

ORE VALLEY

HOUSING ASSOCIATION

AUTUMN 2019
ISSUE 74



Win a £50 Co-op Gift Card!

Have you registered for My Home yet? All tenants registered by October 31st will be entered in to a prize draw.

Read more :
Page 5



Join Our Club!

Find out more about our Car Club along with details of our free membership offer for Ore Valley tenants.

Read more :
Page 8



Summer Roadshow.

Read the feedback from our Summer Roadshows which will help to inform us on areas where we can improve our service.

Read more
Page 16



Latest News

Welcome Amanda!

A warm welcome to Amanda Wilson as she joins the Ore Valley team. Amanda joined us in September as a Customer Service Advisor. We wish her well in her new role.



Scottish Housing Day

September 18th was Scottish Housing Day and we took the opportunity to look back at the history of the old Bowhill Miners' Institute, which we acquired late last year with the aim of developing it for residential use.



Over the years the building has been used for a variety of purposes including a soup kitchen, Sunday school and hosting a make do & mend club during World War 2. However, judging from the comments on our social media pages it seems everyone's favourite memories are those of 'the youthy'!

If you have any memories or photos of the old Bowhill Miners' Institute we'd love you to share them with us, you can contact us via our website, email us at ovha@orevalleyha.org.uk or call us on 01592 721 917.

Ore Valley & Kingdom Housing Partnership

At the Association's Annual General Meeting on September 17th it was announced to the members present that Ore Valley and Kingdom Housing Associations had embarked on an exploration of the potential to establish closer working relationships.



The discussions are still at a very early stage and your views are important to us. Read the full announcement on page 4.

New Website & My Home



Our new look website and tenant portal (My Home) launched in August and feedback from tenants so far has been very positive. Have you signed up to My Home yet? Find out how to register and be in with a chance of winning a £50 Co-op Gift Card on page 5.

Upcoming Events

Challenge Poverty Week - 7th-13th October 2019
Get Online Week - 14th-20th October 2019

Stay Updated!

Remember you can stay up to date with all the latest Ore Valley news on our website www.orevalleyha.org.uk and social media, so why not like us on Facebook or follow us on Twitter?

 facebook.com/orevalleyha
 twitter.com/OreValleyGroup

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Ore Valley & Kingdom HA's Announce Partnership Discussion

At the Association's Annual General Meeting held on 17th September the following announcement was made to those members present declaring that Ore Valley and Kingdom Housing Associations had embarked on an exploration of the potential to establish closer working relationships.

The announcement is replicated below:

'At Ore Valley we continually look at ways to improve our services to customers and our communities and for many years we have worked collaboratively with other partners.

I am pleased to advise members that Ore Valley and Kingdom Housing Associations have entered into early discussions to establish if a closer working arrangement could deliver mutual benefits for both organisations and our tenants.

It's still early days, however we have appointed advisors to assist us in considering the options, which may range from closer working, such as sharing services, through to a more formal constitutional partnership.

In order to support tenants in their consideration of the options we have commissioned the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) who will help us to organise a series of events, newsletters and surveys in order to help establish the general views of our tenants.'

In the coming weeks and months, along with TPAS, we will be holding a number of events with tenants to consider and discuss tenants views on areas where services could be improved. We hope that as many of our tenants as possible will get involved.

Potentially this is one of the most important opportunities we will have considered since the formation of the Association and the first stock transfer of homes from Scottish Homes which took place in 1995 and we want to make sure that we hear as many opinions from you, our tenants as we possibly can.

As mentioned in this announcement, discussions regarding the possible closer working arrangements are still in the early stages. Your opinions are very important to us and we will be organising tenant events to hear your feedback, along with regular updates on our website, social media and newsletters.

As always, if you have any queries regarding this or anything else to do with your Ore Valley tenancy, you can contact us on **01592 721 917** or email **ovha@orevalleyha.org.uk**





Discover
'My Home'
Putting you in control of your tenancy

All tenants registered before 31/10/19 will be entered in to the prize draw to win 1 of 3 £50 Co-op Gift Cards!

Register today at:

www.orevalleyha.org.uk

- check your rent account
- manage payments
- report repairs
- access tenancy letters
- view & update your details
- send us feedback
- and more!



Have you registered for My Home yet?

