



FORTH
housing association Ltd.

SpeakingForth

The newsletter of Forth Housing Association Ltd

Summer 2022

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Public Holidays



We would like you to note that our offices will be closed for the following public holidays:

Office Closes: Thursday 14th July at 5.15pm.

Office Reopens: Tuesday 19th July at 9am.

If you have a **genuine** emergency repair over this period please contact:

Gas Central Heating – 0800 048 2710 (Saltire)
Gas Leaks – 0800 111999

For genuine **emergency** repairs (excluding gas heating and hot water) outwith office hours please telephone **Saltire** on **Tel No: 0333 123 1011**.

New Out of Office Hours info on page 2...

Forth Housing Association Limited

Kildean Business and Enterprise Hub, 146 Drip Road, Raploch, Stirling FK8 1RW

Tel: 01786 446066 • Fax: 01786 445846 • E-mail: info@forthha.org.uk

Forth Housing Association Limited is a Registered Scottish Charity, No. SCO03550



New Out of Office Hours info

(Continued from cover)

Please note that from the **1st August 2022**, the Out of Office Hours Contractor will change to **the Logie Group**. **The Logie Group** will provide the Out of Office Hours emergency repairs service and can be contacted from 1 August 2022 on Tel No **0131 608 2003**. Please give the following information:

- **Your name and address**
- **Telephone number**
- **A description of the repair request**

Please follow any instructions given or

requests made by the Logie Group which may assist with your repair request.

Alternatively, telephone the office and listen to the recorded message.

This information will also be texted to tenants, nearer the time and will be available on our website and on My Forth.

If you have any questions, please contact Stephen Dougherty, Property Services Officer, Direct Dial: **01786 431027**.

Closes – for your safety make sure they are not a fire hazard

Please do not store any items within a close. Doing so creates a health and safety risk and prevents our contractors carrying out close cleaning.

When the Housing Services Officers are inspecting the areas, action will be taken if any items are within a close. We will ask that these are removed by you and if you don't respond, we will arrange for items to be uplifted and disposed of at a cost to you.

Please be aware of fire regulations and if you have any issues, please contact your Housing Services Officer who can work out a solution with you.



Going up – new homes!

New houses for Forth's customers are coming up out of the ground across a range of sites in Stirling.

Across at Cornton, we hope to take delivery of 24 new houses and cottage flats from Cruden Building (East) Limited in September 2022.

Between now and May 2023, flats and houses will be handed over in several phases by Robertson Partnership Homes at Raploch Road and Drip Road.

In Bannockburn, 10 new homes are under construction by Lovell Partnerships. The development, currently known as Telburn Way, consists of 10 semi-detached houses for social rent by Forth alongside 31 private houses for sale. These should be ready by Summer 2023.

Further new homes are currently under negotiation for sites at Cambusbarron, Pirnhall and Raploch. So watch this space and we will keep you posted.



Milne Park, Bannockburn



Penman Court, Raploch

De Moray Association – Jubilee Fun



Our Tenants Association at De Moray Court joined in the Queens Platinum Jubilee celebrations with their own garden party on 3rd June.

Several adult helpers made sure that everyone had an enjoyable afternoon with fun and games and a buffet. They also held a small raffle.

A great time was had by all.



CCTV / Ring Doorbells

Please obtain permission from Forth before you go ahead and install these CCTV/Ring Doorbells. They may sound like a great idea for security reasons, but please understand that they can impact on the privacy of others. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) applies to us all and you must therefore comply with the law. To find out more, visit our website, or call the office and we can supply you with more information.

Fire Damage Rectified

In our last issue we highlighted the importance of smoke detectors and allowing access to our contractors for the electrical safety check. We also carry out annual gas servicing and the smoke detectors get checked at the same time.

Following on from a fire in the kitchen of a Cambusbarrow property in early May 2022, our tenant had to be decanted as a number of the areas of the property were no longer fit to use.

We quickly addressed the situation and started to coordinate an action plan to get the tenant back into her property. Our insurers attended and determined the scope of works along with contractors who provided swift responses to the request for quotes and timescales for works.

We have undertaken a new kitchen replacement, electrical rewire of the kitchen, boiler replacement, installation of new heat and carbon dioxide detectors in the kitchen plus a new smoke detector in the hall. The works to the property were completed following the painting of the kitchen and hallway.



Our tenant was pleased and commented: "I am happy with the turnaround of the property and work completed within timescale. Delighted with the work and the quality of the finished kitchen."

Giant Hogweed In Your Area?

Giant hogweed is a highly invasive plant spread by seed. The plant has a chemical in its sap which had the potential to cause injury. It can also look similar to the harmless cow parsley plant. If hogweed is reported it is up to the landowner to remove it.

