

# THE LOCHIL VIEW

West Fife

## BUDGET UPDATE

Pending budget approval, we are aiming to undertake the following investment in your area during 2024-25:

**Kitchen Upgrades – £4,600**

**Bathroom Upgrades - £181,000**

**Window / Door Upgrades - £206,000**

**Door Entry Upgrades - £25,000**

If approved, all tenants due to receive investment in their home, will be contacted in advance of the projects starting.

**If you have any questions on this, you can ask for Andrew Gibb or Vicki Brown.**

Total  
Investment  
Cost  
**£416,600**

## LOCAL EVENTS AND INFO FOR YOUR AREA

### Have you heard of Cosy Kingdom?

They offer free and impartial energy and debt advice service available to all tenants and homeowners across Fife. They can do this by telephone or through a home visit to help you stay warm, save energy and reduce your carbon emissions. **Visit their website at: [www.cosykingdom.org.uk/](http://www.cosykingdom.org.uk/) for more information.**

There is an **Easter Egg Hunt** taking place at Culross Palace between Friday 29th March and Monday 1st April. For all the details, just visit: **[www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/culross](http://www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/culross)**

Between  
29th March  
to  
1st April

The Valleyfield Community Council have a Facebook page which highlights all the various activities and events taking place in the area. There is also information on here for local adult learning courses and support around finances and legal advice.

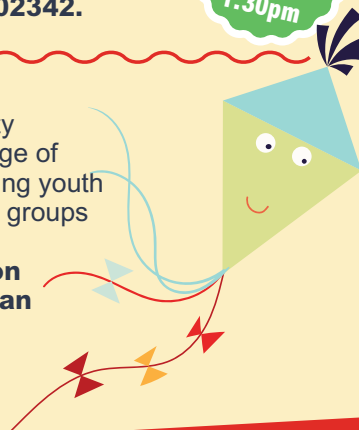
Blairhall Community Centre are running a Community Cafe every Thursday from 11:30am - 1:30pm.  
**For more information, contact: 01383 602342.**

Every  
Thursday  
11.30am -  
1.30pm



At Valleyfield Community Centre, they have a range of weekly activities, including youth clubs, IT classes, social groups and much more.

**Pop into the centre on Abbey Street to find an activity just for you!**



Margaret Hall,  
Tenancy Sustainment  
Officer

## Tenancy Sustainment Support SPRING NEWS

**Since April 2023 we have helped a total of 389 tenants with**

**670 different enquiries, ranging from benefit advice to help with energy costs.**

Our tenants are better off by **£1,071,548.42** This includes Housing Benefit of **£158,247.20**, and **£379,141.68** of Universal Credit

In your area this included helping 46 tenants with 95 issues leading to overall additional income of **£173,383.22** including **£45,486.68** Discretionary Housing Payments and **£49,671.48** Universal Credit.

This is an average gain of **£3,769.20** for each tenant in your area that has been helped since April 2023.

**If you would like information on Benefits etc, then please contact Margaret Hall our Tenancy Sustainment Officer.**

## STAY INFORMED

Follow us on Facebook to get more local news and info

📞 01259 722899

✉ [customerservices@ochilviewha.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@ochilviewha.co.uk)

🌐 [www.ochilviewha.co.uk](http://www.ochilviewha.co.uk)

📘 [ochilviewha](https://www.facebook.com/ochilviewha)

🐦 [twitter.com/ViewOchil](https://twitter.com/ViewOchil)

## Property Alterations

If you want to make certain alterations to your home, you need to ask for permission, this includes video door bells and CCTV which we are seeing more requests for.

These items require careful consideration as they can capture images and sounds of your neighbours and members of the public meaning they come under Data Protection legislation. If you do plan to install one of these systems, you must speak with us first and obtain approval to do so.

Remember to always seek advice on changes you plan to make to your home. Our staff are on hand to provide advice on what you can and cannot do.

## Legionella safety in your property

Is your property going to be vacant for a period of a week or more? If it is, we strongly recommend on your return you flush the water system.

This means:-

- Running all taps and showers for a minimum of two minutes once a week,
- Flushing all the toilets on your return
- It is also recommended that you clean and descale your shower head too!