My Home is fully integrated into our new website and is designed to make life easier for Ore Valley tenants by being an online, one-stop place to organise and access all tenancy related services. Using your My Home account you can check your rent account, manage payments, report repairs, access tenancy letters, view & update your details, send us feedback and more!

Along with all the benefits of My Home, all tenants who register their account before 31st October 2019 will be entered in to a prize draw to **win one of three £50 Co-op Gift Cards!**

Registration is easy, just visit www.orevalleyha.org.uk and click the 'My Home' button then fill in your details. You'll then receive a welcome email with a link to confirm your account and set your password.

Don't have internet access? Don't let that stop you, why not visit our Cardenden office and use our community computers?

Not sure about the process on how to register? No problem, we can talk you through this, or better still let us do it for you by giving us a call on 01592 721 917.

So far we have had a good response with over 50 tenants signing up to My Home in the first month and feedback has been very positive. With the chance to win a £50 Co-op Gift Card and the benefit of easy 24/7 access to your tenancy related services there's no better time to sign up!

Register now at www.orevalleyha.org.uk

What do I need to sign up to My Home?

- Your tenant number *
- Your surname
- Your year of birth
- Your postcode
- Your email address

*If you don't know your tenant number you can call us on 01592 721 917

Walk Fife

The Walk Fife project has been created by and is maintained by a team of volunteers who have spent many years walking around the county and enjoy sharing information on their favourite routes with visitors & locals to the region.

The aim of Walk Fife is to allow fellow walkers to share their own tried and tested walking routes with those wishing to explore the county. The routes they share are typically easy-going strolls suitable for all the family however they do also share the tougher longer distance walks. Their routes take in some of the best views and sights Fife has to offer.



Walking is a simple, free way of getting more physically active and is ideal for people of all ages and fitness levels. It is easy to build into your daily routine and doesn't require any special equipment. With Walk Fife's help and their easy to follow routes, you could start noticing the benefits of walking on your physical health and your mental health. It is also a great way to get to know others and is proven to help reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness.

The Walk Fife project is a not-for-profit venture and funding for its upkeep comes directly from the volunteers themselves and donations made by like-minded people. For more information on Walk Fife and to check out some of their recommended routes visit: www.walkfife.com



The Hub

The Hub is our new community space created by Ore Valley on Station Road and is intended to support various development & regeneration projects. Since opening in April of this year, The Hub has already hosted a wide variety of activities including our popular Tea & Toast events on Thursday mornings, a youth drop-in cafe that operates on a Sunday evening, dementia awareness training in May and July, our community growing project which uses the Hub as a base and our art and crafts drop-in amongst many others.



The Hub will soon be the venue for memory book courses, food hygiene training, our horticulture project, the new community fridge project training and we are now seeing a number of organisations within the community coming forward to make use of the space.

The Hub has a meeting room with 16 chairs, a small kitchen with kettle, toaster and microwave and a toilet and is available for anyone to use who has an idea for something that will be of benefit to the wider community. Anyone wishing to make use of The Hub should contact our Community Development Officer **Vicky Murdoch** on **01592 721 917** or email vmurdoch@orevalleyha.org.uk

What You Should Know About Legionella

What is Legionella?

Legionella is the bacterium which causes legionnaires' disease. All man-made hot and cold water systems (air conditioning units, spas, hot systems, central heating systems, water towers and humidifiers) are likely to provide an environment where Legionella can grow so. It thrives in warmer waters (15°C to 46°C) but has been isolated from waters with temperatures ranging from 6°C to 60°.

Legionella grows in the following conditions;

- suitable temperature range;
- water droplets (known as aerosols) are produced and dispersed
- water stored and/or recirculated
- 'food' present for the organism to grow such as rust, sludge, scale, biofilm etc)

In these conditions, the bacteria may multiply and increases the risk of exposure. It will also thrive in both large and small systems so both require risks to be managed effectively.

Is Legionnaires Disease Fatal?

Legionnaires Disease is potentially a fatal lung infection (form of pneumonia) which can affect anybody, but which principally affects those who are susceptible because of age, illness, immunosuppression, smoking etc. and is caused when individuals inhale legionella bacteria.

In Scotland, the incidence rate of legionnaires in 2015 and 2016 (statistics will next be collated for 2017 - 2018) is 7.3 cases per million population and 6.3 cases per million, respectively. These are significantly lower than the 2015 European incidence rate of 13.6 cases per million.