Stirling Council has a Giant Hogweed eradication strategy. If you do see this plant please report to Stirling Council on Tel 01786 404040.

We are aware that some properties are close to Hogweed. Please report to us when Hogweed is present but, if you are responsible for your own back garden area, the best way is to mow often to prevent the Hogweed from flowering. This is an extract of how it should be managed.

Herbicide – This is best when the plants are young. A garden herbicide with Glyphosate (contact

herbicide) kills plants when they are small. Please follow the instructions on the packet and check after 2 weeks to make sure that all the plants are dying. Re-apply if necessary.

Cutting – Cutting the plant repeatedly throughout the season will stop it from flowering and it will die eventually. Wear long sleeves and gloves – keep the sap off your skin – and wash everything afterwards.

Digging – If you have only a few plants, dig them up, making sure you cut the tap

root at least 10 cm (4 inches) below ground level and shake all the soil from the root. To prevent any possible spread, do **not** take the plant away (and do **not** put it in your brown bin, if you have one). Let it rot, with the roots exposed to dry out. Wear long sleeves and gloves – keep the sap off your skin – and wash everything afterwards.

Keep Checking – Whichever treatment you use, check it, and make sure you have got them all. And do the same thing next year. Be thorough and there will be less and less!



“Looking Out For One Another”

You can pick your friends, but you can't pick your neighbours - so let's look out for each other. Being a good neighbour can bring communities together and make a difference to your lives, not only that, it brings a sense of trust and security to all.

If your concerned or not seen your neighbour in a while, or they have not been in their usual routine, why not pop in or chap their door to see if they are ok. A little kindness can go a long way.

Our Annual Good Neighbour Award will be running again and this will be highlighted in our Autumn edition.



TENANT FEEDBACK



It's been a busy time at Forth with the following being out for consultation:

- Asset Management Strategy – M Brown, Stirling
- Development Strategy – L Lavery, Stirling
- Business Plan – C Adam, Stirling
- Gas repair – J Hamilton, Raploch
- Fencing survey – S Donlevy, Fallin

Thanks for everyone who gave their feedback and to the winners who have each won a £25 voucher. Please continue to let us know what you think of our services by responding to our surveys. This lets us improve our services to you.

Community Events – Come Along to our Next Open Day

We had a successful Open Afternoon at our offices in April. Great fun was had by all, including the adults. It was great to be able to have our tenants back in the office. There were lots of Easter Activities for children, a demonstration of My Forth and our website. Staff and our Committee were on hand to answer any questions.

We will be holding our next Community Open Day on **Friday 5th August from 1-3pm**, at our offices. There will be an

abundance of activities including a bouncy castle, crafts, dance display, beat-the goalie, free raffle and refreshments.

If you would like transport to this event please contact Margaret Glencross or Becky Ramage Tel 01786 446066 by 25th July 2022 and we will arrange on your behalf.

More information will be available on our website and on My Forth nearer the event – so watch this space.



Money News Round-Up



Our Income Maximisation Officer is here to help. If you have any queries regarding Benefits, please contact Tracy on Direct Dial Tel (01786) 431921. A recent tenant commented on the service: “Just wanted to thank-you Tracy for everything you did to get my pension, you are the best.”

ADULT DISABILITY PAYMENT

As from 29th August 22 Personal Independence Payment for NEW claims will be replaced by a new Social Security Scotland benefit – Adult Disability Payment. This means that any adult of working age who has a disability/medical condition that affects their daily living activities or mobility will require to claim Adult Disability Payment instead of Personal Independence Payment.

Any change of circumstances reported after 29th August 22 or any review of awards being completed after this date will

be transferred to Adult Disability Payment.

Any claimant who is currently in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment will remain on this benefit meantime. Transfer from PIP/DLA to Adult Disability Payment will be completed automatically by Social Security Scotland. This process should be completed by June 2024.

If you have any queries regarding above, please contact Tracy Doran, Income Maximisation Officer Direct Dial 01786 431921.

Money News

As per the announcements of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in relation to cost of living increases you may receive the following additional payments

Cost of Living Payment

If you are in receipt of any of the following benefits for any day between 26th April and 25th May 22 you may get a payment of £650:-

- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Pension Credit
- Universal Credit

The £650 will be paid in 2 lump sums of £326. One payment made sometime from 14th July to 31st July 22 and the second payment of £324 in Autumn 22. The exact date to be announced.

For those in receipt of **tax credits** (child tax credits and/or working tax credit of £26 or more) for any day between 26th April and

25th May 22 you will receive a payment of £650 split into 2 payments 1st payment in Autumn 22 and 2nd payment in Winter 22 exact dates to be announced.

If you have a joint claim with a partner, you will receive one payment for both of you.

