



Supporting Communities

FPHA have been successful in being awarded £85,000 from the Scottish Government's Supporting Communities fund. The association has joined up with a small number of organisations such as the Tannahill Centre, YoMo and Own yer Bike to help deliver the following:

- Run a hot meal service, providing over 1,000 meals to the most vulnerable within Ferguslie Park, particularly older people.
- To deliver activity packs to 200 children and 100 young people over the summer school holiday period.
- Provide 100 vulnerable families with the resources they need to continue educating children from home and to purchase wifi dongles for 40 of the most vulnerable families.
- FPHA will purchase PPE and hygiene packs for families on low income, supporting 200 individuals to ensure the additional cost associated with purchasing PPE (e.g. face coverings) and complying with hygiene measures are not a barrier to getting back to work, education or volunteering.
- Run a subsidised pre-owned bike purchase scheme and free repair and maintenance service for 100 people using active travel as a means of getting to work, education and visiting family.

Further details on the above can be found on both FPHA and Tannahill Centre's Facebook page and can also be requested from admin@fpha.org.uk or by calling **0141 887 4053**.



Ferguslie Essentials Fund

The Essentials Fund is still available to help any household in Ferguslie who are impacted by Covid-19 and may need some help in managing with day to day essential household items and support.

To find out more about the scheme you can contact us in the following ways:

Email us on admin@fpha.org.uk

like the **Ferguslie Park Housing Association** Facebook page and send us a private message

Phone the Association on **0141 887 4053** and choose to speak to any member of staff



Ferguslie Park
Housing Association

We're here for you!

Lock-down has been tough for everyone and for some, more than others. We know that many of you have been dealing with social isolation, illness and even the loss of loved ones. You may have job worries, a reduced income or are just trying to stay sane whilst keeping school aged children occupied and learning. Whilst there is light at the end of the tunnel now that lockdown is gradually easing, it will take time to get used to the new normal going forward.

The Association exists to make life better for our tenants and the community. Throughout the crisis we have continued to provide services and support wherever possible.

- Essential repair and maintenance work has continued.
- Housing and Welfare Rights staff working from home, have continued to provide support and advice including helping the many people who have lost income and are trying to navigate the benefits system.
- Whilst the office is closed our phone system is operating as normal, taking and responding to your calls.
- We have been able to help so far twenty-six requests with the purchase of one-off items such as cookers from our Ferguslie Essentials Fund.
- After a delayed start, bulk uplift and landscaping services has resumed.
- Worked in partnership with our subsidiary New Tannahill Centre to bring further funding and support to the community.

Like every other organisation we have had to adapt, a small number of staff members have been furloughed and the rest had to be equipped for remote working. We have made increase use of our website and social media and texting to get key information out to tenants.

Our Management Board have continued to meet and take decisions through video conferencing. Good governance is always vital and you will see inside that we are getting ready to hold our AGM in September as normal but in a different way. In May the Board approved our new 3 year Business Plan which sets out the direction of the association for the foreseeable future, more information is provided further on in the newsletter.

As lock-down continues to be eased, we are planning for how we can safely resume services fully and re-open the office to the public in line with the Scottish Government "route map". We will keep you informed as plans develop. I hope you find this newsletter helpful. Keep a look out for breaking news on our website and social media and do not hesitate to contact us for assistance, if we are unable to help directly we will know someone who can and be able to connect you.

Catrina Miller
Group Chief Executive

New Approved Business Plan 2020-2023

The Association is delighted to report that at the Board meeting held in early May FPFA's new three year Business Plan was approved. This plan sets out the aspirations of the Association and the clear objectives to be able to achieve them.

Our new objectives are:

1. To provide excellent homes, services within a vibrant community.
2. To create opportunities for local people.
3. To improve the profile and raise the reputation of Ferguslie Park.
4. To inspire our Board and staff to be the best.
5. To develop, grow and manage the business responsibly.



AGM 2020

FPFA will be holding their Annual General Meeting and a Special General Meeting (SGM) on Wednesday 9 September 2020. Both meetings will be delivered in a different format this year due to the Covid-19 pandemic and social distancing rules. Members should have received their notifications by now with more detail. We are holding an SGM this year to adopt the new model rules.