What Does Ore Valley Do To Control The Risk of Legionella

To ensure that the incident rate remains low and continues to drop, regulation and control measures are in place. All landlords must assess and control the risk of exposure of legionella to ensure the safety of tenants.

Controls include;

- Flushing out the water system before letting the property
- Ensure cold water tanks are maintained and have a tight lid to stop debris getting into the system
- Setting heating controls in properties to ensure water is stored at the correct temperature - Hot water should be set so that the water is heated up to 60°C.
- Remove any unused pipework

What Can You Do?

It is important that water is not allowed to stagnate within the water system. Where properties are left empty for extended periods for example when you are on holiday or in hospital, on returning to the property you should run all taps for at least two minutes. You should also check that your hot water system is functioning as expected.

Showers have the means of creating and dispersing water droplets (aerosols) which may be inhaled causing a potential risk of exposure to Legionella. If the shower is used regularly the risks are greatly reduced. To further reduce the risk, you should regularly clean and disinfect your showerhead. If you are able to remove your showerhead it is recommended to immerse it in a bucket or basin.

Tenants should not interfere with the settings on the boiler or hot water system. Let us know if your hot water is not heating properly or there are any other problems with the system so that appropriate action can be taken.

Note: Instantaneous electric showers pose less of a risk as they are generally cold water-fed and heat only small volumes of water during operation.

Go Electric With Ore Valley!

Ore Valley Housing Association is delighted to announce the launch of its electric car club in October in partnership with Enterprise Car Club. The Association secured funding for the project through the Scottish Government's Plugged-in Households Scheme which aims to support the adoption of less polluting forms of transport, reduce the financial burden of car ownership and encourage greener travel. The zero emission car club vehicles are available for use by tenants and the wider local community 24 hours a day.

What is a Car Club?

A car club provides shared access to one or more vehicles as an alternative to private car ownership.

This provides:

- Affordable access to zero-emission vehicles to households across Scotland, including those without allocated off-street parking.
- A viable alternative to owning a vehicle for people who only need one occasionally.
- Access to alternative transport options for people who don't have their own vehicle.
- An opportunity to experience electric vehicles regardless of income or location.

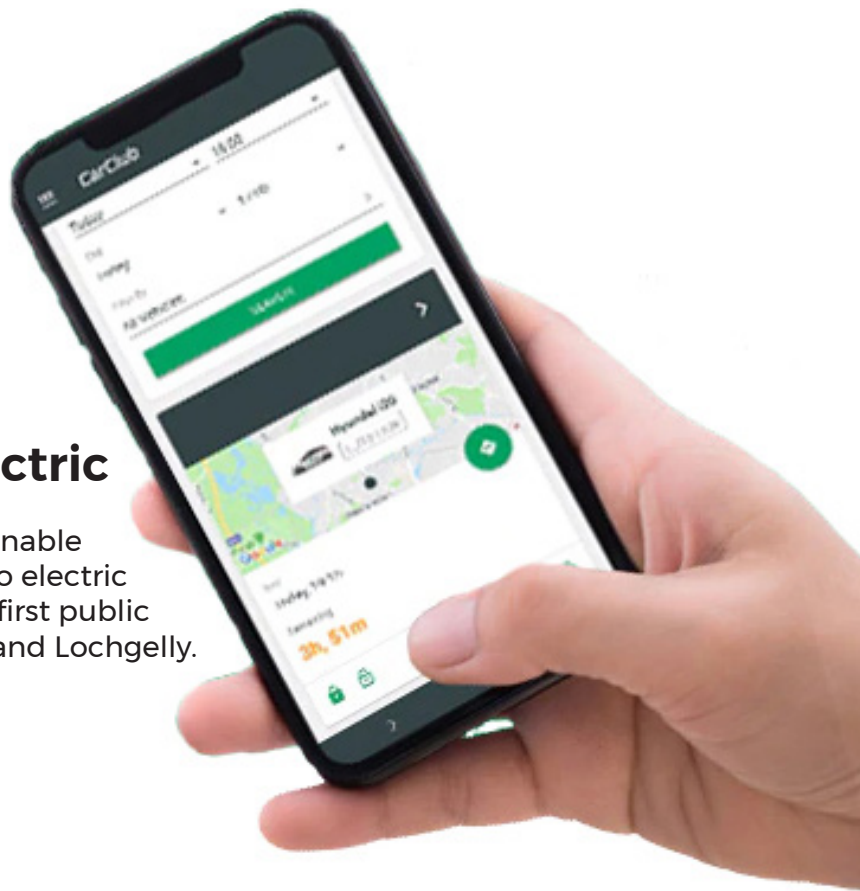
How Does it work?