Disability Cost of Living Payment

If you are in receipt of any of the following benefits on 25th May 22 you may get a payment of £150:

- Attendance Allowance
- Constant Attendance Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance for adults
- Disability Living Allowance for children
- Personal Independence Payment
- Adult Disability Payment (in Scotland)
- Child Disability Payment (in Scotland)
- Armed Forces Independence Payment
- War Pension Mobility Supplement

You will receive the payment by the end of September 2022. This payment will be in addition to any cost of living payment you are entitled to.

Winter Fuel Payment

For pensioners entitled to a Winter Fuel Payment for winter 2022 to 2023, you will receive an extra £300 for your household paid with your normal payment from November 2022. This payment will be in addition to any cost of living payment you are entitled to.

Energy Bills Support Scheme

A £400 energy bills payment which will be paid directly to your energy supplier in installments over 6 months commencing in October 22. For direct debit and credit customers the monies will be credited to your account and for those with pre-payment meters the monies will be applied to your meter or paid via a voucher. The £400 will be paid as a grant and not recovered and replaces the £200 energy support previously announced on 3 February 2022. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/millions-to-receive-350-boost-to-help-with-rising-energy-costs>)

School Age Grant

If you are in receipt of any of the following benefits and your child is born between 1.3.17 and 28.2.18 you may be entitled to school age grant:-

- Child Tax Credit
- Universal Credit
- Income Support
- Pension Credit

- Working Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance (JSA),
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)

The School Age Grant which is a payment from the

Scottish Government for the sum of £267.65

To make a claim you can either phone 0800 182 2222 (Best Start Grant) or you can apply online at <https://www.mygov.scot/best-start-grant-best-start-foods/> (at very bottom of page). Claims can be made from 1st June 2022 to 29th February 2023.

Needing Some Help With Your Energy Bills?

As we all know energy costs are increasing rapidly. If you or anyone in your home has any underlying health conditions, you should also contact your energy supplier to let them know. They will add you to the Priority Service Register, which will give you extra support should you need it.

Prepayment Meters

Smart meter top up you can do this online using the usual process. If you are struggling financially contact your energy supplier as they may be able to top up your meter if it is an emergency situation.

Electricity key or gas card top up you can pay your supplier directly by phone and they will then send a special code to a pay-point near to you. This code can then be picked up by family or friends. If you don't have anyone who can do this for you, your supplier may be able to send a key or card to your home that will allow you to top up.

General tips It's a good idea to keep topping your meter up with extra money whenever you can to build up plenty of credit in case of any emergencies and prior to the winter period.

Energy Advice For Billed Customers

If you are having difficulty paying bills or keeping up with Direct Debit payments, you should call your energy supplier as soon as possible to see what assistance may be available.

Energy suppliers are keen to identify households that have vulnerable people so they can add the household to the Priority Service Register and offer support. This is particularly important if you are at risk of being cut off from your energy supply.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your energy supply, do not ignore this and get in touch with your supplier as soon as possible. The earlier you get in touch the easier it is for the supplier to offer support, and it may prevent any emergency measures being carried out.

For energy saving tips from Energy Action Scotland <https://www.eas.org.uk/> and Home Energy Scotland <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/scotland/home-energy-scotland>

If you require assistance in this area, please contact Tracy Doran our Income Maximisation Officer on Direct Dial: 01786 431921.

My Forth

Thank you to all our tenants that have used this service. For those that would like to know more about this service, please call the office or contact Kelly Cadden who will talk you through the easy process of setting this up or can set this up for you. It's free, available to use 24 hours a day and has easy online tools to pay your rent, report repairs, read regular updates, access forms etc.

We also have our digital champions, Elaine Shepherd and Ann Gordon, who will also be happy to help and assist.

Elaine Shepherd, Direct Dial: 01786 431927, elaine@forthha.org.uk, Ann Gordon, Direct Dial 01786 431025, anngordon@forthha.org.uk – Elaine or Ann for Digital assistance.

Kelly Cadden, Direct Dial: 01786 431928, kelly@forthha.org.uk – for My Forth assistance.

Paying Your Rent

Although energy costs are increasing, rent still needs to be paid. We try to make it as easy and convenient for you to make payments towards your rent. For example you can pay at a Post Office, a Paypoint outlet or via My Forth. Some of our tenants find it beneficial to have the Allpay App downloaded to their mobile device. If you want advice on how to the download the App please contact the office. If you are

experiencing any financial difficulties, please contact our Income Maximisation Officer who is here to help you. E Mail: tracy@forthha.org.uk or Direct Dial: 01786 431921. If you call from your mobile and have limited credit on your phone, we can call you straight back.



YOU SAID – WE DID!

Keep the Comments Coming!

You said: Unhappy with contractor attending when no adult in property

We Did: Contractor to check age of householder if unsure of age as unable to access property if no adult in property.



