



FORTH
housing association Ltd.

SpeakingForth

The newsletter of Forth Housing Association Ltd

Summer 2021

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My Forth – New Service Coming to Tenants Soon!

Its nearing the time of the launch date for our new on-line portal which will enable you to access details of your tenancy. You will soon receive an information leaflet with all the details. However, if you have any queries or questions, please do not hesitate to get in contact. When you are calling the office, you will be asked to confirm your mobile number and email address and we will be encouraging you to go paperfree so the transition to My Forth will run smoothly.

For more information please log on to:
<https://www.forthha.org.uk/myhomeforthhousing/>

Forth Housing Association Limited

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Easing of lockdown –

Take it easy

Getting back to ‘normal life’ as lockdown eases certainly hasn’t come without its challenges. From dealing with anxiety about leaving the house to navigating the exhaustion of simply doing things, there’s been a lot to overcome.

However, for many of us, there’s been another rather frustrating obstacle to overcome as restrictions ease: learning how to feel comfortable socialising again and what is acceptable behaviour.

Some time has passed since we were “allowed” to have friends round and socialise in our

homes. Please take this into account if you are inviting people over for a get together.

Don’t give your neighbours reason to complain or make them feel uncomfortable in their homes.

Please be aware your tenancy agreement means you are responsible for the conduct of your household and your visitors. If you have concerns, speak to your neighbour in the first instance and if it can’t be resolved, then raise with your Housing Services Officer.

Stay Safe



Garden Competition Reminder

Following on from our Spring Newsletter this is just a reminder that a guest judge will be deciding the annual garden competition over the Summer. The winners will be announced in our Autumn Newsletter. Good luck and happy gardening!

Public Holidays



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

Office Closes:

Thursday 15th July at 5.15pm.

Office Reopens:

Tuesday 20th 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 The McDougall Group on Tel No: 0333 123 1011.

Feeding wildlife/ Slug Pellets

Although its always nice to feed the wildlife from your own garden/shared garden and communal areas, you do have to bear in mind the impact this has on the garden, your neighbours and others. Large food items, such as bread etc should not be used as this attracts larger birds such as seagulls. Seagulls are becoming a problem for us, and are causing a nuisance in our areas. If you do wish to feed the birds, please use small feeding devices that only small birds can access.

Again be mindful if using any pellets to deter slugs, snails and such things in areas that others have access to. Not only are these harmful to slugs, they are also harmful to small children and animals.





GAS SERVICING

Every 10 to 12 months we must carry out a service of the gas boiler in your property if you have gas central heating. This is not an option but a requirement by law under The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998.

The boiler service is carried out to ensure the safety of our tenants in their home. It is therefore important to read the letters that are sent to your home and take action before it's too late. We cannot extend the date of your service.

We appreciate that people work and have other commitments but you must allow us access to undertake the service. You can phone Saltire (our gas engineers) direct to arrange an appointment time.

As we are required by law to undertake the service, we may gain access to your property to carry out the service if no access is provided.

If we cannot gain entry or there is no credit in the meter, the gas supply will be capped. If we do cap your meter, you will be required to pay £45 in advance to have your supply uncapped and you must ensure that there is a credit on both your gas and electricity meters.

Thankfully the need to cap the gas supply only affects a few tenants. If you have had your meter capped and you are in financial difficulty, please contact Tracy Doran or Stephen Dougherty.

Your safety is of paramount importance to us.

'Test It Tuesday'

Campaign for Fire Safety



Aico, the residential fire and carbon monoxide alarm company, has launched a campaign to encourage tenants to test their alarms weekly.

Called 'Test It Tuesday', a short, attention catching video is at the heart of the campaign.

Neal Hooper, Managing Director of Aico, said: "No matter what brand of alarm you have it's important to test them. 'Test it Tuesday' is an easy to remember phrase and the upbeat, concise video really drives the message home: test your alarms every week to ensure all components of the alarm are working."

All smoke alarms need very little maintenance and the majority now last for 10 years. However it is vital to regularly test them to make sure they work.