The first six vehicles will be located in Cardenden, Lochgelly and Dunfermline and we are offering every tenant free membership with the first 50 applicants receiving £50.00 worth of free car usage on their account to give everyone the opportunity to try out the system and the vehicles.



How Do I Sign Up?

You can sign up online at www.enterpriseclub.co.uk/OREVALLEY or via the **Enterprise Car Club app** using the promotional code: **OREVALLEY**



The advantages of going electric

Our new Car Club builds on our previous sustainable transport projects including the addition of two electric vehicles to our fleet and the installation of the first public electric vehicle charging points in Cardenden and Lochgelly.



Zero Emissions

Having a fully electric engine means these vehicles don't produce any exhaust emissions!



Quieter Drive

Electric vehicles are so quiet that you won't even realise the ignition is on! Don't worry though, they automatically emit a sound when travelling at low speeds to alert pedestrians.



Fun and Easy

Electric vehicles are the perfect city car; quick off the mark and easy to manoeuvre.



Cost Effective

With our Car Club you only pay for the time and distance you actually need a vehicle for, meaning you have all the convenience of a vehicle, without the hassle and expense of owning one.

Smoking & Fire Safety

Smoking remains a major cause of poor health in Scotland and is reported to lead to around 33,500 hospital admissions and around 10,000 deaths every year.

It is also a significant contributor to house fires and in 2017/18, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service recorded that of the 10,694 primary fires (fires that take place inside) 825 (7.7%) were caused by smoking, making it the third most likely ignition source.

The benefits from stopping smoking on the health & wellbeing of individuals, families and communities therefore remain just as important today as they were more than ten years ago when the smoking ban came into force.

What advice and support is available to help you to stop?

The good news is that there is a lot of support and information out there that can help you to stop smoking and with the range on offer you should be able to find something that works for you.

Quit Your Way Scotland

If you wish to talk about your options or need someone to talk to you can also get some free and friendly advice from Quit Your Way Scotland. Quit Your Way Scotland is run by NHS 24 and is staffed by trained advisors who'll be able to give you expert advice.

The service can help by:

- talking through all the options available to you
- referring you to free local NHS services
- sending you a free Quit Your Way Scotland quit pack
- helping you plan to stop in a way that suits you
- offering support and advice when you're trying to stop
- being there when other support services are closed

You can contact **Quit Your Way Scotland** for free by:

- phoning a Quit Your Way Scotland advisor on **0800 84 84 84**
- chatting online with an advisor at **www.quityourway.scot**



Local Stop Smoking Services

The Government offers support through NHS Scotland Local Stop Smoking Services also known as smoking cessation groups. These groups are free, friendly and can massively boost your chances of stopping for good. It's typically believed that by attending a group and using a combination of treatment and support you are up to 4 times more likely to stop smoking for good than if you were to go it alone.

These services staffed by expert advisers provide a range of proven methods to help you stop and prevent relapsing. They'll give you accurate information and advice, as well as professional support, during the first few months you stop smoking. They also make it easy and affordable for you to get stop smoking treatments including: Varenicline (Champix), Bupropion (Zyban) and nicotine replacement therapy, such as patches and gum.

Your local stop smoking advisor will help you to decide which type of treatment is right for you and will also explain how to use it. They may even be able to directly supply the treatment before you leave and if they can't they may be able to arrange a prescription or a voucher.

E-Cigarettes

There's evidence that e-cigarettes can help people stop smoking. E-cigarettes aren't currently available as medicines so they can't be supplied by stop smoking services or prescribed on the NHS.

But if you want to use an e-cigarette to help you quit, you can still get advice and support from a stop smoking adviser to give you the best chance of success.

Benefits of Stopping Smoking

You could live longer: Half of all long-term smokers die early from smoking-related diseases, including heart disease, lung cancer and chronic bronchitis.

It lets you breathe more easily: People cough less when they give up smoking because their lung capacity improves by up to 10% within 9 months. The impact of smoking may not be overly noticeable in your 20s and 30s however the capacity of your lungs diminishes with age and you may find things you used to find easy such as walking up stairs becomes difficult.

