

Housing Matters

Taigheadas na Gàidhealtachd

Spring 2023

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INTRODUCTION

Brian Cameron – Service Lead, Housing Policy and Performance

Welcome to our Spring 2023 newsletter.

This year we continue to face some real challenges ahead, particularly with the ongoing Cost of Living crisis across the country. We are fully aware of the impact this has on every one of our tenants, and are committed to supporting you as much as we can through this difficult period.

In this newsletter you will find details on the help and support we can provide, including details of the partnership energy advice service with ALLenergy who can help our tenants with difficulties they may be having with the increase in fuel bills.

The Council would like to thank all our tenants who responded to the annual rent consultation before Christmas. Subsequent to that, the Housing & Property Committee approved a 4% rent increase to come into effect from 1st April. This increase is significantly below inflation and Highland remain in the lowest quartile of Council house rents in Scotland. The limited increase should hopefully assist tenants who may struggle otherwise to pay a higher rent.

Unfortunately, the increase is insufficient to maintain all the services we would like to carry out as a result of inflation which has led to a large increase in the costs of repair works. In 2023/24, we may have to limit some non-essential repairs such as environmental works and fence/gate/path repairs. The Council appreciates that this may cause some tenants concern, but our priority will be to deliver essential and statutory repairs and works in the coming months.

Tenant feedback as to how we prioritise our budgets is vital, and our tenant participation team are keen to talk to our tenants about how you think your rental money should be spent.

As always, we are here to help so please do not hesitate to get in touch with your housing officer or tenant participation officer – tenant.participation@highland.gov.uk



Getting Involved!

Tenant Participation is all about tenants and landlords working together to improve housing services and our housing estates to be the best they can be!

The tenant participation team currently work with 22 registered tenant and resident groups across Highland as well as informal tenant groups and individual tenants. We run focus groups on issues such as repairs, rents and estate management and we have a tenant forum who meet every two months to discuss highland wide policies and current issues.

Many of our tenant and resident groups have won national awards for the work they are doing in their communities! (Photo above: Upper Achintore Regeneration Group win National award – TPAS 2022)

Check out our YouTube channel to see what some of our tenants are saying about their experiences in Tenant Participation!

<https://www.youtube.com/@tenantparticipationhighlan9229>

If you would like more information about how you can get involved contact us at tenant.participation@highland.gov.uk or on our web site www.highland.gov.uk/tenantparticipation



OPTIONS FOR HOUSING

Low-cost Initiative for First Time Buyers (LIFT)

If you are looking to purchase a house but are struggling to save up a deposit, the LIFT schemes may help you get onto the property ladder.

These schemes help you purchase a home through a shared equity process. You will typically buy 60%-90% of a property's total value with the remaining equity share is held by the Scottish Government. This means your deposit will be based on, for example, 70% of the property value and not 100%.

You will pay off after selling your home or via one off payments. No rent is paid on this share. You can purchase both New Build and open market properties.

For information and how to apply for both the New Build and Open Market schemes, please visit their information pages on the Scottish Government website.

NEW BUILD - <https://www.mygov.scot/new-supply-shared-equity-scheme>

OPEN MARKET - <https://www.mygov.scot/open-market-shared-equity-scheme>

Low-cost Initiative for First-Time Buyers

LIFT



Mid-Market Rent Scheme

Mid-Market Rent properties are affordable housing where rent is set below the normal private market level in the local area and higher than what a tenant would normally pay in social housing. Rent levels are usually set at around 85% – 100% of the local housing allowance (Housing Benefits).

Mid-Market Rent is targeted at people on a low to moderate income and provides an alternative solution to people who are struggling to find affordable private rent properties or achieve a social housing allocation.

There are Mid-Market Rental properties available across the Highlands and offer an alternative housing option for those looking to re-house. Mid-Market properties are available to both tenants and those living with tenants.

To make an application and find out the specific eligibility criteria, please visit Highland Housing Alliance and Highland Residential.

