ownership,

make people aware of the benefits of pets for people, plus the positive impacts that owners can have on their pets.

It also aims to raise awareness of the role, value and contribution to society that companion animals have. National Pet Month helps people learn how to look after pets properly, and lots of events are held all over the country to celebrate it. For further information, please visit www.nationalpetmonth.org.uk and #NationalPetMonth

Fab reasons people have pets

- Pets are good company and can help combat loneliness. This is because dogs are often great at making their owner feel loved and welcome when they return home.
- Stroking an animal can help people feel calm and relaxed.
- Animals such as dogs need lots of walks, so having a pet can help you stay fit and healthy.
- Owning a pet can help improve an individual's mental health. Some form of a friendly pet is often used in 'calm' areas for schools to help relieve the stress that pupils are experiencing.
- Pets are also great for children- they can help a child develop a sense of responsibility. For example, a child's role could be to fill the water bowl or clean the hutch each day.

Before considering having your own pet

- Make sure you've consulted your Housing Management Officer as having more than one pet requires permission.
- Check your Tenancy Agreement to ensure your accommodation allows pets and it is suitable for them.
- Ensure you can care for a pet financially. You must consider not only day to day costs but unexpected vet bills.

- Consider if you have the time and ability to look after a pet. It can often be challenging and a lot of work.

Ways to Celebrate National Pet Month

There are many ways to celebrate National Pet Month- let's explore a few here.

- If you're thinking about getting a new pet, make sure you buy from a registered breeder, as many illegal breeders mistreat animals or from a registered animal shelter if you wish to rehome.
- Volunteer at your local animal shelter- they're often understaffed and could do with an extra pair of hands. It will be a massively rewarding experience for you or any family members.
- Why not have a go at fundraising for an animal charity? You could go on a sponsored run, a sponsored dog walk, host a front garden bake sale, or put on a car boot sale, where all the money made goes to charity.

Animal Charities

- The PDSA (People's Dispensary for Sick Animals) provides care in animal hospitals. www.pdsa.org.uk
- The SSPCA (Scottish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) rescues animals who aren't being looked after properly. www.scottishspca.org
- The Dog Aid Society of Scotland is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation. The dog rescue organisation was founded in 1956 to help pups of all breeds and sizes find new, loving homes. www.dogaidsociety.com

**Best pals,
Chip and
Hydie**



National Pet Month



Luna, the
new baby
of the
family

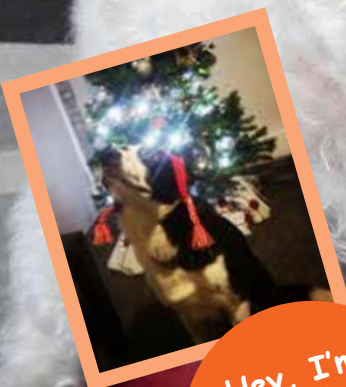


if you'd like your pet to
feature on "Phoebe says"
please email your photos to
tenantparticipation@ffe.gov.uk

Simba the
cat looking
amazing at
15



Hello Phoebe,
from Ralph
& Holly your
Therapet
buddies



Hey, I'm
Buddy boy
and I loved
Christmas

Canine concern

Canine Concern Scotland Trust was formed in 1988 to help dogs and their owners, and to improve their position in present-day society. Its aims are to:

- Provide an educational service to promote responsible dog ownership in Scotland by visiting schools to reach dog owners of the future, or to give talks, supply useful literature and advice to any interested Community Groups.
- Establish and manage a service to be known as "Therapet".
- Further the role and care of dogs in Scotland, either directly or in co-operation with Government, Local Authorities and other organisations in Scotland, whether charitable or not.
- Promote research into the therapeutic value of dogs to patients or others isolated from normal association with pets.

Therapet Service

For some years now it has been recognised, more and more, that pets are good for us! Even scientifically proven that the mere action of stroking a dog, or cat, slows down the heartbeat, reduces blood pressure, and makes someone who has already suffered a heart attack much less likely to have another.

Through no fault of their own, many people find themselves deprived of companionship of a much-loved dog. It may be that they have had to go into sheltered housing, residential accommodation, a long-stay geriatric ward; perhaps they are simply no longer able to care properly for a pet. The same applies to adults and children who have a physical disability or learning difficulty and those suffering a terminal illness. The Therapet Volunteers take their own dogs into visit these people and hopefully make a positive impact on their lives.

One of our most successful Therapet Services is Paws Against Stress. This began as an innovative pilot project in 2013 and was intended to help to alleviate student stress before examinations. In 2019 CCST held 178 sessions in universities, colleges and some commercial organisations across Scotland, 11,800+ people benefited from attending these events. This is a free service to universities, colleges or places of further education. We recently held these sessions again and were welcomed back to College campuses across Fife. Down Your Street's very own Phoebe attended the Levenmouth Campus to meet the students.

If you'd like to find out more about Therapets or if you know of a place that would benefit from one of our doggie volunteers visiting, then please visit our website www.canineconcernscotland.org.uk.





Tenant Participation News Bulletin

We are back!

The Tenant Participation Team are delighted to be able to attend face to face meetings again. We might have spoken to many of you at Tenants & Residents Association Meetings (TRA's) over Zoom or Teams but for many others we have not managed to meet at all in the last 2 years.

If you are part of a TRA and you'd like to get back to your meetings or even if you'd be interested in joining or creating a TRA please get in contact. The Tenant Participation Officer (TPO) for your area would be thrilled to help you.