A smoke-free home protects your loved ones: By stopping smoking, you'll be protecting the health of your non-smoking friends and family, too. Breathing in secondhand smoke increases the risk of lung cancer, heart disease and stroke. In children, it doubles the risk of getting chest illnesses, including pneumonia, ear infections, wheezing and asthma. They also have 3 times the risk of getting lung cancer in later life compared with children who live with non-smokers.

Stopping smoking gives you more energy: Within 2 to 12 weeks of stopping smoking, your blood circulation improves. This makes all physical activity, including walking and running, much easier.

Stopping smoking improves smell and taste: When you stop smoking, your senses of smell and taste get a boost. You may notice that food tastes and smells different as your mouth and nose recover from being dulled by the hundreds of toxic chemicals found in cigarettes.

Stop smoking for younger-looking skin: Stopping smoking has been found to slow facial ageing and delay the appearance of wrinkles. Ex-smokers are also less likely than smokers to get gum disease and prematurely lose their teeth.

Feel less stressed: Scientific studies show that people's stress levels are lower after they stop smoking. If you find that you're prone to stress, replacing smoking with a healthier, better way of dealing with stress can give you some real benefits.

Fire Safety

Cigarette ends can smoulder for a long time if not put out properly so whilst you are choosing to smoke it is important to make sure you disposing of lit cigarettes safely. We always recommend that you should smoke outside and away from any common areas.

We also request that all exits are kept clear of rubbish and belongings, all rubbish is stored correctly within designated areas and that no bulky items of furniture or household waste is left outside against the exterior of the property.

If you require a bulk uplift ensure that it is stored as far away from the building as is possible (preferably near or within the bin area) and ensure that you arrange for this to be collected as soon as possible by Fife Council.

Here's some other tips from the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service to ensure you keep your house safe from fire whilst smoking;

✓ Always

- Stub cigarettes out properly in an ashtray – make sure there's no smoke
- Pour water on cigar and cigarette ends before putting in a bin – ideally an outside bin

✗ Never

- Leave a cigarette, cigar or pipe unattended
- Balance cigars or cigarettes on the edge of an ashtray or anything else – they can tip and fall as they burn away
- Empty a pipe into a bin – the ember can still be very hot even if it's not smoking

Garden Competition

Our annual garden competition format was a little different this year, with the prizes being awarded to the best overall garden in each of 3 areas - Lochore, Lochgelly and Cardenden.

As you can see in the selection of photos from this year's entrants below once again the variety of beautifully maintained gardens made it difficult for our judges to pick the winners, but after some deliberation the winners were agreed upon and they were announced at our Summer Roadshow events.

Well done to everyone who took part in the competition and congratulations to our winners - Mr & Mrs Sims in Lochore, Denise Deacon in Lochgelly and Grant Dickson in Cardenden. Each of our winners took home a £50 Dobbies Gift Voucher and everyone who entered received a £10 Gift Voucher.





ORE VALLEY

WINNER
MR & MRS SIMS
ROSEWELL DRIVE
GARDEN COMPETITION



Mr & Mrs Sims
Winners - Lochore



ORE VALLEY

WINNER
DENISE DEACON
GEATONS ROAD
GARDEN COMPETITION



Denise Deacon
Winner - Lochgelly



ORE VALLEY

WINNER
GRANT DICKSON
MAIN STREET
GARDEN COMPETITION



Grant Dickson
Winner - Cardenden

Energy Price Cap Lowered

Ofgem is lowering the cap on standard and default energy tariffs from £1,254/yr for a typical user to £1,179/yr. For an average household, this means a likely price cut to bills of £75/yr from Tuesday 1 October. However, this cap isn't the maximum you can be charged. The price cap sets a limit on the rates you pay for each unit of gas and electricity, so if you use more, you'll pay more.

Importantly, although the cap can reduce the cost for many of those who are on standard or default tariffs, most could still save more than £300 a year by switching to the cheapest deals on the market. The best way to save on your energy is to switch supplier, even with prices coming down.

Compare & Switch

What info will I need?

It's useful to have to hand the following information:

- Your postcode.
- The name of your current supplier.
- The name of your current tariff.

Use a price comparison website

Use a comparison website or phone different energy suppliers to see if you can save by switching. If you are happy with your current supplier, but find a better offer elsewhere, you can ask to see if they will match it.



Use an Ofgem accredited price comparison website such as uSwitch or Money Supermarket. Ofgem have approved a number of online price comparison sites that are a good place to look when comparing energy tariffs and supplier deals. These websites comply with a code of practice: The **Confidence Code**.