Highland Housing Alliance - <https://hhainverness.com> or contact them on 01463 251133

Highland Residential - <http://www.highlandresidential.co.uk> or contact them on 01463 701271

Make swapping your home a breeze with House Exchange !

Looking for a new home? Maybe it's for a new job, more space for the family or to be closer to loved ones. Whatever the reason, you can find that new home by swapping your home with another Council or Housing Association tenant.

Sometimes it is difficult to find another tenant to swap with. To help you find your new home, the Council and HHR Partner Landlords have teamed up with House Exchange.

They are a free online platform that helps you find a swap. They have properties across Highland and the UK. There are already over 600 Highland Council and Housing Association tenants on House Exchange.

Register today with House Exchange by visiting www.houseexchange.org.uk and start looking for your new home!

Speak with your Housing Officer if you have any questions.



Paying your rent during the “Cost of living Crisis”

In our last newsletter we gave you advice on organisations which could help with welfare benefit, debt and money advice during the “cost of living” crisis. This advice can be found again below.

We also asked you to prioritise paying your rent.

Paying your rent on time is a condition of your tenancy. If you do not, you could end up losing your home. We also need you to pay your rent so we can continue to provide services such as repairs and improvements to your homes.

The Cost of Living (Tenant Protection) (Scotland) Act 2022 was introduced in 2022 and will be in place until September 2023. This prevents social landlords from evicting their tenants in some circumstances. However, the Council can still go to Court and ask for an order to evict in cases where the tenant has substantial rent arrears. This has been clarified by the Scottish Government as arrears over £2, 250..

If you are in arrears or are worried about how you will be able to continue paying your rent over the coming months, please do not ignore the situation. This applies particularly if your arrears are approaching or are over £2, 250.

Where to get help and advice

Please get in touch with your housing officer as soon as possible – there is help and advice available. You will find their contact details on any recent reminder letters or **telephone 01349 886602**. They are the first point of contact for any tenant in arrears or financial difficulty and can help you access welfare benefit, debt, money management and housing support advice.



You can also follow the steps in our “Worrying about money” leaflet to find out where to get help in Highland. <https://bit.ly/3JnUBNp> - the leaflet is also available on-line in the following community languages: Gaelic, polish, Arabic, Dari and Ukrainian – search “Benefits – Benefits Advice” at www.highland.gov.uk.

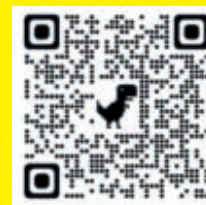
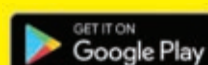
A new website providing information on the wide range of advice and financial support available to people in Scotland has been launched.

Developed by the Scottish Government as a ‘one stop shop’ to help those struggling with the cost of living crisis, the website includes information on help available for households to meet rising energy, housing and other costs

<http://gov.scot/costoflivingsupport>



There is also a **Worrying About Money? Highland app**. These apps are intended to help navigate individuals to sources of help to alleviate the cost of living crisis.



Here to Help

Moving into your first home is challenging for anyone. Some young people find it particularly challenging – especially if they've not had opportunities to learn the skills, or get support, from their families.

We know that having someone you can rely on for help is important. We know that worries about things like money or pressure from others can make life difficult.

This is what one care leaver advises:

Ask for help, rely on others, but depend on yourself.

Asking for help can be difficult. I'm not sure why, maybe it's because we are in some way saying that we don't know what to do and that can feel helpless. That's not the case; asking for help is really important because you can't do everything yourself, as much as you might like to, or feel you have to. Make peace with reaching out. There's a balance between relying on people and depending on yourself. By reaching out you can gain skills that increase your independence. Being in care, most things are done for you and lots of things happen in the background of your life. When you leave care, it can be scary, because that goes. This is where we learn to depend on ourselves, and it is important to start to think this way too. A balance of asking for help, relying on others, and depending on yourself will really benefit you.

