



Welcome...

...to our Spring newsletter

Whilst we are still under restrictions due to the pandemic, our office remains closed and staff continue to work from home.

All updates on our services will be published on our website www.fpha.org.uk and our Facebook page.

You can keep up with the latest guidance on the Scottish Government's website

<https://www.gov.scot/>

Rent Freeze

We notified all of our tenants earlier in 2021 that the Association decided to keep rents at the same level for the financial year that runs from 15th March 2021 until 13th March 2022.

The Board of Ferguslie Park Housing Association recognises that 2020 was a tough year for many and the negative impact of Coronavirus was still being felt as we entered 2021. The decision was in keeping with our aim to ensure that our rents remain fair and give value for money.

By using information available on rents charged and annual rent increases from Housing Associations in Scotland, we are able to compare rental increase and charges over a period of several years.

We are pleased to say by keeping rents at the same level for 2021/22, our average rent increase is the 2nd lowest in comparison with 82 Associations over the past 3 years. This also means that the rents for the Association are lower than the Average for those Housing providers that we benchmark against.



WhatsApp text service 07388 990236

Please note, our WhatsApp number is a text service only for sending **photos** relating to your property, uplifts and routine repairs. This number is **NOT** for reporting emergency repairs or general enquires.



Housing, Planned Maintenance & Property Services

We are delighted to introduce our new grounds maintenance contractor, Nurture, who were the successful bidder for the contract after a recent tender exercise.

We are also pleased to announce that Gas Sure have again been successful in being awarded the gas maintenance contract after another recent procurement exercise.

We look forward to working with both contractors.

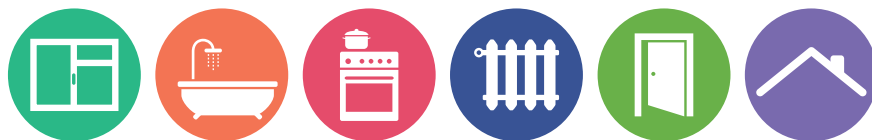
Healthy Working Lives

Just as lockdown came into force, the Ferguslie Group staff had achieved Bronze in Healthy Working Lives and were ready to embark on the programme to achieve Silver.

However, the programme was suspended, but as a staff team we continued to look for alternative ways to promote wellbeing within the group. One of these was the 50 day walking challenge and we are pleased to announce we have been awarded @pathsforall's #WalkatWorkAward!

We're taking steps to a more active, happy and healthy workforce & the group managed a total of 4,189,956 steps!

A group of our staff also took part in the virtual kilt walk this year to raise funds for future events in the community.



Planned Investment

Estate Survey, we want to hear from you!

As we come out of lockdown and look to the future, our team have started to work on plans for investing in our homes over the next 3 years. This includes lifecycle replacement of key components such as Kitchens, Bathrooms, Boilers, Windows and Doors based on our most recent stock condition survey which you may have been part of. During the lockdown all of our planned investment work was put on hold, and the team took this time to formulate a plan for maintaining the high standards within our properties and improving our homes once restrictions allowed.

To complete this we need your input, we are not only concerned with the physical building but the wider area as well, and the best people to advise on where we should prioritise our efforts are our tenants! We have started to collect feedback from as many of our tenants as possible to begin to identify what your priorities are. You will be called by Christine or Robert from the Planned Investment team regarding this as we are keen to hear from you. Alternatively, we have created a short online survey if you prefer - <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/5876AC/>

The link can also be accessed via our website and Facebook page, if you wish you will be entered into a prize draw after completing the survey. We value your opinion and insight and this is an opportunity to impact how your rent is invested and hopefully improve the area.

Your Rent Statement

Normally tenants receive a rent statement in February/March showing the transactions for the previous year and their rent balance. Current Coronavirus restrictions mean we cannot have staff in the office and the delivery of the rent statements has been delayed.

If you want to know your current balance, have any questions about your rent account or what benefits you may be entitled to if there has been a change in your circumstances, then please contact our Housing Team on **0141 887 4053** and press for **option 2**.

Board/Committee Member Recruitment – an opportunity in your community!

We are actively seeking tenants/local residents to join our Board at our next Annual General Meeting in August this year. We also have a vacancy on the Tannahill Executive Committee.

This would be an ideal opportunity for someone with an interest in the housing sector and/or their local community. We would help enable you to build up on your training, skills and enhance your knowledge. We offer training on all areas of our services including finance, technical, community regeneration and governance.

You would also be involved at a strategic level on making decisions

for the Association and the Tannahill Centre.