Comparison sites bearing the Confidence Code logo:

- help you find the best deal for you in your local area
- provide a free and easy-to-use switching service
- give detailed information on each tariff, including gas and electricity unit prices
- detail any discounts available

Weigh up your options

You may want to consider a number of factors when comparing suppliers and tariffs – from cheaper prices and customer satisfaction scores, to green energy tariffs or fixed deals with no exit fee.

Confirm your switch

Once you've picked your new supplier and energy tariff, the last step is to confirm your contract and how you plan to pay. Paying by Direct Debit can usually save you more money.

The switching process will then start, and your new supplier will be in touch to confirm your switch-over date.



The switch-over process can take up to 21 days. In most cases, it's around 17 days. If you change your mind, you have 14 days to cancel from the date you agree a contract. You must contact the supplier to cancel any contract.



at home with...

fife housing group

fifehg.org.uk



Give a kid a coat



Donate your pre-loved winter jackets and coats and help to keep a local child warm this winter



Donations welcomed at the following locations:

EAST FIFE

- Kingdom Group**
Saltire Centre, Pentland Court, Glenrothes
- Ore Valley Housing Association**
 - 114-116 Station Road, Cardenden
 - 93 Main Street, Lochgelly
- Fife Council Local Offices**
 - Cupar Customer Service Centre
 - St Andrews Customer Service Point
 - Kirkcaldy Customer Service Centre
 - Methil Customer Service Centre
 - Leven Customer Service Point

WEST FIFE

- Fife Housing Group**
7 Pitreavie Court, Dunfermline
- Rosyth Parish Church**
82a Queensferry Rd, Rosyth
(1.30pm - 4.00pm every Tuesday)
- Fife Council Local Offices**
 - Cowdenbeath Customer Service Centre
 - Benarty Customer Service Centre
 - Kelty Community Centre
 - Inverkeithing Customer Service Centre
 - Dunfermline Customer Service Centre
 - Abbotsview Customer Service Point

We're collecting coats up until **31 October** for kids aged 0-16 years old. Please ensure all items are washed and in good condition before donating.



Roadshow Feedback:

Thanks to everyone who came along to our Summer Roadshow Events in Cardenden, Lochgelly and Lochore. We hope everyone who attended found these events useful and informative.

Your feedback from these events is already helping to inform us on the areas where you think we need to improve. As mentioned at the events, all our tenants also have the opportunity to take part in our Tenant Satisfaction Survey which is being conducted during September and October.

Your feedback from the Summer Roadshow Events together with the results from this survey will let us know your views on what we are doing well, along with the areas where you think we can improve our service, so we would encourage all tenants to take part in this survey.

Tenant Feedback - Lochore

Ore Valley Enterprises Properties - Install showers, inspect internal doors and handles, kitchen units/additional storage, check window locks (fire regulations), check the location of all smoke alarms and heat detectors.

Ore Valley Housing Association Properties - New regulations require OVHA to upgrade hardwired smoke alarms and heat detectors - request from tenant to install hardwired smoke alarms for deaf or hearing impaired tenants. The original heating systems, installed when the properties were built, are now over 10 years old and may need to be replaced after 15 years.

Environmental Improvements - Traffic control measures required at Rosewell Drive, concerns about speeding cars and the illegal use of motorbikes, dog fouling, safe play area for local children. Fences at front gardens.

OVHA Feedback

Our planned priorities for the Rosewell Drive area are to upgrade hardwired smoke alarms and detectors. OVHA to speak to Fife Council about Community Safety concerns and road safety measures and report back to residents.

We also discussed promoting the use of the Community Office at 42 Rosewell Drive so that local people can use this space for projects that will benefit the local community.

Tenant Feedback - Lochgelly

OVHA Properties - Discussed new regulations that require OVHA to upgrade hardwired smoke alarms and heat detectors. Painterwork required at common stairs (Cook Square - Phase 1), consider planning kitchen upgrades without having to replace the whole kitchen. The original heating systems installed at North Street, Francis Street and Berry Street are now over 12 years old and may need to be replaced after 15 years.

Environmental Improvements - Improve external storage/bins storage options at South Street/Erskine Street flats. Review grass cutting/ground maintenance at flats with common stairs.

