

September 2021

 With head
& heart



Tenants News



Scottish Housing Day

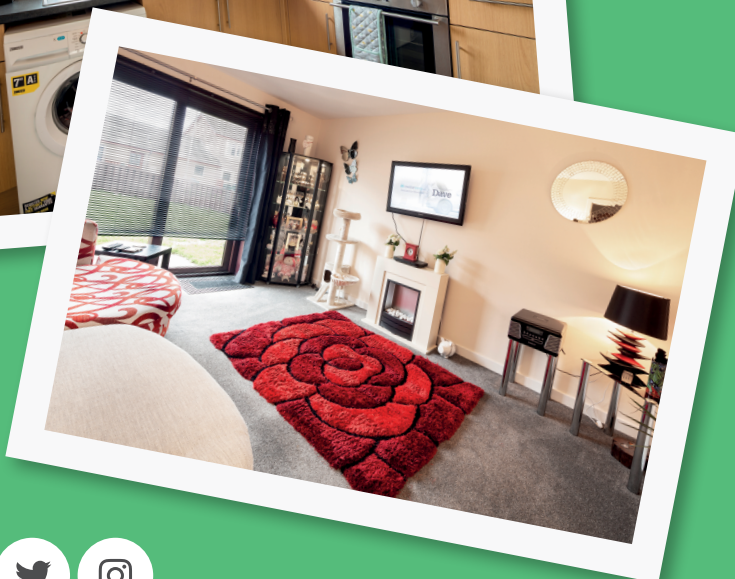
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Home Energy Advice

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Ark[®] People Housing Care



arkha.org.uk

Scottish Housing Day



We are happy to have supported the SFHA's Scottish Housing Day on 15 September 2021. This year the focus was on **housing and the climate emergency**. This is what we have done:

- We **planted trees** in our development in Inverurie, Aberdeenshire, following a request from our tenants who want to create a sensory garden.
- We **rewilded an area** in our development in Peebles, Scottish Borders so that wildflowers will soon attract bees and other pollinators.
- People we support have been doing lots of activities. Well done to Speak Out Worker Laura for organising a whole week of **litter picking** events in Forfar.
- The **Ark Voices group** members met on Zoom to share tips on how to help the environment.

Read more on our website and social media!

Maintenance Update



You can report a repair either by calling us on 0131 478 8143 or e-mailing repairs@arkha.org.uk.

If you need to report an emergency repair at night, weekends and holidays please call:

Area	Repair	Contractor	Telephone
All Areas	Gas Central Heating	Heatcare	01343 842 042
Forres	Emergency Only	Heatcare	01343 842 042
MacDuff, Peterhead, Fraserburgh, Inverurie, Aberdeen, Portlethen, Buckie	Emergency Only	1 Call Property Maintenance	01224 638 888
Arbroath, Blairgowrie, Forfar, Perth, Clackmannanshire, Falkirk, Fife, Lothians and Scottish Borders	Emergency Only	All in 1 Property Maintenance	07756 147 365 or 07810 883 676

Handy Tips for repairs to try before calling

Blocked toilet/Sink

- If the toilet pan is already full, remove some of the water into a bucket or container.
- If you have a plunger (or a toilet brush wrapped in a plastic bag), push the plunger/toilet brush to the bottom of the pan and pump up and down 12 times. This may shift the blockage.
- If the sink won't drain, try putting in the plug, or plunger and pull back out again about a dozen times. This can also shift the blockage.



Smoke Detectors

- Remember to test your smoke detector, usually every week, by pressing and holding the button for a few seconds - the alarm should sound.
- If you can't hear anything, try giving the smoke detector a quick clean with your Hoover nozzle.
- If it still doesn't work, you may need a repair or replacement.
- If you hear a low tone every few minutes, it means the back-up battery in your smoke alarm needs replacing.



Loss of Power

A total loss of power could be due to a power cut. Check if your neighbour has also lost power. If they have then please call your supplier.



Fire Alarm Upgrades

You should have received a letter confirming that the smoke and heat detectors in your property will be changed to comply with new law.

Our contractor, First Call, will be carrying out the installations.

Please get in touch with us if your property has not yet been upgraded and we will arrange a time, convenient to you, for First Call to attend.



Gas Servicing

Throughout the year, our contractor Heatcare carry out Annual Gas Safety Checks.

It is our legal responsibility to provide an annual gas safety certificate to our tenants.

Please let Heatcare enter your home in order to carry out the annual service.

To keep you and our contractors safe, we will follow social distancing while in your home.

If you are self-isolating, please let us know and we will re-arrange the visit.



Gardening

Advice and Responsibilities



During the last 18 months of lockdowns, many people have taken to gardening and looking to improve their spaces at home.

Ark tenants with a private garden have a responsibility to keep their garden to a good standard which means:

- Free from weeds, free from litter and free from dog and other animal dirt.
- Cut the grass frequently so that it is no longer than 10 cm.
- Prune back bushes and shrubs so they are not overgrown.
- Cut hedges so that they are not higher than 1 metre.
- Do not top, lop, pollard or fell trees without our prior written consent. Do not remove, chop down or destroy any bushes or hedges without our written permission unless you planted them.
- Get our written permission before erecting any structures, for example a shed or greenhouse.



If you are struggling to maintain a private garden please get in touch for further advice.

Cycling Action Plan For Scotland



Ark are pleased to confirm that the consultation phase for Back Hilton Road was carried out in late July.

Tenants agreed for us to install here 4 brand new Velo-Box cycle stores in the coming months.

They agreed for the units to be near the front entrance to the building so they will be readily accessible for all tenants/staff on site and visible from the front of the development.