If you would like to become a Share holding member, please contact Teresa on **0141 887 4053** for further information.

Your Rent

We know this has been a difficult time for our tenants and their families, and please be assured that our staff are here to listen and to help where we can, but please remember that it is important to keep up with your rent payments.

If you have had a change in your circumstances, if your income has reduced, or if you have lost your job then please contact one of our Housing Team for advice and assistance. We can pass your details onto our Welfare Rights Team for any benefit help or questions you have.

You may be entitled to additional benefits, or you may have applied for Universal Credit and have been waiting for any award to be paid to you.

If your rent account has fallen into arrears then please do not ignore any letters or phone calls from our team, we can discuss payment options and agree on an affordable repayment arrangement to reduce the balance owed. If you do not contact us, further action can be taken.

If you are struggling then call us, if we cannot help then we can pass on the details of other organisations that may be able to provide the assistance you need.



Allocations

When Scotland went into lockdown in March, it stopped us letting our empty homes to new tenants.

As the restrictions are slowly being lifted, we are looking at restarting our lettings, but they

will be different to meet current social distancing guidelines.

If you are made an offer of a property, we are aiming to send you a link to a video to allow you to have a 'virtual viewing' to find out if you are interested.

From there we will arrange for you to come and view the

property in person, and if you are accepting the property, we would carry out the sign up straight away.

Things are getting ready to start again and we are accepting application forms for housing, so please contact us if you want a Housing Application Form sent out.

Property Services



Ferguslie Park Housing Association are in the process of procuring a new contractor for our Repairs and Maintenance contract to replace Mears.

This is an exciting opportunity for the future maintenance of the housing stock and also gives smaller, local contractors the chance to bid for the work.

We currently expect to have the new contractors in place by October 2020 and will keep you updated on the successful bidders.

Planning for the Future

After completing a new stock condition survey earlier in the year, the planned investment team have been working on investment plans for the year ahead. Despite lockdown restrictions, the board have been able to approve a programme of investment works across the estate for the financial year 2020/21, including;

Kitchen renewal in 80 properties

Gas Boiler Replacement/Install in 32 properties

Bathroom renewal in 22 properties

It is anticipated these works will be procured through the joint iFlair Framework, currently out to the market in an open tender process. iFlair is a collaboration of 8 Housing Associations, working together to procure services to maximise value for money for all of our contract works. It is hoped the framework will be available late summer and we can begin to appoint contractors thereafter.

In addition to the above, the board approved plans to tender for the completion of repair works and window replacement to 16nr properties on Dalskieth Road.

As a result of the lockdown measures, works to install new smoke and heat detectors in all of the associations properties were put on hold. To date the association has completed 199 installs of a planned 804, just over 24%. When government guidelines allow works to recommence within our properties, our contractor Valley Electrical will be back on site to complete the remaining 605nr installations.

Robert Murray and Christine Hay of our Planned investment team will be on hand to offer advice and arrange any access requirements associated with the works programme. The team are eager to get back to work and deliver all of the programme works before the end of March 2021.

Routine Repairs



We are now in a position to resume some routine repairs, but only those repairs which can be carried out by one person.

This is due to our contractors adhering to the social distancing rules. We will keep you updated on progress and timescales but also want to thank you for your patience and understanding during these difficult times.

Gas Service

We recently resumed the gas servicing programme and it is imperative that customers provide access to ensure the annual gas service visit is carried out for the safety of our tenants.



If you receive a letter please allow access or if the appointment is not suitable you can contact us to reschedule.

Please be assured our gas engineers will maintain strict social distancing during the service and wear appropriate PPE to ensure the safety of your household.

Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

Covid-19

The Board of FPFA have continued to carry on with business as usual throughout this pandemic by having online meetings.

The Association's improved I.T. structure allowed for all staff to be able to work from home during this time. Plans are in place to allow staff back into the workplace when the Scottish Government's guidance allows it. We will continue to keep tenants updated as guidance changes.



Face the FACTS

Face coverings should be worn in enclosed spaces. They are mandatory in shops and on public transport, but our advice is in any enclosed space where physical distancing might be more difficult, wear a face covering.