OVHA Feedback

We noted feedback about the need for more regular estate management inspections to check gardens are being maintained. Better communication required to let local residents know when inspections are being carried out and what action is being taken to make sure that tenants are maintaining their gardens to a reasonable standard. OVHA to review external storage at South Street/Erskine Street flats and update tenants about internal painterwork at our blocks with common stairs.

Tenant Feedback - Cardenden

OVHA Properties - Discussed new regulations that require OVHA to upgrade hardwired smoke alarms and heat detectors. Review of fire safety regulations for 2 bedroom bungalows at Bluebell Gardens (Phase 2). New radiators required for our stock transfer properties in Bowhill that received partial upgrade of heating system (new boiler installed but original radiators still need to be upgraded). The original heating systems installed at Bluebell Gardens (phase 1) are now over 12 years old and may need to be replaced after 15 years. Better maintenance required to clean rhones / problems caused by moss on roofs.

Review grass cutting/ground maintenance at flats with common stairs. Improve the provision of off road parking for vehicles at Main Street, Wallsgreen Gardens, Craigside Road and Woodside Terrace. Concerns about off road parking at Bluebell Gardens and planting/ground maintenance at the pumping station (Green Box).

OVHA Feedback

Our planned priorities for the Bowhill/Cardenden and Dundonald area are to upgrade hardwired smoke alarms and heat detectors, survey older roofs, timber framed windows and fences in Bowhill area. Discussed options for accelerating planned improvement work or providing enhanced environmental improvements by agreeing with tenants to add a supplementary charge to rents. It was agreed that this would be discussed by tenants at our Estate Management Group when they review the results of our Tenant Satisfaction Survey along with rent affordability and value for money considerations.

We will refer all the priorities highlighted by our tenants at the Roadshow Events to our Board for further discussion so that we can consider these when we are looking at our future planned maintenance budgets. The priorities that have been highlighted will also be referred to our tenants who attend our Estate Management Group so that these can be discussed when they are reviewing the results of our Tenancy Satisfaction Survey.

If you are interested in joining our **Estate Management Group**, please contact **Colin McInnes** (Housing Manager) on **01592 721 917** or email **housing@orevalleyha.org.uk**.

You've been framed!

Some of our tenants got in to the Summer spirit and had their photo taken in our Summer Roadshow selfie frame. Visit our website to see more.



WINTER is GOING



How to stay safe during winter

Take care when driving

- Tell someone where you're going and when you expect to arrive.
- Always charge your mobile phone fully before you set off on a journey
- If you have to drive in bad weather, make sure you allow extra time for your journey.
- Make sure you have warm clothes, boots, food, water, a torch and a spade in the car.

Be careful of slippery or wet surfaces

- Wear boots, shoes and slippers with non-slip soles.
- Keep a mixture of salt and sand handy to put on steps or paths in icy weather.
- Consider fitting a grab rail if you have steps at your front or back door.

Home safety

- Regularly check your smoke alarm is working and report it to us if it isn't.
- Don't block up air vents. Fires and heaters need ventilation.
- Test your carbon monoxide alarms regularly.
- Keep a torch handy in case you lose power and keep your radio, mobile phone, laptop or tablet fully charged, so you can use the battery power if there's no electricity.
- Keep a list of emergency numbers, such as your utility companies, by your phone. If there is a power cut, call the 105 electricity helpline. This helpline can give you more information about when your electricity is likely to come back on.

Organise your medications

- It's important that you don't run out of your medications. Make sure you order prescriptions ahead of time, just in case there is bad weather or you're too unwell to go to the pharmacy. Also ask your pharmacy if they can deliver to you, if they don't usually do this.
- It's also a good idea to keep simple cold, flu and sore throat remedies at home, just in case you become unwell.

Have a yearly flu jab

The flu is not only unpleasant, it can also develop into something more serious, such as pneumonia. If you're over 65, or if you have certain health conditions the Government recommends that you get the flu jab every year. Flu viruses are constantly changing so vaccines are updated each year.

