

# OVHA

# NEWSLETTER

June/July 2023

## CEO Update

**Andrew Saunders is to retire from Ore Valley Housing Association at the end of June this year, after more than 23 years of service to the organisation.**

During the period of his tenure, the organisation has more than doubled the number of social housing homes it owns and manages and has also developed a group structure of companies delivering both commercial property and renewable energy businesses which operate for the benefit of our local communities.

In making the announcement John Flynn, chair of Ore Valley Housing Association, acknowledged the progress that has been made during Andrew's leadership and as a result of his direct contribution. He said: "Andrew will leave with our gratitude and thanks for the years of commitment to making a positive difference to Ore Valley HA and its tenants."

Andrew also leaves with the thanks of the management team and staff at Ore Valley HA for the strong, positive and supportive leadership that he has provided consistently throughout his tenure as CEO; and everyone would like to wish him all the best for his future retirement.

*'There have been many happy and successful times during the years as well as some serious and severe challenges. I have enjoyed my time at Ore Valley and have met and worked with some truly wonderful people. I have been supported over the years by a wide range of insightful and supportive Board members, colleagues and tenants, whom I will miss seeing on a daily basis. In retiring I wish Ore Valley's tenants and everyone else associated with the organisation all the very best.'*  
**Andrew**

## Welcome to our new CEO

Following a robust period of recruitment that was conducted by our Board with support from Employers in Voluntary Housing, John Flynn, Chair of Ore Valley Housing Association is delighted to announce on behalf of the Board and Management Team that Nick Clark has been appointed as our new CEO with effect from 1st July 2023.

Nick Clark is well known to everyone at Ore Valley HA having most recently been in post as our Enterprise and Sustainability Manager.

Nick first joined Ore Valley in January 2009 and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience, specifically in relation to delivery of our sustainability and wider role projects, and he is very much looking forward to working closely with our Board and all other interested parties, including our tenants; to ensure that Ore Valley HA continues to deliver good quality, sustainable and affordable housing for our tenants and our future communities.



# Updates

## Homemaster

Ore Valley Housing Association has been working since January to integrate a new housing management system. The new system, called 'HomeMaster', is our central control software for tenant engagement, rents, finance, repairs and asset management.

In addition, the software will be the new back end of our tenant portal replacing our previous 'My Home' system. The portal will allow registered tenants to view their rent balance, report repairs and see useful information relating to their tenancy.

The new system went live internally on the 1st of June 2023 and we will shortly be contacting all tenants who had previously registered for the MyHome system on how they can login and use the new tenant portal. We will also be sending details to all other tenants on how they can sign up to use it as well.

The new system integrates data from a number of sources into one location reducing our IT and data management burden making our internal systems more efficient.

## Bowhill Miners Institute

Work is progressing well on site at the Bowhill Miners Institute in Cardenden. Campion Homes are making excellent progress with the delivery of ten flats that will be allocated to applicants on the Fife Housing Register who are identified as being in priority housing need.

The Bowhill Miners Institute is an iconic building and we are delighted to be able to work with Campion Homes to deliver the major renovation of a building which represents the history and heritage of Bowhill and the Cardenden area.





# Tenancy Support Update

The cost of living crisis has seen a significant increase in demand for our tenancy support service. During the autumn and winter months Ore Valley Housing Association applied for and distributed additional grant funding amounting to £17,750 to tenants who we identified as being financially vulnerable due to increased food and energy costs.

- £12,750 - Social Housing Fuel Support Fund - Scottish Government funding distributed by SFHA and used to purchase weighted blankets, draught excluders, radiator panels and energy saving light bulbs. A total of 70 tenants received an energy efficiency pack. £5,000 was also used to make £100 payments directly to tenant's energy suppliers in May 2023. A total of 50 tenants received one of these payments.
- £5,000 - Winter Hardship Fund - Scottish Government funding distributed by SFHA and used to purchase 100 x £50 Co-op vouchers to help tenants identified as being financially vulnerable, buying food and other household items.
- £22,950 - Tenancy Support Fund - This budget is funded by Ore Valley HA with additional funding from the Community Wind Fund amounting to £7,200 to support the Cardenden Community Fridge Project with the purchase of food, including fresh fruit and vegetables - this service is open to everyone with regular drop-ins at the Bowhill Centre, Cardenden between 1-3pm every Monday and 2-4pm every Friday. The majority of the remainder of this budget was used to assist 29 tenants with Cost of Living Crisis Payments to help with essential item such as food, energy costs, travel expenses and nappies, while 29 tenants who were homeless or needed support to sustain their tenancy received assistance with the purchase of white goods and flooring.