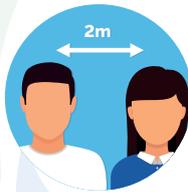
Avoid crowded places, not just crowded places indoors, that is especially important, but even outdoors choose to go places when the time and area is quieter.



Clean hands regularly, carry an alcohol-based hand sanitiser with you when you leave the house, use it often, especially before eating or after touching surfaces. Wash your hands for 20 seconds as soon as you get back home.



Two metre distance, stay at least 2 metres away from anyone you do not live with.



Self-isolate and book a test if you have symptoms. Remember, if you have a new cough, if you have a fever, if you suffer a loss of or a change in your sense of taste or smell, don't wait to see if you feel better. Act immediately.



Self-isolate and go to the NHS inform website, and book a test. It is by doing that, that you give our test and protect system the opportunity to break the chains of transmission.

Keep up to date by visiting the Scottish Government Website <https://www.gov.scot/> or NHS Scotland <https://www.scot.nhs.uk/>

Have you been shielding?

It is now safe enough for you to:

- meet indoors with up to 8 people from 2 other households with physical distancing
- meet outdoors with up to 15 people from 4 other households outdoors with physical distancing
- go inside pubs and restaurants
- attend places of worship for congregational services, communal prayer and contemplation
- return to work or school
- return to university or college as part of the phased return to campus
- use formal childcare providers – this now includes children who have been shielding

This is in addition to previous guidance on:

- stopping physically distancing from the people you live with or who are in your extended household group
- using toilets in other people's homes and allowing other people to use yours at home
- use public transport wearing a face covering unless you are exempt
- travelling further than 5 miles from home, as far as you want
- booking all types of holiday accommodation or travelling to a second home – and staying over with people outwith your household
- going inside shops and leisure venues wearing a face covering unless you are exempt
- visiting outdoor public gardens

Welfare Rights Update

Due to the outbreak of coronavirus/COVID-19 there have been multiple changes in the benefit system, too many to cover in this newsletter.

We have highlighted some important issues in this edition however It is important to remember that our welfare rights team are still working and can be contacted on **0141 847 5219/5204** or **0141 887 4053** (and choose option 3) or by email at **r.findlay@fpha.org.uk** so please do not hesitate to contact the team if you need any advice or support.

Sickness and Disability Benefits

Sickness and disability benefit face to face assessments have been suspended since 17 March 2020 as a result of the coronavirus outbreak, the DWP have announced.

Further to all face-to-face assessments having already been suspended, and people being advised that they do not have to attend jobcentre appointments for at least three months, the Secretary of State has said;

"We will do whatever it takes to protect claimants and our staff.

We are automatically extending all awards and reassessments for health and disability benefits to provide that reassurance to those in receipt of them".

Further changes mean that there will be no new reviews or reassessments across all sickness and disability benefits - including universal credit, employment and support allowance (ESA), personal independence payment (PIP), disability living allowance, attendance allowance and industrial injuries disablement benefit - for at least the next three months, starting from 24 March 2020.

NB - the government/DWP adds that;

- for PIP, if a health assessment has already taken place this will continue to be processed and, if an assessment has been scheduled, claimants will be contacted by the assessment provider to discuss how it will be taken forward;
- for ESA and universal credit, claimants whose cases have been referred to the provider will be contacted to take it forward;
- if people experience a change in their needs, they are still encouraged to contact the DWP to ensure they are receiving the correct level of support;
- where awards are due to expire, they will be extended so that claimants continue to receive financial support at their current rate.

At the point of writing it is not known if any extension will be applied after the initial three months suspension period has expired. We will provide further information regarding this matter on our website and facebook when it is known.



Housing Benefit

As we print this newsletter the offices at Renfrewshire Council remain closed to the public.

However, you can still contact them if you have had a change in your circumstances which could affect your housing benefit (HB). If you have a change of circumstances but are unable to report the change, you run the risk of being underpaid or overpaid. Please do not hesitate to contact our welfare rights team if you need help or support regarding this matter. If you prefer to contact Renfrewshire Council housing benefit department directly you can do so on **0300 300 0330**.