This will be Ark's first cycle storage installation and we want to encourage uptake for the units. If you are a Back Hilton Road resident and interested please call 0131 478 8146 or email housing@arkha.org.uk for more details.

The next development to benefit from the funding plan is Hoseason Gardens in Edinburgh. We spoke with tenants on Tuesday 14th September and we will share more details in the next newsletter.



Low Income Pandemic Payment



The Low Income Pandemic Payment is a one-off payment of £130 to a household to help with lost income due to coronavirus.

You could get the payment

1. If you were in receipt of **Council Tax Reduction** for at least 1 day between 1 April to 30 April 2021

or

2. If you **do not pay Council Tax**

Your local council will identify who is entitled to this payment and will make the payment to you if you are eligible.

Check with them for more information if you are not sure.



LIFT Scheme

Get a LIFT onto the property ladder



The LIFT (Low-cost Initiative for First-Time Buyers) scheme helps first-time buyers, and other priority groups including current social renters, get onto the property ladder with Scottish Government support.



“If it wasn’t for LIFT, I would not have been able to purchase a property as I found it difficult to save a large amount of money for a deposit. I’m so grateful for LIFT and would definitely recommend it to others.”

Tracy, LIFT scheme buyer



The Scottish Government contributes between 10% and 40% towards the property price and gets the same percentage back when it is sold.



For more information, visit

www.linkhousing.org.uk/lift-tenants

or text ‘LIFT’ to 66777.



Fly Tipping



Fly tipping is the illegal deposit of any waste onto land. It includes waste dumped or tipped on a site with no license to accept waste.

Your waste is your responsibility.
Fly tipping is a criminal offence.



If you see anyone dumping rubbish illegally, report it through the:

- Dumb Dumpers online report or
- SEPA's pollution hotline 0800 607080.

For more information on fly tipping visit:

Zero Waste Scotland



SEPA's waste carriers web page



Your local authority website



Home Energy Advice

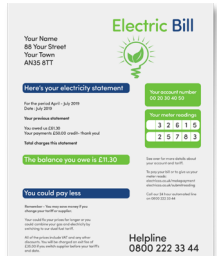


Home, heating and habits for a greener Scotland

Home Energy Scotland is a network of local advice centres all over Scotland. Their website and advisors are able to give free, impartial advice on how to save energy in your home. For example help to:



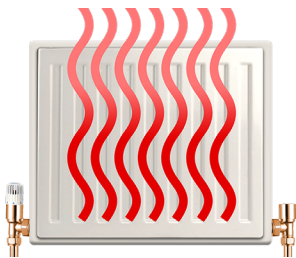
Understand your energy bill
Help to find the best tariffs for your home.



Use less water
Use water efficient shower heads, make sure washing machines and dishwashers have full loads and are set to eco programmes.



Understand Heating Controls
Understand the different functions and settings for timers, room thermostats and radiator valves not only reduces our CO2 footprint, but can help us save from the start.



Call **Home Energy Scotland** at 0808 808 2282. All calls are free.

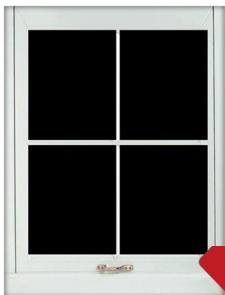


Bulky / Special Uplifts



Bulky / special uplifts is a service to collect bulky household items that are too big to fit into a wheeled bin and cannot be transported to a recycling centre.

This should be arranged by contacting your local council on the numbers provided on the next page.



What can be collected:

- fridges/freezers
- free standing furniture
- carpets, rugs, mattresses and beds

Will not collect:

- any liquid in containers (like cans of paint)
- garden materials
- car parts
- recyclable waste
- mirrors
- windows

Materials should be left outside your house before 6am on the day of collection.

Contacts for your area:

Area	Telephone	Website
Aberdeen City	03000 200 292	www.aberdeencity.gov.uk
Aberdeenshire	03456 081 207	www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk
Angus	07594 223596 angusupcycling@gmail.com	www.angus.gov.uk
Edinburgh	0345 143 005 or 0800 0665 820 to pass items on.	www.edinburgh.gov.uk or www.reusephoneline.com
Fife	03451 55 00 22	www.fife.gov.uk
Midlothian	0131 561 5284	www.midlothian.gov.uk
Moray	0300 123 4565	www.moray.gov.uk
Perth & Kinross	01738 476476	www.pkc.gov.uk
Scottish Borders	0300 100 1800	www.scotborders.gov.uk

Equality Form

Working toward equality for Ark's existing and prospective tenants and employees



When you apply for a service you may be asked to give lots of personal information about yourself in an Equality Monitoring Form.

The law (The Equality Act 2010) requires public bodies to collect your personal data to make sure they do not discriminate people for their:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation



Over the next couple of months you will receive an Equality Monitoring Form and a pre-paid envelope.

Filling out this form is your choice, but we hope that you will take the time to complete and return it to us.

This will allow us to adapt our service to suit your needs where we can.

Becoming a member of Ark



Ark Housing Association Ltd. is a membership-based organisation.

A member of the Association is an individual or an organisation holding a share in the Association and whose name is entered in the Register of Members.

We welcome applications for membership from tenants, supported people, community groups and other residents of the towns and villages in which we are active.

Members are entitled to:

- attend and vote at Annual or Special General Meetings of the Association;
- seek election to the Board of Management;
- vote at meetings on issues such as elections to the Board.



To apply or for more information, contact Mary Bell 0131 478 8150 or mary.bell@arkha.org.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.



enquiries@scottishombudsman.org.uk

0800 377 7330