## FIRE SAFETY IN COMMUNAL CLOSES

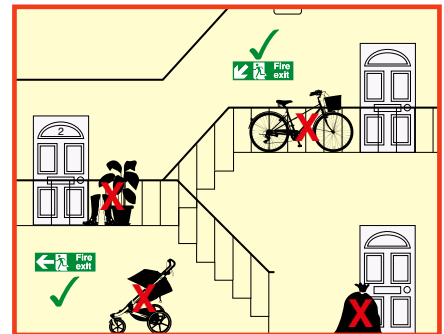
It is really important that your communal close is kept cleared of any items for fire safety reasons as it may obstruct the fire escape route.



- Do not prop open fire doors in communal areas
- Do not clutter the stairs, corridors and landings with personal items or things that can set fire easily
- Do not store prams, bicycles or mobility scooters in communal areas
- Do not store flammable materials in cupboards that have electrical circuits
- Do not smoke in communal areas

Please tell us you see anything in the communal areas that does not belong there and put any rubbish in bins provided.

Please remember that Ochil View also subsidises the cost for bulk uplifts in both Fife and Clackmannanshire. Call us if you require further information!



## Homeswap (FIFE)

Homeswap is an online mutual exchange system that is a free service to all Ochil View tenants who are considering looking for a swap in Fife.

If you would like to search for a home on Homeswap, then you need to go to <https://www.fife.gov.uk/kb/docs/articles/housing/council-housing/mutual-exchange>

It allows you to register your own property advert and search online for other tenants looking to exchange throughout Fife.

Before you sign up, we recommend you read Fife Housing Register's User Guide which is available via their website <https://www.fifehousingregister.org.uk/homeswap-about/>. This explains how the site works, tells you what to expect, and will let you know if you're able to sign up.

Don't forget to add photographs and a description about your home. The better the advert looks, the more attractive it is too other would-be-swappers.

If you require any advice or assistance about setting up your advert on Homeswap please do not hesitate to contact Donna Phillips, Housing Services Assistant (Housing Options)

## THISTLE

TENANT RISKS

### Are you covered in your home?

As your landlord, Ochil View provide a buildings insurance policy. This covers the property and the fixtures and fittings in your home. We don't, however, cover your items or personal belongings. This is where you need to get contents insurance.

**A contents insurance policy covers goods in your home, such as furniture, clothing and electrical items.**

For example: Your toilet leaks onto your vinyl flooring and through to your kitchen below, causing damage to appliances, like your toaster. We would repair the leak and any ceiling damage, but not for the flooring or toaster. This is where your contents insurance would help.

We can recommend the Thistle Tenants Risks Home Contents Insurance Scheme. It is specifically designed for social housing tenants, has minimum requirements and flexible payment options. Visit their website at: [www.thistletenants-scotland.co.uk/](http://www.thistletenants-scotland.co.uk/) for more information.

## Partnership Working In The Community



We continue to work with other housing providers and the local Police Officers from the West Fife area in attending meetings to work together and be part of any joint action to tackle issues within the villages. At Ochil View we feel that it is beneficial to the Association but also it is important to provide a consistent approach for all tenants no matter who their landlord is.

We continue to work with the Safer Communities Team who work to deliver community safety across Fife. They cover a range of issues including crime, anti-social behaviour, public perception of crime and safety in our homes and on our roads.

They have dedicated officers who work with colleagues across the council and partner organisations to improve the local environment, make people feel safer and reduce crime, its causes and the fear of crime.

The Safer Communities Team has responsibility for the enforcement and issuing of fixed penalty notices including dog fouling fixed penalty notices, dog control notices, fly tipping fixed penalty notices and formal warnings of noise to name a few.

### What happens when I am referred to Fife Community Safety Support Service?

- 1 You will be matched with the appropriate service.
- 2 You will receive a letter or phone call to set up your first appointment. Your meeting can take place in your home at the Sacro or local council service office or a place that is suited for your personal circumstances.
- 3 You and your support worker will work to discuss your needs and agree a plan of action.
- 4 Once your needs are identified, you and your support worker will support you in accessing the appropriate service or help.
- 5 You will have ongoing contact with your support worker
- 6 Your support worker will continue to review your case and agree the next steps.

If you would like to find out more about the team or to report an issue you may be having please see [www.fife.gov.uk/kb/docs/articles/community-life2/safer-communities](http://www.fife.gov.uk/kb/docs/articles/community-life2/safer-communities) or contact your Housing Services Officer at Ochil View.

## ANNUAL RENT INCREASE & UNIVERSAL CREDIT



We notified you in February that your rent will increase from 1st April 2024. If you are claiming Universal Credit, then please remember that it is your responsibility to notify the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) of any change of circumstances including changes to your housing costs. From 01/04/24 there will be a link in your To Do List on your online journal. You need to click on the link and complete the questions asked. It is important you do this as soon as possible from 01/04/24.