New Style Jobseekers Allowance

We understand these are extremely difficult times and you may lose work or have your hours reduced.

In some circumstances you may be able to claim New Style Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) with, or instead of, Universal Credit, depending on your National Insurance record.

If you're unemployed or work less than 16 hours a week you may be able to get New Style Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA).

New Style JSA is a fortnightly payment that can be claimed on its own or at the same time as Universal Credit.

New Style JSA is a contribution based benefit. Normally, this means you may be able to get it if you've paid and/or been credited with enough National Insurance (NI) contributions in the 2 full tax years before the year you're claiming in.

If you qualify, you can get New Style JSA for up to 182 days. After this you should speak to our welfare rights team to discuss your options.

If you qualify for both New Style JSA and Universal Credit, any New Style JSA you receive will be taken into account as income for Universal Credit.

Why should I apply?

Your savings and capital (or your partner's savings, capital and income) are not taken into account when claiming New Style JSA.

However, your earnings and any payment you are getting from a pension can affect the amount you may receive.

While you receive New Style JSA you'll be awarded Class 1 National Insurance credits, which can help towards your State Pension and other contributory benefits in the future. It is a regular fortnightly payment.

New Style Employment & Support Allowance

You may be able to claim New Style Employment and Support Allowance with, or instead of Universal Credit, depending on your National Insurance record.

If you are ill or have a health condition or disability that limits your ability to work you may be able to get New Style Employment and Support Allowance (ESA).

You can also apply for New Style ESA if you cannot work while you are self-isolating because of coronavirus (COVID-19).

New Style ESA is a fortnightly payment that can be claimed on its own or at the same time as Universal Credit (UC).

New Style ESA is a contributory benefit. Normally, this means you may be able to get it if you've paid or been credited with enough National Insurance contributions in the 2 full tax years before the year you're claiming in.

Why should I apply?

Your (or your partner's) savings will not affect how much New Style ESA you're paid. If your partner works, it does not affect your claim.

Most income is not taken into account (but a personal pension can affect the amount you may receive).

While you receive New Style ESA you'll earn Class 1 National Insurance credits, which can help towards your State Pension and other contributory benefits in the future.

It is a regular fortnightly payment.

For further advice please contact our welfare rights team.

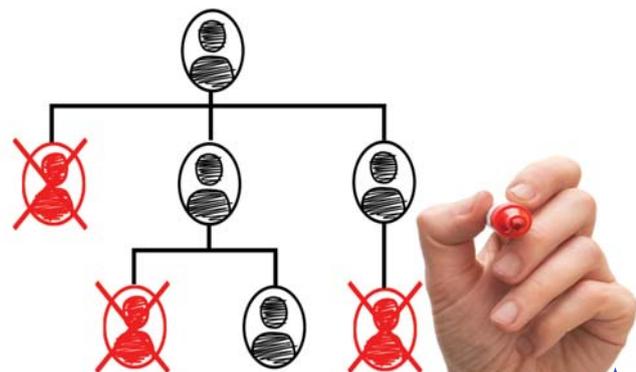
Are you at risk of redundancy?