To serve on our Board of Management you have to be a member of the Association. You can become a member by completing our membership application form which would go to our next board meeting for approval. The deadline for applications to be processed is 16 June 2021. All applications will be presented at our Board meeting on 23 June 2021.

If you are interested in serving on our Board of Management for the Tannahill Executive Committee, please contact Catrina Miller on



0141 887 4053 to have an informal chat or email

catrinamiller@fpha.org.uk to request a copy of our Recruitment Pack.

Our Board Members volunteer their time to prepare for and attend regular meetings, training and information events. Travel and other reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.

Current Service Delivery

As the Association continues to operate under Government guidance around coronavirus, our regular estate inspection service continues to be paused.

However, our **free** and **unlimited** uplift service is still in operation, and tenants should continue to report any uplifts in a timely manner and maintain their private/communal gardens.

To report a bulk uplift, please phone our Property Services Team on 0141 887 4053 **Option 1**. Remember to list all items for uplift and store the items somewhere safe. Bulk items can be a potential fire hazard and should not be stored near buildings, wooden fences or refuse bins.

To highlight gardens which are not in adherence to the tenancy agreement please contact the Housing Services team on 0141 887 4053 **Option 2**.

Thank you to our many tenants who continue to maintain their gardens and help keep Ferguslie Park a pleasant environment.

As summer approaches we would like to remind tenants that we offer an annual Garden Tidy Scheme which runs from Spring until Autumn to our tenants who are unable to maintain their gardens and meet our qualifying criteria. To enquire about the Garden Tidy Scheme contact the Housing Services Team on 0141 887 4053 and selecting **Option 2**.

Allocations

Allocations are still ongoing but the process is



taking longer than normal, this is due to office closure and access for staff to pick up any information that has been sent to office.

We can continue to send out application forms, just call the office or drop us an email to admin@fpha.org.uk

Application forms can also be completed online.

We are still letting homes although this process is also taking longer than usual due to the current restrictions.

A word from our Welfare Rights Team



Despite the impact Covid 19 has had on all of us, our team has continued to provide advice and support during these very difficult times. Although our office is closed please be aware that our welfare rights service is still here for you and you can contact them on **0141 887 4053** then choose **option 3**.

One-off payments for working households receiving tax credits

As part of the UK Governments Coronavirus Support Scheme HMRC announced a new one off £500 payment.

- there is no need to apply for the payment;
- text messages will/should be sent to claimants for whom HMRC has contact details for and, from 19 April 2021, letters will be sent out to eligible households; and
- payment should be received by 23 April 2021 and will be made automatically into the same bank account that the claimant's tax credits are usually paid into - if it is not received, claimants should contact HMRC on 0345 300 3900.
- If you have not received the payments or need further advice please contact our Welfare Rights Team.

Universal Credit News

As part of the UK Governments Coronavirus Support Scheme Universal Credit claimants have been receiving a £20pw uplift to help deal with additional costs during the pandemic. The UK Government have agreed to extend the payments for six months. There have been calls for the increase to be made permanent but at the point of writing the payments are expected to stop at the end of September 2021.

If you receive Universal Credit and you are the householder you will still need to update your housing costs on your Universal Credit account. So even though your rent charge has not changed this year you will have received a 'To Do' on your account asking you to update your records. Please complete this by confirming there has been 'no change'. If you need help or advice please contact our Welfare Rights Team or your Housing Officer.

Other News

You may already know that during the pandemic DWP have been delivering services to claimants successfully while working from home. However there appears to be plans for them to resume some face to face services. This is likely to mean an increase in Job Centre appointments, health assessments and more job-seeking requirements etc.

If you are contacted by DWP and feel you are unable to carry out any requirements please contact our Welfare Rights Team for help or advice.

We are still working as normal and we are here for you so If you need help or advice regarding any of the above, or any other matter, please don't hesitate to contact us on **0141 887 4053** and choose **option 3** or by email r.findlay@fpha.co.uk

Have a look at the FLAIR training academy!

FLAIR Training Academy is a joint venture between local housing associations which offers free training on housing and community matters. It is open to anyone with a keen interest in their local housing service and communities.

The academy lasts 9 weeks with 2 semesters – April to June and October to December every year. It requires around 6 hours of commitment per month. All training materials, resources and reasonable expenses are covered. FLAIR can offer continuing professional development, real life experience for your CV, volunteering with meaning and purpose, networking with professionals and others committed to social impact and ultimately a way of helping improve communities and lives.