Please contact your Housing Services Officer if you require any help with this.

## Bulk UPLIFTS

Fife Council offers a free collection of bulk rubbish. This service is for oversized items that will not fit in a standard wheelie bin and it is limited to collection of up to 18 units per collection. Each item is allocated a certain amount of units.

You can arrange a bulk uplift by phoning Fife Council on 03451 55 00 22. You can also arrange through their website [www.fife.gov.uk/kb/docs/articles/bins-and-recycling/bulky-uplift-service](http://www.fife.gov.uk/kb/docs/articles/bins-and-recycling/bulky-uplift-service)

## Repairs TIMESCALES

We are committed to providing a first-class repairs service to you and thought it would be good to remind you of our repairs timescales.



**EMERGENCIES – attendance to make safe within 3 hours** (for any heating related repairs, we will offer temporary heating if we are unable to repair at the 1st visit)

**URGENT – completed within 24 hours**

**ROUTINE – completed within 5 working days**

We have done our best to build a comprehensive list of repairs in to our tenants handbook and you can find what timescales we use in there!

There may unfortunately be instances we cannot adhere to these timescales for example if there are roofing works required to your property and the weather will not allow us to work at height safely, or if we are waiting on parts.

**YOU ALSO HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOUR HOME AND NOT CAUSE DAMAGE TO ANY PART OF IT.**

## Repairs YOU ARE responsible for as a tenant

We will carry out nearly all repairs within your property, however there are a few things we are not responsible for. These include things such as:-

- Changing light bulbs
- Changing toilet seats if they are broken
- Divisional fencing (fences between you and a neighbour)



**MORE INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND IN YOUR TENANT'S HANDBOOK!**



# Community Benefits Update

We would like to thank our contractors, MCN & Alphacomm for their recent contributions towards our community benefit projects.



Ochil View Housing Association encourage all contractors to support our tenants by pledging a donation through our planned maintenance projects. MCN were awarded a contract last year to install medical adaptations in our tenants' homes. As part of this project, they donate 2.5% of the value to our cost-of-living projects where we provide energy saving goods, fuel vouchers and supermarket vouchers to our tenants. This year, MCN have kindly donated a total of £1564 which has no doubt allowed the association to successfully deliver much needed assistance to our tenants.



Along with this donation, Alphacomm assisted us by removing unwanted sky dishes from our buildings which were sold to a scrap merchant, allowing our fund to be topped up by £200. Without the support of the contractors, suppliers, and consultants, we would be unable to provide these extra services.

**If you have any ideas on how we can use our community benefits funding, please contact Vicki Brown, Property Services Officer.**

# Landscaping Update

We are now in our Spring/ Summer phase of landscaping within our developments. You should have now noticed that the Landscape contractors have been starting to prepare our communal gardens for the summer months. If you have any issues that you would like to bring to our attention, please do not hesitate to contact us.

## SUMMER MONTHS (APRIL TO OCTOBER)

- Grass Cutting - Every 10 working days, except in very inclement weather conditions.
- Grass Edging - Every 10 working days plus annual edge reforming (not including naturalised areas).
- Shrub Pruning - Once or twice per year, depending on species.
- Weed Control - As required.
- Hedge Trimming - 2 times per year
- Litter Picking - Every 10 working days



## STAFF OUT AND ABOUT



**Adele Rae,** Housing Services Officer



**Vicki Brown,** Property Services Officer



**Grahame Phillips,** Property Services Officer (Inspections)



**Chris McShane,** Tenant Engagement & Communications Officer



**Leona Hens,** Assistant Housing Services Officer



**David Bishop,** Housing Services Assistant

**Adele covers all our Fife areas.**

## ESTATE INSPECTIONS

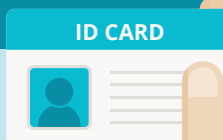
At present we have put our regular Estate Inspections on hold due to current staffing levels. If you would like to report any estate repairs or any issues that you wish to discuss please call 01259 722899 or alternatively send pictures to [customerservices@ochilviewha.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@ochilviewha.co.uk).

**ON HOLD**

## Contractors should be showing ID

Please remember that any of the Association's contractors that attend your home should be able to show you photographic ID.

**If you are unsure, please contact us on 01259 722899 and we can verify if they have been instructed on behalf of the Association.**



HAPPY TO TRANSLATE