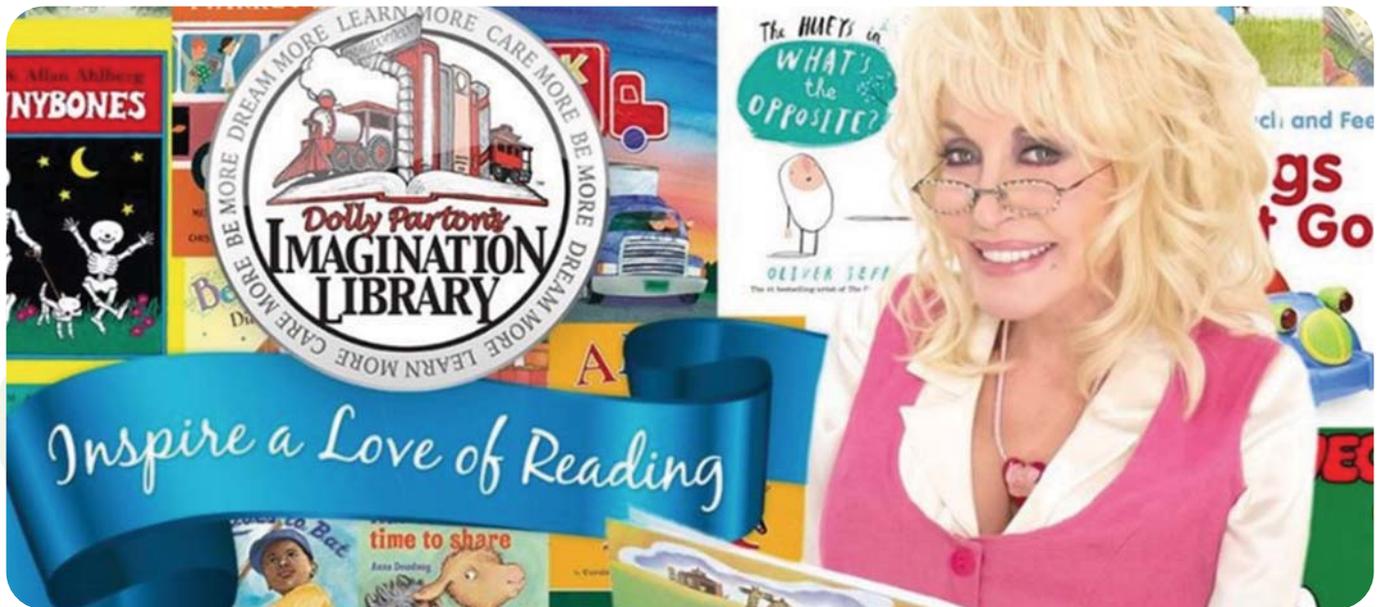
If you are made redundant, or could be, it is understandably a very difficult and stressful situation to cope with.

Losing your job can be a huge financial hit, which affects your ability to pay bills. So it's vital to know your rights and to get a plan in place. This could include sorting out your finances and making sure you receive all the help you are entitled to and to see what you are eligible for from the benefits system.

Due to the current crisis it might be sensible to take a moment to think how you would be affected if redundancy is a possibility and put a contingency plan in place.

For further advice please contact our welfare rights team.





Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

What is it?

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a 60 volume set of books beginning with the children's classic *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* for children aged 0-5. Each month a new, carefully selected book will arrive by mail in your child's name and be delivered directly to your home. Best of all it is free. There is no cost or obligation to your family.

Who is eligible?

All children under the age of five, living in a Ferguslie Park Housing Association tenanted homes in Renfrewshire.

What are my responsibilities?

1. Be a resident of Ferguslie Park Housing Association.
2. Submit an official registration form, completely filled out by parent or guardian.

3. Notify Ferguslie Park Housing Association anytime your address changes. Books are delivered by post to the address listed on the official registration form. If the child's address changes, you must contact the address/phone number on this brochure in order to continue receiving books.

4. Read with your child and enjoy the books!

When will I receive books?

Six to eight weeks after your registration form has been received, books will begin arriving at your home and will continue until your child turns five or you move out of the area.

If you are interested or would like to know more about the Imagination Library email Laura at admin@fpha.org.uk or call **0141 887 4053** or go to <https://imaginationlibrary.com/uk/>

How to contact us

Staff have been working from home throughout lockdown and we can be reached during normal office hours by calling **0141 887 4053** or email admin@fpha.org.uk

Office Hours:

Monday to Thursday 9am – 5pm • Friday 9am – 4pm

Staff continue to have monthly training on the last Wednesday of the month from 9am – 12.30pm, and team meetings every Wednesday from 9am – 10.30am.

You can find out what's going on by visiting our website www.fpha.org.uk or follow us on Facebook.

Update to our Privacy Policy

We have recently updated our Privacy Policy to reflect changes in legislation.

The Association became a public authority under the Freedom of Information Scotland Act 2002 (FOISA) and required us to have a named Data Protection Officer (DPO). Our DPO at FPHA is the Finance & Corporate Services Manager and this is included in the revised Privacy Policy.

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