

Spring 2021

 With head
& heart



Tenants News



Spotlight on...

Macduff!

See page 2.

Maintenance Update

See page 7.

Seasons Greetings

We wish you a wonderful spring season. May you enjoy the easing of COVID-19 restrictions with a warm sun and colours all around.



Ark[®] People Housing Care

arkha.org.uk

Spotlight on... Macduff



Some of our properties in Aberdeenshire are in the coastal town of Macduff.

Macduff is a small village of 4000 people. It is best known for its Aquarium which is well worth a visit!



We have asked our newest tenants, Stacie Duncan, to share her thoughts and experience of her new home.

- **Where were you living before and how long had you lived there?**

I lived in Banff with my parents till I moved to Macduff.

- **What is the biggest change for you having your own tenancy?**

Having to take care of things on my own which I like.



- **What is your favourite room in your new home and why?**

My living room as I watch my movies and tv shows with friends and family when they come to visit.

- **What does it mean to you to have your own home?**

Having my independence I like to do things on my own.



- **What are the best and worst things about the town of Macduff?**

The best it has a nice harbour; the worst it doesn't have much shops as Banff.



- **How was your first Christmas in your new home?**

It was fine but with the COVID thing it wasn't the same but hopefully 2021 will be a better year.

*Thank you
Stacie!*

Rent Increase 2021 - 2022



In December we sent out a Rent Increase proposal and questionnaire to our tenants.



Tenants were asked to choose between an increase of 2.6% or of 3.1%. Based on the responses we received it was decided that we increase the rents by 2.6% for 2021 - 2022.



We have sent out a rent increase notification letter to all our tenants. If you have not yet received this or have any questions please contact a member of the housing team.

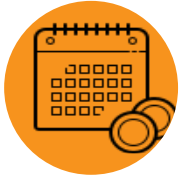


If you are in receipt of housing benefit Ark will notify the local housing benefit team of the rent increase.



If you are in receipt of Universal Credit housing costs it is your responsibility to update your journal with the increased rent charge from 1st April 2021.

Ways to pay your rent



1. Direct Debit – if you wish to set up a Direct Debit please contact the Housing Team.



2. All Pay Card – contact the Housing Team to request a card. This will allow you to make payments towards your rent at any shop or post office with a PayPoint symbol.



3. Cheques or Postal Order - they should be made payable to “ARK Housing Association LTD”. Write your name and address on the back of the cheque or postal order.



4. Telephone – you can telephone the Housing Team on 0131 478 8146 to make a payment via World Pay using your debit card.



5. Online - you can pay using your All Pay Card and credit or debit card at www.allpayments.net. To download the All Pay app for your mobile phone please go to www.allpay.net/app.

Thanks to all who took part in our latest **Tenant Satisfaction Survey**. We will share our findings in our next newsletter. Congratulations to the 3 prize draw winners who won ‘Love2shop’ vouchers:

- Mr Cowie in Aberdeenshire
- tenant in West Lothian
- tenant in Moray



Housing Benefits & Universal Credit



If you are getting housing benefit or Universal Credit and your circumstances have changed, it may affect the amount of benefit that you can claim.

What is a change of circumstances?

- changes to your rent
- changes to who lives with you
- changes related to your money
- changes related to your work and education
- changes related to children



You should update your Universal Credit Journal or notify the Housing Benefit department and your Housing Officer immediately.

If you don't, you could end up being paid too much and having to pay it back. You never know - you might be entitled to more benefit.



To report a change in your circumstances, write to your council to tell the housing benefit department of the change as soon as possible.

It's best to deliver the letter yourself and ask for a receipt and keep this in a safe place or post a copy of the letter by recorded delivery.




Maintenance Update



We are very pleased to introduce you to our new Asset Team.

Our first point of contact for repairs is Erin Tracey who is our Property Administrator. If you need to report a repair, call Erin or use the repairs email address.

Erin Tracey 	0131 478 8143	erin.tracey@arkha.org.uk repairs@arkha.org.uk
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If you need to report an emergency repair at night, weekends and holidays please call:

Area	Emergency Contractor
Buckie, Forres, Aberdeen, Fraserburgh, Inverurie, Macduff, Peterhead and Portlethen	1 Call Property Maintenance 01224 638 888
Arbroath and Forfar, Blairgowrie and Perth, Clackmannanshire, Falkirk, Fife, Lothian's and Scottish Borders	All in 1 Property Maintenance 07756 147 365 or 07810 883 676

**For ALL gas central heating repairs, contact Heatcare:
01343 842 042**

Each of our Maintenance Officer covers specific geographical area noted below, along with their contact details.

**Nicola
Hampton**



07514 670 186

nicola.hampton@arkha.org.uk

Fife: Dunfermline, Cardenden

Midlothian: Dalkeith, Loanhead

**Edinburgh: Quartermile, Restalrig,
Longstone, Oxfangs, Niddrie Farm Grove,
Broomhouse**

Clackmannanshire: Alloa

Falkirk: Grangemouth

West Lothian: Linlithgow, Uphall

East Lothian: Musselburgh

**Rob
Ormston**



07720 096 456

0131 478 8161

rob.ormston@arkha.org.uk

Western Isles: Stornoway

Angus: Forfar, Arbroath

Perth & Kinross: Perth, Blairgowrie

Fife: Glenrothes, St Andrews

Midlothian: Penicuik

Scottish Borders: Peebles, Hawick

**Edinburgh: Southhouse Broadway,
Hoseasons Gardens, Stenhouse Drive,
Stenhouse Place West, West Adam St,
Richmond Place**

**Paul
Allison**



07967 320 379

paul.allison@arkha.org.uk

Moray: Forbes, Buckie

**Aberdeenshire: Fraserburgh, Inverurie,
Macduff, Peterhead, Portlethen**

**Aberdeen: Provost Mitchell Circle, Dubford
Balnagask Circle, Greenfern Lodge, School
Drive, Back Hilton Road, Kittybrewster**

Our Property Administrator and Maintenance Officers are line managed by our Senior Property Officer Lucy Stang.