A word from local community group The Barochan Green Team (BGTeam)

We are delighted to inform you about transformation that is happening to Barochan Greenspace. This project is run by a local group called the Barochan Green Team.

We would like to invite local residents to help out with the regeneration of this forgotten piece of land. We are there every Saturday (weather permitting) from 11am - 1pm and you could help us to clear this area in order for us to move onto the next stage. Some tasks might include trimming bushes back to encourage new growth and creating access to allow us to tackle years of fly tipping which needs removed.

We would like to say thank you to Ferguslie Park Housing Association for supporting us and to the Tannahill Centre for awarding us funding from the "Good Idea Fund".

This award will enable us to proceed with our project.

If you are interested in taking part in this project, have any questions or would like to follow the progress of this project, please visit our Facebook page: Barochan Green Team

www.facebook.com/groups/771780790118941 or email: Barochan.green.team@gmail.com



Maggie & Alan Hayward, Lauren Gray, Sandra & David Caddell

Wild area:

- Accessible pathway to main area
- Insect hotel
- Bench
- Water features
- Flowers



Main area:

- Fruit trees and shrubs
- Willow live gazebo
- Re-build allotments
- Plant bulbs & Flowers
- Balance beams
- Muddy kitchen
- Kid's den
- Bench, bin

Ferguslie Park Good Ideas Fund

Local people's ideas to help Ferguslie Park recover from the COVID-19 pandemic will become a reality as the Tannahill Centre distributes £25,000 to projects across the community.

The Ferguslie Park Good Ideas Fund was managed by a steering group made up of local people who identified the need to reduce isolation, boredom and poor mental health that had arisen as a result of the social distancing measures implemented over the past year.

Thirteen groups in total received funding for projects as varied as building a play park, setting up a men's wellbeing group, hosting a mental health and wellbeing festival for young people and street bingo.

Ashley Monaghan, one of the local residents who applied from Dalskeith Road added: "We are over the moon to be receiving funding, especially as this is our first time applying. We had run some street bingo sessions last year and already people have been shouting over their fences asking us when it is starting back up again. This grant will allow us to run the bingo all through the summer, making it free and opening it up to children too with their own version of the game.

It's more than just bingo. It's a real opportunity for the whole community to come together, those who are shielding or afraid to come out of the house can get involved and feel safe sitting in their own garden. Everyone gets involved, even those who don't really participate in anything else, it's great to see them getting involved too."



All the projects funded will now receive support from the Tannahill Centre to make their good ideas a reality. The Ferguslie Park Good Ideas Fund is backed by the Scottish Government's Investing in Communities Fund and managed by the Tannahill Centre.

| Project Name | Project Description - Where partial funding has been provided, only the element that has been funded is described below. | Amount granted |
|--------------------------|---|----------------|
| Blackstoun Rd Cul de sac | A number of socially distanced family activities throughout the year including regular street bingo and three one-off events. | £1,000 |
| Dalskieth Road | Weekly socially distanced prize bingo during the summer holiday period and a one-off talent show. | £1,000 |
| Darkwood Crew | Relaunch of the Bingo Bus from May - September. | £2,500 |
| Events Team | New group looking to establish quarterly events for adults, and a free event for children. | £1,250 |
| Fitness for Ferguslie | Purchase some new weights and repair a treadmill and cross trainer. | £1,150 |
| Forever Young | To run an afternoon tea for residents of Darkwood Court. | £500 |
| Glencoats Park | To bring play and outdoor gym equipment to the local park that focuses on young people. | £5,000 |
| Glenvale FC | Establish a free weekly football activity for under 18s and the purchase of 36 footballs for each child that attends. | £2,030 |
| Mens Group | Purchase equipment to organise fortnightly darts and pool nights for men, also organise fishing and hillwalking trips. | £3,000 |
| Own Yer Bike | To run the second 'Cycle Roon the Scheme' event in Ferguslie. | £1,000 |
| Westwood Gardens | A number of socially distanced family activities throughout the year including regular street bingo and series of one-off events. | £1,000 |
| YoMo | Ferguslie wellbeing festival. Led by young people this would include interactive workshops with mental health charities, local artists, writers and various health organisations. | £3,300 |
| Barochan Green Team | Transform the Barochan green space back to life, by working with the community to create a space that can be practical and educational. | £3,000 |

Tannahill Centre wins Community Regeneration 'Oscar'



Thank you, Andrea

Local resident Andrea McLaughlan was a tenant member of the Association for the past 5 years and has stepped down to focus on other interests within the community.