We can offer advice and support on booking a meeting venue, publicising your meeting, establishing a committee and inviting other Council officials to make sure your voice is heard on the issues you care about.

We are looking forward to seeing you all again over the next few months!

Cowdenbeath – Rab Clark – rab.clark@fife.gov.uk – 07525 392637

Dunfermline - Rab Clark – rab.clark@fife.gov.uk – 07525 392637

Glenrothes – Colin Whyte – colin.whyte@fife.gov.uk – 07525 392728

Kirkcaldy – Jillian Robb-McMahon – jillian.robbs-mcmahon@fife.gov.uk – 07872 420510

Levenmouth - Jillian Robb-McMahon – jillian.robbs-mcmahon@fife.gov.uk – 07872 420510

North East Fife - Colin Whyte – colin.whyte@fife.gov.uk – 07525 392728

South West Fife - Rab Clark – rab.clark@fife.gov.uk – 07525 392637



Colouring in

Why not colour in our spring butterfly?

Just for fun. With restrictions in place to prevent the spread of Coronavirus, there are currently no prize-winning competitions running in this edition of Down Your Street.



Try our Spring wordsearch

Just for fun. Find the following words:

BIRD
BUD
EGG
FLOWER
LAMB
NET
RAIN
SPRING

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| L | F | L | O | W | E | R | B |
| A | N | U | N | M | S | W | X |
| M | E | W | A | D | M | S | Q |
| B | T | Z | E | Q | C | P | Q |
| X | B | U | D | E | Q | R | R |
| Q | Z | U | B | G | Y | I | A |
| Z | A | C | L | G | Z | N | I |
| B | I | R | D | Q | J | G | N |



Mrs Doyle's Kitchen features amazingly tasty recipes for the whole family. Check out this seasons delicious and easy ideas...



American style pancakes

- Serves 4
- 10 mins to prepare and 30 mins to cook
- 379 calories / serving

Ingredients

- 350ml milk
- 2 eggs
- 200g plain flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp sugar
- vegetable oil, for frying

To serve

- maple syrup, optional

Method

1. Whisk the milk and eggs in a jug, then set aside. Sieve the flour and the baking powder into a bowl, add a pinch of salt, the sugar and combine. Make a well in the centre and gradually pour in the milk and egg mixture. Beat well.
2. Brush a nonstick frying pan with a little vegetable oil and place over a medium heat. When the pan is hot, pour half a ladle of batter into the pan to form a pancake that is approx 10cm in diameter.
3. Cook until bubbles start to form, then flip the pancake over and cook the other side until golden.
4. Serve with a drizzle of maple syrup, if you like.

Peanut Butter Chicken

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp olive or vegetable oil
- 4 large chicken thighs, skin removed and boneless, each cut into 8 chunks
- 2 large shallots, peeled and sliced
- 2 red peppers, cut into long 1cm/½in-wide slices
- 1 red chilli, seeds removed and chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, finely sliced
- 400ml tin coconut milk
- 4 tbsp peanut butter (smooth or crunchy)
- 2 limes, juice only
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh coriander leaves, to garnish (optional)

Method

1. Heat the oil in a large frying pan over a high heat. Fry the chicken for 5 minutes, stirring every 30 seconds or so. Turn the heat down to low, add the shallots, red peppers, chilli and garlic and cook for 5 minutes, or until softened.
2. Stir in the coconut milk and peanut butter. Half-fill the coconut milk tin with water and add to the pan. Bring to the boil, then cover with a lid and cook over a medium heat for 7 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the chicken is cooked.
3. If you want to thicken the peanut butter sauce, remove the lid and boil to reduce the sauce to a coating consistency. Stir in the lime juice and soy sauce. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary – you may need a touch more soy sauce or a little more lime juice to balance out the sweet-saltiness.
4. Garnish with the chopped coriander, if using, and serve with white rice and/or steamed greens.

Preparation time less than 30 mins

Cooking time 10 to 30 mins

Serves Serves 4

Each serving provides 431 kcal, 27g protein, 10g carbohydrates (of which 8g sugars), 30g fat (of which 18g saturates), 3.5g fibre and 1.4g salt.



Second boosters for at-risk groups

NHS Fife is now inviting those aged 75 and over and those at highest risk of severe COVID-19 disease forward for their second booster vaccination.

People in the following groups will receive blue envelopes with appointment details:

- adults aged 75 years and over
- residents in care homes for older adults
- individuals aged 12 years and over who are immunosuppressed

These people will be invited as they become eligible from at least 24 weeks after their last booster, with the first groups receiving appointments from the second week in March.

This follows recent advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI).

Deputy Chief Medical Officer Professor Nicola

Steedman said: "Our vaccination programme has been highly successful, with 85% of the eligible population having had a booster or third dose vaccination and the World Health Organisation estimating some 28,000 lives saved to date in Scotland.

"However, the degree of protection offered by the vaccines wanes over time, which is why booster vaccination is needed to maintain the best protection against COVID-19 for those at highest risk of severe effects of the virus. The additional booster dose will improve your level of protection significantly and is the best way to protect your health and those around you.

"The primary aim of the COVID-19 vaccination programme continues to be the prevention of severe disease, hospitalisation and mortality, arising from COVID-19. I encourage anyone who is still to have any dose of the COVID-19 vaccine to get vaccinated as soon as they are eligible."



Boosters are up to 85% effective at reducing your risk of COVID-19 hospitalisation.