For more information log on to:
<https://www.aico.co.uk/aicos-test-it-tuesday-campaign-encourages-alarm-testing/>

Communication Survey – Services During Lockdown

A big thank-you to those that have responded to date, to our survey. At the time of going to print, these are the results:

Were you satisfied with our services?

**Yes-
93%**

Were you satisfied generally with our communication?

**Yes-
91%**

Did you find the information provided in our Newsletters informative?

**Yes-
93%**

Were you satisfied with the information provided on our website?

**Yes-
94%**

At any stage did you find it difficult to contact us?

**No-
90%**

We are pleased that early indications show that tenants were satisfied with our services during lockdown. We will provide an update in our next Newsletter and also on our website:
<https://www.forthha.org.uk/news-stories/>

Forth Continues Its Ambitious Programme Of New Development

Although progress has been held up by Covid-19, Forth's development programme is now in full swing with work on site, handovers imminent and more new homes to come.

Johnston Avenue, Cornton

A start is underway on new homes for rent in Cornton.

Cruden Building East Ltd will be building 24 houses and cottage flats.

Penman Court, Raploch



Our latest development at Drip Road, Raploch has been creating quite a stir. Built with ample space indoors and

out, the 10 attractive semi-detached houses will see new tenants moving in by July 2021, with a further 6 flats to follow.

They should prove well worth the wait for our lucky tenants.

Raploch Road, Raploch

While our 37 houses won't be finished until 2022/2023, the rest of this large site has been a hive of activity with new private housing and council houses to be occupied this year. It is great to see progress after so long in the planning.

Gateside Road, St Ninians



The last of our new homes in the "Cultenhove Phase 3" project are now occupied.

This project suffered the "double whammy" of contractor insolvency followed swiftly by pandemic, causing months of delay. The transformation will be complete once the roadways and pavements are finished.

More new homes are currently under discussion for Cambusbarron, Bannockburn and Raploch, so watch this space.



To Recycle or Not To Recycle?

– That Is The Question

With the introduction of Stirling Council's garden waste permits in April, we have taken action against tenants for allowing their recycling bins to be contaminated and/or overflowing.

We all have a responsibility to recycle and the brown bins we use to fill with grass cuttings and food waste will no longer be picked up if you don't have a permit. The responsibility then becomes yours to make arrangements to take these to your local recycling centre. The permit costs £35 per year and runs from April 2021 to March 2022.

We have some developments that also have

large waste bins for communal use and a single recycling bin sited by Stirling Council. The Council will not uplift these should general waste be placed inside.

We need to arrange for a special uplift if action is not taken by tenants. This comes at a cost and will ultimately impact on rent costs if the frequency of this continues.

Please speak to your Assistant/Housing Services Officer for advice and assistance or complete the application on this link <https://www.stirling.gov.uk/bins-waste-recycling/garden-waste-permits/>.

Legionnaires Disease

is Uncommon But
Can Be Serious

**Reduce
Your Risk!**

Legionella is a lung infection you can catch by inhaling droplets of water. There are some simple steps to protect you in the home:

- 1/ On a weekly basis run water through all the taps.
- 2/ Descale your showerhead every 3 months or earlier if scaling is evident.
- 3/ If you have an electric hot water tank fully heat the water in it and then use the water immediately after, at least 2-3 times per week. Temperatures above 60 degrees will kill legionella bacteria so set the temperature of your boiler/cylinder to a minimum of 60 degrees.
- 4/ When returning from holiday make sure to run your taps and shower prior to use.

If you would like any more advice please contact Paul Fraser, Senior Property Services Officer Direct Dial: 01786 431026 or e mail paul@forthha.org.uk.

You Said – We Did!

Keep the Comments Coming!

We received
27
complaints

10
complaints
were upheld

All complaints
were responded
to in full and
within *SPSO
timescale

You said: Unhappy with some close cleaning issues.

We did: Discussed issues with Contractor to improve close cleaning standards. Housing Services Officers monitoring and will also ensure that contract specification is being met.