Any concerns or issues about the services we deliver should be passed to Lucy in the first instance.

**Lucy
Stang**



07593 134 970

lucy.stang@arkha.org.uk

Lindsay Campbell is our Development Coordinator. For information on new build housing, projects and adaptations please contact her on the details below:

**Lindsay
Campbell**



07514 670 128

**lindsay.campbell@arkha.
org.uk**

Food banks



Coronavirus - If you have no money for food



No one should be left hungry or living in poverty. The food banks provide emergency food and support to people in crisis.

Start by looking online to see if there are any independent local food banks that you can go to without a referral.

If there aren't any, you'll need to be sent by someone else. For example by your Ark Housing Officer, a GP or social worker.

A good place to ask for a referral is your nearest Citizens Advice.

Call **Scotland's Citizens Advice Helpline**, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm. Calls are free.



0800 028 1456

Tell them you need the food bank - they'll probably make you an appointment to discuss your situation with an adviser.

If you've been referred, you should be told where the food bank is. If it's run by the Trussell Trust you can check the address on trusselltrust.org

If you live in a rural area and can't afford to travel, your nearest food bank might be able to deliver. Call or email them to check.

If you need to use the food bank again you'll need to get another referral before you go back.



Next steps

Check if you can get extra help if you're on benefits or your benefits have stopped at citizensadvice.org.uk

If you're over 18, you can use the Turn2us benefits calculator to check which benefits you can get. Go to turn2us.org.uk



Food banks



How do they work?



1. FOOD IS DONATED

Schools, churches, businesses and individuals donate non-perishable, in-date food to a food bank. Food is also collected at supermarkets.

2. FOOD IS SORTED & STORED

Volunteers sort food to check that it's in date and store it ready to be given to people who are referred to food banks in crisis.

3. PROFESSIONALS IDENTIFY PEOPLE IN NEED

Doctors, teachers, health visitors and social workers identify people in crisis and give them a food bank voucher to access emergency food.

4. PEOPLE REFERRED RECEIVE FOOD

People bring their voucher to a food bank centre where it can be redeemed for 3 days' emergency food.



Having a pet



If you want to get a pet you must first contact the Housing Team to get a **Pet Permission Leaflet**.

Once we give you written permission you can go ahead and get a pet.

You do not need permission to keep fish or small caged animals and birds.



There are rules about keeping pets. If you break these rules we will remove permission to keep your pet.



- You cannot get a pet that is not permitted by the Dangerous Dog Act 1991 or by any other law.

- You will be responsible for looking after the pet and making sure it behaves well.

- Your pet must not cause nuisance, annoyance or danger to your neighbours.



- Your pet must not foul or cause damage to the house or communal areas. You must clean up after your pet.

How to move home



If you need a bigger or smaller home, or you wish to move to another area, there are different ways to find a more suitable social rented home. The route to follow will depend on where you wish to move to.



The City of Edinburgh

EdIndex is the place to find social rented housing in Edinburgh. It is a partnership between the Council and 18 housing associations/co-operatives in Edinburgh. This means that you only need to complete 1 application to apply for houses.

edindexhousing.co.uk



Ark properties out with Edinburgh

Ark has a variety of properties throughout eastern Scotland. On our website you can see where we have properties and you can download an application form to join our housing list.

arkha.org.uk





Contact Other Social Rented Landlords

Widen your options by applying to the local **Council** in the area you wish to move to.



For information on other Housing Associations in Scotland go to the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations website sfha.co.uk



The East Hub also provides information on housing options in Lothians, Falkirk and Scottish Borders.

eastscotlandhousingoptions.co.uk



House Exchanges

If you are a Council or Housing Association tenant and you want to move, you can swap your tenancy with another tenant who is also looking to move.

Tenants in Edinburgh can register on houseexchange.org.uk



Tenants who want to exchange out with Edinburgh can register with other house swap schemes that are set up nationally. For example homeswapper.co.uk



Housing Team Contacts

housing@arkha.org.uk
0131 478 8146



Maintenance Team Contacts

repairs@arkha.org.uk
0131 478 8143

The Scottish Housing Regulator checks that Ark is providing a good Housing Service. Their Significant Performance Failures factsheet provides more information on how to raise concerns with them. This can be found on our website but if you want a copy, contact us and we can send one to you.



**Scottish Housing
Regulator**

www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk
shr@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk
0141 242 5642

If you made a complaint to Ark and you want something more to be done, you can ask the Ombudsman to look at your complaint.

**SCOTTISH
PUBLIC
SERVICES
OMBUDSMAN**



enquiries@scottishombudsman.org.uk
0800 377 7330