## Fuel Bank Vouchers

- We are working in partnership with the Fuel Bank Foundation to help tenants who are on a prepayment meter with their energy suppliers. The Fuel Bank provides tenants with a voucher of £30 during the summer months and a £49 voucher during the winter months. We made 82 applications to the Fuel Bank and a total of £3,636 was awarded.

## Did you know...?

Unfortunately, we had a recent incident in Lochgelly when a cooker was not switched off properly before our tenant left their home. Neighbours were alerted by the smoke alarms sounding.

The Fire Service attended and forced entry to the property to find the kitchen area filled with smoke. Fortunately, no one was injured but our tenant now has a large bill for replacing the front door and no insurance to cover the cost.

Visit [www.thisletenants-scotland.co.uk/](http://www.thisletenants-scotland.co.uk/) to find out more about affordable home contents insurance.

## Smoke Alarm Safety

- You're around eight times more likely to die in a fire if you do not have a working smoke alarm in your home
- Make testing your smoke alarms part of your regular household routine
- If your smoke alarm starts to beep or chirp on a regular basis, please call us on 01592 721 917 as we may need to replace the smoke alarm for you.

## Cook Safe

- Around half of home fires are caused by cooking accidents.
- Take extra care if you need to leave the kitchen whilst cooking, take pans off the heat and turn down to avoid risk.
- Double check your oven and hobs are off when you've finished cooking.
- Keep the oven, hob and grill clean and in good working order. A build up of fat and grease can ignite a fire.
- Use a thermostat controlled air fryer or deep fat fryer. They can't overheat.

# Cafe Inc

**Bowhill Centre,  
Cowdenbeath area, 145  
Station Road, Cardenden,  
Lochgelly**

**Offering**

Hot meals and cold packed lunches

**Opening Times**

11:45am - 1pm

**Week 1**

Monday 3 July to Friday 7 July

**Week 2**

Monday 10 July to Friday 14 July

**Week 3**

Tuesday 18 July to Friday 21 July

**Week 4**

Monday 24 July to Friday 28 July

**Week 5**

Monday 31 July to Friday 4 August

**Week 6**

Monday 7 August to Friday 11 August

**Lochgelly town hall,  
Cowdenbeath area, Bank  
Street, Lochgelly**

**Offering**

Hot meals and cold packed lunches

**Opening Times**

11:45am - 1pm

**Week 1**

Monday 3 July to Friday 7 July

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**Week 3**

Tuesday 18 July to Friday 21 July

**Week 4**

Monday 24 July to Friday 28 July

**Week 5**

Monday 31 July to Friday 4 August

**Week 6**

Monday 7 August to Friday 11 August

**Benarty Primary School,  
Cowdenbeath area, 67-69  
Lochleven Road, Ballingry,  
Lochore, Lochgelly**

**Offering**

Hot meals and cold packed lunches

**Opening Times**

11:45am - 1pm

**Week 1**

Monday 3 July to Friday 7 July

**Week 2**

Monday 10 July to Friday 14 July

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Tuesday 18 July to Friday 21 July

**Week 4**

Monday 24 July to Friday 28 July

**Week 5**

Monday 31 July to Friday 4 August

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Monday 7 August to Friday 11 August

**FANCY SOME CHAT, FUN  
AND A BITE TO EAT OVER  
THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS?**

**THEN COME ALONG TO**



**NO NEED  
TO BOOK  
LUNCH!**

All are welcome but we recommend children under 10 are accompanied by an adult.

# Board recruitment

## Become a member and make a difference.

Have you ever thought about becoming a member of Ore Valley Housing Association? Our members are important as they help us shape our future. If you are interested in the work of Ore Valley HA and want to help influence change, why don't you join us?

Being a member means you can attend our Annual General Meeting (AGM) to ask questions on specific topics that interest you. It is also an excellent first step to become a full board member where you will be able to influence our future direction.