You said: Unhappy with standard of new home and expected better standard of cleaning.

We did: Introduction of sparkle clean to properties.

We are committed to providing high quality customer services, valuing complaints and using information from complaints to help us improve our services.

We hope that the quality of our services will be such that people will be delighted with all that we do. If you would like to make a positive comment about our services or a member of staff please e mail info@forthha.org.uk. However, we are realistic enough to accept this won't always be the case.

Full details of our complaints processes can be obtained from our Complaints Policy or our "Your Right To Complain" leaflet. Log on to: <https://www.forthha.org.uk/about-us/complaints/>

Estate Management Visit From Your Housing Services Officer

Our 2 Housing Services Officers cover the following areas:



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

Elaine will be carrying out an estate visit to your area **week commencing: 12th July 2021**

Kelly Cadden – Bannockburn, Braehead, Fallin, Cornton, Cowie, Plean, St. Ninians, Whins of Milton, Stirling Town - Barn Road.

Kelly will be carrying out an estate visit to your area **week commencing: 5th July 2021**



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



Estate Management Round-Up

Wheelie Bins

Please remember and return your wheelie bins to your designated space after collection day. By leaving them on a public pathway, this causes issues for anyone wishing to walk on the public footpath, especially those with prams, buggies etc.



Rubbish & household items

All rubbish and any items from within your home should NOT be placed outside until collection day. The weather has recently been warm, this causes household waste to smell and is also disrespectful to others.

Gardens / Noise

A gentle reminder to keep your garden area tidy, well kept and free of weeds etc. If you smoke, do not leave your cigarette ends lying around your garden and door area. You are responsible for keeping the area tidy and clear of any litter and rubbish. You may also like to sit in your garden area, now that the better weather is approaching (hopefully!). Please bear in mind that you have neighbours surrounding you and be mindful not to disturb others enjoying their time in the garden.

**YOU ARE IN BREACH
OF YOUR TENANCY
AGREEMENT IF YOU
FAIL TO ADHERE TO THE
ABOVE.**

Money News Round-Up

Our Income Maximisation Officer, Tracy Doran is here to help you. So contact Tracy at the office if you have any questions or would like assistance with completion of forms. Tracy can be contacted at Direct Dial Tel: 01786 431921 or e mail tracy@forthha.org.uk.



NB: The following information was correct at time of going to print.

Clothing Grant (children from Primary 1 to age 16 before 30th September 21)

- Parents on Income Support, Employment Support Allowance, income based or Jobseekers Allowance income based
- Parents in receipt of Child Tax Credits but **not** Working Tax Credits and less than £16,105 annual income
- Parents in receipt of Child Tax Credits and Working Tax Credits and less than £16,105 annual income
- Parents in receipt of Universal Credit

Applications for clothing grant MUST be made by 31.12.21

Free School Meals (school age children)

- Parents on Income Support, Employment Support Allowance income based or Jobseekers Allowance income based
- Parents in receipt of Child Tax Credits but **not** Working Tax Credits and less than £16,105 annual income
- Parents in receipt of Child Tax Credits and Working Tax Credits and less than £6,900 annual income
- Parents in receipt of Universal Credit and less than £610 per month earnings

Forms for both Clothing Grant and free School Meals available to complete online at <https://stirling.gov.uk/learning-education/schools/school-meals-uniforms/footwear-clothing-grant-school-meals/>



Child Benefit

When your child is 16 years old and leaves school Child Benefit will normally stop. However, in some circumstances Child Benefit can be extended. eg if your child is aged 16 and under 20 and on an approved training course. Or if your child is aged 16 or 17 and has left education or training and is registered for work with the Careers Service and is not working for 24 hours or more.

18 years old and No Longer In Education or Unemployed

When your child turns 18 and is no longer in education or is not employed, they can claim Universal Credit in their own right.

In some instances, if your child is under 18 years old, no longer in education or unemployed, and Child Benefit has ceased they may be able to apply for benefits. However, they must contact the Careers Office in the first instance and ask about these payments.

Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

If you have a child of 16 years of age or over before 30 September 2021 who is remaining at school, the child may be eligible for EMA of £30 per week, from the beginning of school term. All eligible applications received before 30 September 2021 can be backdated to the beginning of term, otherwise claims will only be paid from date they are received.

Forms for Educational Maintenance Allowance available in July 21 to complete online at <https://stirling.gov.uk/learning-education/schools/school-meals-uniforms/education-maintenance-allowance-ema/>

PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE – Tax Credits

Anyone who is in or was in receipt of Tax Credits should have received their annual declaration pack by now. If you have not already completed this, please phone Tax Credits on Tel: 0345 300 3900 and give your information.

Please note that if you were in receipt of Tax Credits and no longer receive these you MUST still complete the annual declaration information or else Tax Credits will state that you have received an overpayment for the monies you previously received.

What Benefits Can You Claim If You've Lost Your Job?

New-style Jobseeker's Allowance

If you have made enough Class 1 National Insurance Contributions (NICs) in the last 2 full tax years, you might be able to get new-style Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA).

You can get this for up to 6 months and it will be paid into your bank, building society, or credit union account every 2 weeks. Your partner's or spouse's income will not affect your claim for new-style JSA. You can apply for new style JSA at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-style-jobseekers-allowance#how-to-claim>

Universal Credit

If you are not eligible for new style Jobseeker's Allowance and/or you require help with housing costs (rent) or children, you may be eligible for Universal Credit.

Universal Credit is based on household income, so your partner's or spouse's income will affect

how much you will get. If your capital is £16,000 or above, you will NOT qualify for universal credit.

You can check your entitlement at <https://www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators>.

You can apply for Universal Credit at <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit/how-to-claim>

If you are currently in receipt of Tax Credits/Housing Benefit/Income Support/Jobseekers Allowance Income Based/Employment Support Allowance Income Related and then claim Universal Credit these benefits will stop and be replaced by Universal Credit. If your Universal Credit claim is submitted and is then unsuccessful you will not be able to go back to claiming previous benefits.

Warning : if you claim Universal Credit before your last wage from your employer is received this income will be taken into account in the calculation of your Universal Credit entitlement.

What Benefits Can You Claim If Your Hours/Income Is Reduced?

You may be entitled to Universal Credit. Universal Credit is based on household income, so your partner's or spouse's income will affect how much you will get. If your capital is £16,000 or above, you will NOT qualify for Universal Credit. (see Universal Credit article above on how to check entitlement or how to apply)

For more information or assistance please contact Tracy Doran, Income Maximisation Officer, Direct Dial: 01786 431921.

Change of Telephone Number – Allpay

Allpay Phone Payments - This is an automated telephone system, allowing you to make payments from a landline or mobile telephone whenever you want. All you need is your swipecard and your debit/credit card.

Allpay are aiming to change their telephone number from 0844 to **0330 557 8321** in July. As they do not have a definite date, log on to the link below for more information:

<https://www.allpay.net/contact/>



Management Committee

We currently have some vacancies on the Management Committee and particularly welcome interest in joining the Committee from tenants. The first step in the process is to become a member of the Association (see back page). We have an induction process for new members and can provide

training tailored to suit your needs. The position is voluntary and requires a commitment of a few hours each month. We would love to hear from you, so why not start with an initial informal chat? Please contact Grahame Cairns on 01786 431924 or email grahame@forthha.org.uk.

Membership Of Forth



ARE you interested in becoming more involved? Being a member of Forth allows people a say of how Forth is run and develops in the future, as well as attending the AGM.

If you want more details on becoming a member of the Association, please fill in your name and address in the space below, and hand it into our offices, or post it to :-
The Director, Forth Housing Association Ltd, 146 Drip Road, Stirling FK8 1RW.

FULL NAME:

ADDRESS:

DATE:

We will send you out an application form and more information on how to join and make your voice heard. For more information log on to:

<https://www.forthha.org.uk/about-us/management-committee/>



Useful Contact Details...

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