We would like to wish Andrea all the best and to thank her for her time serving on the Board. Andrea's commitment, expertise and knowledge helped take the Association through all the positive changes that has happened in the past few years.

Andrea said "I have thoroughly enjoyed my time on the Board. Since joining the Board of Management, I have learned so much and met so many great people through volunteering and networking in the housing sector."

The Tannahill Centre won this year's prestigious SURF Award for Community-led Regeneration.

Nominated alongside charities Bridgend Farmhouse Community Hub and Rom Romeha, the award win recognises the work undertaken by staff and volunteers at the Tannahill Centre to turn around its fortunes over the past few years, going from an unwelcoming community space, to a trusted community hub that has led on the COVID-19 response in Ferguslie Park over the past year.

Accepting the award on behalf of the Tannahill Centre, Jamie Mallan, business transformation manager said: "We are absolutely delighted to receive this award, especially when we were up against some really inspiring community projects from across Scotland."

"Whilst this is a fantastic achievement for the Tannahill Centre, its staff and volunteers, this is also a big win for Ferguslie Park. We know that winning a SURF Award brings with it a lot of attention, and we hope that this attention will help challenge the unfair reputation that Ferguslie Park has, and highlight that it's a community full of passionate, creative and enterprising people".

Running since 1998 the SURF Awards recognise and reward best practice and innovation in community regeneration. Through the awards, SURF Scotland aims to promote and share examples of best practice. It also aims to highlight the role that regeneration projects have in improving the wellbeing of individuals and communities.

Community News

The Community Market continues to operate every Thursday morning from 11am at the Tannahill Centre.

This initiative, led by local volunteer group Darkwood Crew, has saved a staggering 17.82 tonnes of surplus food from going to landfill and is proving a really popular, dignified and sustainable way of tackling food insecurity across Ferguslie Park. If you are experiencing food insecurity and require some support please visit www.darkwoodcrew.co.uk for more information.

Tenants in Candren Road (High Numbers) recently organised a socially distanced #TeamUpToCleanUp event in their area of the community. Over 20 local residents took part in improving their local environment by removing all fly tipped items, litter picking and even rediscovering an old path. Supported by volunteers from Pals of the Privies, Darkwood Crew, The Tannahill Centre and the newly established Ferguslie Community Development Trust a vast area was covered including the play park filling a 22ft skip provided by Renfrewshire Council. Gordon Larkin, Community Development Officer & Terry McTernan, Covid Recovery Worker will continue to support tenants to realise their ambitions for the area.



Volunteering with the Tannahill Centre



Tannahill Centre
at the heart of Ferguslie

During a very difficult and challenging year, Ferguslie Park has seen a huge increase in the number of volunteers giving their gift of time to their local community; at street level supporting friends and family, and across the whole community as part of a broader COVID response.

Some of our volunteers have shared their experience with us:

'We live in a community that cares about each other. Community spirit has been re-ignited, led by the community itself. There is a renewed sense of community spirit.'

'Taking part in the Community Advent Calendar gave me the opportunity to get to know my neighbours better. Everyone benefited.'

'Being part of the [Volunteer] group makes me feel useful, relevant. I have life skills that I can share and pass on, especially with the Feegie Needlers. Volunteering has had an extremely positive impact on my mental health. There is a strong sense of connection.'

The Scottish Government have drawn up a framework called 'Volunteering for All' in recognition of the importance of volunteering. As part of that process, Aileen Campbell MSP has highlighted that ***'volunteering increases social and civil participation, empowers communities, and reduces loneliness and isolation. It can also improve mental and physical health, support the development of job and life skills, and foster a greater sense of belonging.'***

There are many volunteer opportunities available with the Tannahill Centre and across Ferguslie Park where you can give your time and energy for as little as 2 hours per week, fitting your volunteering around your other commitments. We work with you to identify what you would like to be involved with and the skills you would like to share or learn. And we support you throughout this process.

For those in receipt of benefits it's important to note that this should not be a barrier to volunteering. The following information is from the DWP website;

'Volunteering can help you to develop new skills and try something new. It can help you prepare for paid work by increasing your confidence and experience. You can volunteer while receiving benefits as long as you continue to meet all the conditions of your benefit. If you're getting a benefit, you can volunteer for any type of organisation.'

For more information about volunteering with the Tannahill Centre please contact the Volunteer Co-ordinator, Bobbie McCabe, by emailing bobbieMcCabe@fpha.org.uk, messaging through our Facebook page or dropping her a note. She would love to hear from you.

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