Anyone can become a member of Ore Valley HA as long as you are aged 18 and over. If you are a tenant and 16 or over you can also become a member. All you need to do is purchase a £1 share in Ore Valley HA and meet the essential criteria of our Membership Policy and align with our Model Rules, copies of which are available on our website or on request from our office.

We are currently looking for more tenants to bring their skills, knowledge and expertise so that the people who live in our communities can directly influence what we do.

Similarly, if you are a tenant of Ore Valley HA and you are not interested in becoming a member but you would still like to influence, review and improve our services, whether that be our frontline customer services, estate management, planned maintenance or repairs, please contact our Tenant and Community Engagement Officer, Vicky Murdoch on 01592 721917 or email [housing@orevalleyha.org.uk](mailto:housing@orevalleyha.org.uk)



# A guide to tackling Condensation & Mould



## 1. Reduce Moisture

Condensation is caused by excess moisture in the air hitting colder surfaces, in order to reduce the likelihood of it appearing, try to reduce moisture levels at home. When you cook, put a lid on pans and keep the kitchen well ventilated by using an extractor fan or keeping the window open. If windows are difficult to open please let us know.

Similarly, when you take a bath or shower, keep the room well ventilated to allow steaming air to escape through a window or vent. When filling the bath always put the cold water in first as this will reduce the amount of steam generated by up to 90%.

To stop condensation forming, bathroom and kitchen windows should be opened, and extractor fans turned on. Try to keep the bathroom and kitchen door shut as much as possible when these rooms are in use, so that moisture does not escape into other parts of your home.

**Wet surfaces attract moisture, so wipe them down to get rid of the excess water. Dry off windows, shower screens and kitchen splashbacks to remove moisture when it forms.**



## 2. Dry clothes outside

During the winter, it is tempting to dry wet clothes indoors on radiators but doing so creates higher moisture levels in the air, contributing to condensation. If you are drying clothes indoors please be sure to ventilate as much as possible.

Try to hang your washing outdoors as much as possible during winter. If you use a tumble dryer to dry clothes, make sure that this is vented to the outside to allow moisture to escape.



## 3. Allow Air to circulate

Allow air to circulate in parts of the home where it may otherwise remain stagnant. Regularly open cupboards, drawers, and wardrobes, for instance, to give them an airing and do not overfill them. Create a gap between furniture and walls to stop air from getting trapped and causing condensation to form.



## 4. Effective Insulation

OVHA will ensure that your home is properly insulated and that it has an effective damp-proof course. Seal up or report any cracks or gaps in structures, and report any damage to gutters or roofing, sooner rather than later. If you think that your home does not have sufficient insulation please let us know so that we can check.

## 5. Adequate Heating

Adequately heating your home can help to reduce condensation and damp, so keep temperature levels consistent, especially in those rooms that you may not use often. A heating thermostat can be useful for this. Avoid using calor gas or other fuel burning heaters in your home as these may create additional moisture.



## 6. Home Ventilation

Keep window vents open to allow air to circulate and moisture to escape. Also use extractor fans provided in kitchens and bathrooms, we may consider other home ventilation systems, if damp or condensation is a particular problem. Our homes are becoming increasingly airtight and less draughty and the need to ventilate is becoming more important in order to reduce condensation and mould and improve our health.

# Estate Management

## Garden Scheme

We have now reached capacity with our Garden Assistance Scheme for this year, however we are conscious that some of you find this a daunting and challenging prospect. This could be for a variety of reasons such as lack of mobility, a disability, no one else at home who can maintain the garden for you or you don't have the correct equipment to cut the grass etc.

If this is you then please get in contact with us to discuss options that may help with the situation going forwards our contact details are - 01592 721 917

## Estate Management Inspections

With the arrival of sunnier times, the housing team will continue with Estate Management visits which includes garden inspections, please ensure your garden is kept neat and tidy with no dumped items/rubbish within. If you have a build up of waste including household items that need to be taken to the recycling centre but you don't have transport, Fife Council are now offering a free bulky uplift service. This can be accessed through their website: [Bulky Uplift Service | Fife Council](https://www.fife.gov.uk/kb/docs/articles/bins-and-recycling/bulky-uplift-service)  
<https://www.fife.gov.uk/kb/docs/articles/bins-and-recycling/bulky-uplift-service>

## Shared spaces

All communal areas including internal stairwells, should be clear of any rubbish or dumped items at all times, this includes but not limited to prams, buggies, bicycles or other large items. This is not just a health & safety concern but it is also a fire risk. Your Housing Officer will regularly inspect these areas to ensure they are kept clear at all times.