You can get a free flu jab from your GP and some pharmacies if:

- you're 65 or over
- you receive Carer's Allowance, or you are the carer of a person whose welfare will be affected if you become unwell
- you have a long-term health condition - such as diabetes, a heart condition, asthma or lung disease, a kidney or liver problem, Parkinson's, or if you have had a stroke
- you are living in a long-stay residential care home

Eat well

- Hot meals and drinks help to keep you warm, so eat at least one hot meal each day and have hot drinks throughout the day. Having a hot drink before bed and keeping one in a flask by your bedside are good ideas too.
- Include a good range of foods in your diet and aim for five portions of fruit and vegetables each day so you're getting plenty of nutrients and vitamins. Remember that frozen vegetables are as good as fresh.
- Keep basic food items in the cupboard or freezer in case it's too cold to go shopping. You could also do your food shopping online and get it delivered to your house.

It's important to eat enough, especially in winter. If you're worried about a poor appetite, or are losing weight, speak to your GP.

Keep your spirits up

It's not unusual to feel down in winter – particularly when the days are short and it can get dark by 3.30pm. It can help to do something you enjoy every day.

- Try to keep to your usual routine and if you can't visit friends or family, phone or Skype them often. Ask them if they could visit you more often.
- If you've been feeling down for several weeks and it's stopping you going out, making you feel listless and lacking in energy, it's very important to share these feelings with someone – perhaps a friend or your GP.

How can I keep myself warm?

Even if it isn't a severe winter, cold weather makes us more susceptible to certain illnesses. Follow these tips to stay healthy and keep warm indoors and out.

Keeping warm inside

- If you're sitting down, a shawl or blanket will provide a lot of warmth. Try to keep your feet up, as the air is cooler at ground level.
- Wear warm clothes in bed. When it's very cold, wear thermal underwear, bed socks and even a hat – a lot of heat is lost through your head.
- Use a hot-water bottle, wheat bag or an electric blanket to warm the bed. Never use a hot-water bottle and an electric blanket together as this can be dangerous.
- Get your electric blanket checked every three years by an expert.
- Check whether your electric blanket can be kept on all night. Some blankets should only be used to warm the bed before you get in. If you have continence difficulties, talk to your doctor before using one.

Keeping warm outside

- Make sure you keep your hands and face warm. As well as wearing gloves and a hat, always wrap a scarf around your face when you go outside, even if it's only for a short time. This helps to warm the air you breathe.
- Several thin layers of clothing will keep you warmer than one thick layer, as the layers trap warm air. Clothes made from wool or fleecy synthetic fibres such as polyester are a better choice than cotton. Start with thermal underwear, warm tights or socks.
- Keep your feet warm. Choose boots with non-slip soles and a warm lining, or wear thermal socks.
- Check local news and weather forecasts for advice when cold weather is predicted.

How can I keep my home warm?

- Close the curtains in the evenings and fit thermal linings if you can. This will keep the heat in.
- Keep your bedroom window closed at night when the weather is cold. The coldest time of the day is just before dawn and breathing in cold air increases the risk of chest infections.
- Keep your main living room heated to 70°F (21°C).
- Heat your bedroom to 64°F (18°C).



The Useful Page

FIFE COUNCIL

Switchboard - 03451 55 00 00

Environmental Health - 03451 55 00 22 (rubbish collection, dog fouling etc.)

Antisocial Behaviour - 03451 55 00 33 or call the police on 101

Fife Council's Welfare Fund Team - 0300 555 0265 or email: welfare.fund@fife.gov.uk

ADVICE AND HELP

National Grid - 0800 111 999 (if you smell gas)

Scottish Water - 08000 778 778 (if you spot a water leak outside or for any issues with your water supply)

NHS - 111 (for out-of-hours services including mental health services)

Homeless Emergency Number (free) on 0800 028 6231

Samaritans - Call 116 123, email: jo@samaritans.org or visit www.samaritans.org

Breathing Space - 0800 838587 Mental health & wellbeing helpline.

Drinkline Scotland - 0800 7 314 314

Substance Misuse - 0800 587 5879 or www.knowthescore.info

Adult Protection Phone Line - 01383 602200

Silverline (24hr helpline for older people) - 0800 4 70 80 90

Citizens Advice & Rights Fife - 0345 1400 095 (provides general advice)

Step Change - 0800 138 1111 (debt advice charity providing impartial advice)

Money Advice Scotland - 0141 572 0237

Fife Trading Standards - 01592 583141

Traveline Scotland - 0871 200 2233 or www.travelinescotland.com

ORE VALLEY ONLINE

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OFFICE CLOSURES

Our office will be closed on October 4th and October 7th 2019.

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

If you would like to see anything included in our newsletters that isn't already you can phone us on 01592 721 917 or email: comms@orevalleyha.org.uk