Medical Adaptations – We Can Help You To Continue to Live Comfortably At Home

This year we are pleased to announce that we received funding of £72,000 from the Scottish Government to provide assistance for any medical adaptations that our tenants require to ensure that they can continue to live comfortably at home.

If you feel that your home requires any medical adaptation to assist you with your living standard, please contact your Housing Services Officer on 01786 446066 and a

home visit from a staff member will evaluate what assistance that can be offered. Further information on what qualifies as a medical adaptation is available on the website or within the Tenant's Handbook.

Generally medical adaptations are:

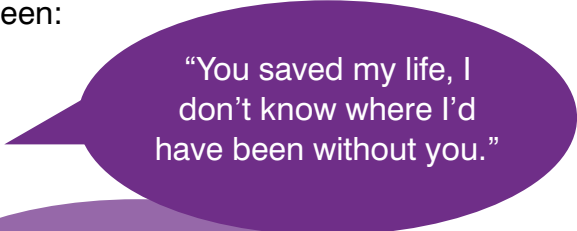
- Level access and wet room floor showers
- Grab rails, handrails and stair bannisters
- Standard door entry intercom

Annual SPSO Complaints Report – Hot Off The Press!

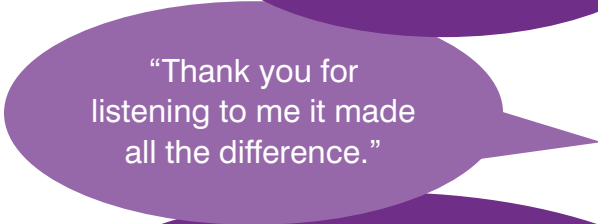
This report provides our tenants with a summary of our overall complaints handling performance, what we have learnt from our complaints and what we have planned for the future in terms of our complaints handling. We have also included a section on compliments as we feel it is important to let you know when we also get things right.

We value each complaint we receive as this is our chance to hear from you when we don't get things right. We use this information to put things right and if necessary, make changes to our services to prevent the same issues happening again. We continue to make complaints a main priority for our business to ensure our customers are receiving a high quality service from us. We are pleased to report that the service we provided to our customers during the last year in terms of complaint handling remained consistently high. Although a difficult year for customers and staff, our SPSO complaints were lower than the previous year. The prolonged periods of restrictions and delays to works as a result of Covid-19 did not result in an increase in our level of complaints.

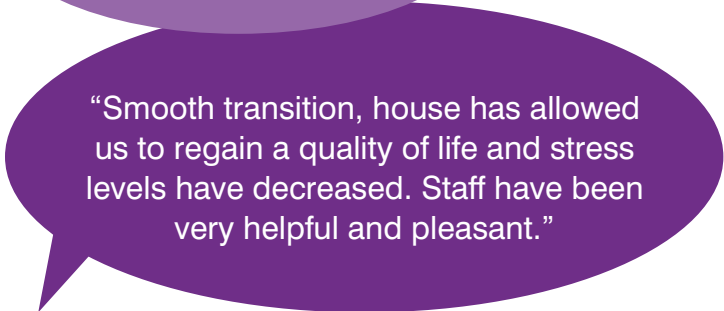
Some of our compliments over the last month have been:



“You saved my life, I don't know where I'd have been without you.”



“Thank you for listening to me it made all the difference.”



“Smooth transition, house has allowed us to regain a quality of life and stress levels have decreased. Staff have been very helpful and pleasant.”

To read this report, please log on to our website: www.forthha.org.uk or My Forth. Alternatively, please contact the office for a hard copy. If you have any comments please contact Angela Laley, Project & Communications Co-ordinator, Tel 01786 446066 or e mail angela@forthha.org.uk.

Estate Visits by Your Housing Services Officer

Your Housing Services Officer will be carrying out estate visits during the month of July and September.



Elaine Shepherd will carry out estates visit during the week commencing - 18th July 2022 and 19th September 2022 to the following areas:

Cambusbarron, Dunblane, Raploch, Riverside, Stirling Town – Baker Street/Morris Terrace, Cowane Street, Crosbies Court, Myles House, Tannery Lane/Queen Street.



Kelly Cadden will carry out estates visit during the week commencing - 11th July 2022 and 12th September 2022 to the following areas:

Bannockburn, Braehead, Cornton, Cowie, Fallin, Pleau, Stirling Town - Barn Road, St. Ninians, Whins of Milton.

If you have any issues or concerns about your estate, please contact your Housing Services Officer.

If you have any items to dispose of, please contact Stirling Council on **01786 40 40 40** to arrange an uplift. Uplift of fridge/freezers is a free uplift, however there is a charge for other items. Please contact the Council for further information www.stirling.gov.uk



Useful Contact Details...

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