## Pest control

Ore Valley will take care of pest problems in communal areas such as bin stores or stairwells, if you have any pest issues in these areas you can report it to us by calling the office on 01592 721917.

With the exception of rats, Ore Valley will not deal with pest issues inside your home. For pests other than rats within the home it is the tenant's responsibility to deal with the issue. If pests are getting into your home, we can arrange to seal gaps or holes.

You can contact Fife Council's Pest Control department on 03451 55 00 22 for free telephone advice on dealing with pests, many of which can be easily dealt with using products available from supermarkets or DIY stores. If you arrange for Fife Council to deal with the pest problem then there is a charge depending on the specific issue. Current charges are £84 for mice, ants or wasps (plus £18 + VAT for any additional wasp nests) and a charge of £84 for all other pest treatments. Please note that if you do arrange for the Council to deal with your infestation you will be liable for this full cost.

However, they do say that prevention is better than cure, so follow the simple precautions below to help to keep your home pest free.

- Make sure your home, especially the kitchen, is always clean, by wiping down surfaces and sweeping or vacuuming floors regularly to remove any trace of food
- Store food in sealed containers
- Don't leave uncovered food out in warm weather as it attracts flies, ants and wasps
- Clear up any water spillages or leaks, as these can encourage pests
- Keep the kitchen bin closed and empty it regularly
- Put rubbish out in properly sealed bags or bins
- If you have a garden, don't dump old furniture, mattresses or other rubbish there, as this provides a good home for mice and rats
- If you feed garden birds, don't put food out in the evening and always use a bird table rather than just putting bird food on the ground as this can attract rats
- If you have a compost heap, don't put cooked food on it as, again, this can attract rats
- Phone us on 01592 721917 to report any gaps or holes to the external fabric of your property as these could allow pests to enter or nest in your home.

# News & Events

## Big Summer Sit Down

Following the success of our Coffee Morning last November, you are invited to attend our Big Summer Sit Down event planned for Wednesday 23rd August 2023 from 10.30am - 12.30pm at Auchterderran Church Hall in Cardenden.

Please join us for a catch up and a blether over tea, coffee and cakes; and we are also planning some fun summer activities for everyone to enjoy.

There will also be a raffle with free transport provided if required so we hope to see as many of you there as possible.

Please contact Vicky Murdoch on 07387 416586 or email [vmurdoch@orevalleyha.org.uk](mailto:vmurdoch@orevalleyha.org.uk) on or before the 7th August 2023 to confirm your attendance and advice on dietary or transport requirements.

## Annual General Meeting

Our Annual General Meeting will be held at 6pm on Tuesday 19th September 2023 at Ore Valley Business Centre, 93 Main Street Lochgelly. KY5 9AF. All members are welcome and transport will be available on request.

If you have any questions about our AGM or if you think you would like to become a member of the Association so that you can attend on the above date, please contact Vicky Murdoch on 01592 721917 or drop into our Cardenden Office for a chat.



# Useful Information

## Office Closure

Our offices will be closed for public holidays on Friday 14th and Monday 17th of July

If you need to report an emergency repair during this period, phone our office number on 01592 721 917 at any time, day or night, and follow the instructions provided.

## Ore Valley Online

Facebook /orevalleyha

Twitter

@orevalleygroup

[www.orevalleyha.org.uk](http://www.orevalleyha.org.uk)

## Important Contacts

**Fife Council**  
**Switchboard**- 03451 55 0000  
**Environmental Health** (Rubbish collection, dog fouling etc)- 03451 55 0022  
**Antisocial Behaviour**- 03451 55 0033  
**Fife Council Welfare Fund Team**- 0300 555 0265 or email: [welfare.fund@ffe.gov.uk](mailto:welfare.fund@ffe.gov.uk)

**Advice and Help**  
**National Grid**- 0800 111 999  
**Scottish Water** - 08000 778 778  
**NHS 24**- 111  
**Homeless Emergency Number (Free)**- 0800 028 6231  
**Citizens advice & Rights Fife**- 0345 1400 095

## Contact Details

114-116 Station Road  
Cardenden, Fife  
KY5 0BW  
Tel: 01592 721 917  
Mon-Fri  
09:00 to 17:00