Our housing officers are here to help. Get in touch with your local housing office if you need any advice or help about anything to do with your tenancy. Just call **01349 886602** or visit your local housing office or service point. Find out more on www.highland.gov.uk/housing

If you were a 'looked after' young person when you were 16 and you're under 26, you may be entitled to help and support. Get in touch with us or Barnardo's Springboard to find out more.

See www.highland.gov.uk/careleavers to find out more.

Leadership Group



When?

Monday 17th April 5:30pm - 7:30pm
and every second Monday after that

What?

Come and join us at Clach every second Monday for food and a catch up! Hang out and let us know what groups and activities you are interested in setting up. Can't wait to see you all again!



Contact details

Leave a comment or give us a message on our facebook page if you're interested in coming along!
@HighlandChamps



CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE | 14-30 YEARS





ARE YOU CARE EXPERIENCED AND LOOKING FOR A CREATIVE OPPORTUNITY?

CREATIVE WRITING - ART - MUSIC - DRAMA - FILM OR ANY OTHER CREATIVE OUTLET

- + FUNDING + SUPPORT + PROFESSIONAL MENTORING
- + PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT THE TEAM:
E: [CREATIVITYANDCARE@MONACKMHOR.ORG.UK](mailto:creativityandcare@monackmhor.org.uk)
T: 01463 592828

ALL FOR FREE





legacy partner
artsculpture
MONACK MHOR
Cambus

The TPAS Scotland National Good Practice Awards



Highland Council tenants and resident groups were in the limelight at the 2022 National Good Practice awards in Glasgow in June 2022 with Liz Richardson and Upper Achintore Regeneration Group both coming runners up in their categories. With over 200 nominations no mean feat!

The Alan Ferguson Champion Tenant or Resident of the Year

Runner up: Liz Richardson

Liz Richardson from Highland Council helped improve services, create positive working relationships, improve housing provision for people with a disability and got more tenants involved in tenant participation.

Unfortunately, Liz was unable to attend the presentation so Tenant Participation Officer, Karin MacKay received it on her behalf from Lesley Baird, CEO, TPAS



Best practice in Developing Community Award

Runner up: Fort William's, Upper Achintore Regeneration Group

Through a tailored approach Upper Achintore Regeneration Group (UARG) from Fort William improves the lives of all those living in the area by listening to needs and finding ways to address them via regeneration of the area.

Chair of the UARG, Mark Linfield, received the award on behalf of the group.

UARG are currently working to develop a Community Hub for residents to hold meetings and events to benefit the local community. They have identified a possible site and have an agreement with Highland and Islands Enterprise for the land to be reserved until 2025. Consultants are currently preparing designs and costings, following which the Group will hold a public consultation

Ardgay

Tenants and residents in **Ardgay and Bonar Bridge** are keen to set up a Tenant and Residents group and had their first successful meeting in March. One of the first projects residents hope to progress is to create a community orchard and they are currently identifying potential sites. If you are interested in joining them, please contact Tenant Participation Officer, Lisa Robertson on 07387 234107

What's happening in Aviemore?

The **Alain Baxter Court Residents Group** in Aviemore, which is open to all resident in the building, held their first meeting of the year to discuss issues affecting residents and for an update from their TPO. The group decided to deliver Easter eggs to homes in Alain Baxter Court where children are known to reside and have plans to plant flowers and shrubs in communal areas in line with advice from the Highland Council amenities team.

Aviemore Sheltered Housing attended their first Tenant Participation coffee morning in the local Glen Centre who kindly gave the use of their lounge along with crockery and a kettle. The meeting was very successful and enjoyed by all who attended. It was decided to make the coffee morning a monthly event and the next meeting will take place on Wednesday 17th May at 10.30am.

Caol Residents Group

Caol Residents Group in Lochaber successfully secured funding to run a warm space "Bite and Blether" for all the community to come along for a warm bowl of soup, hot drinks, and scones. The aim of these meetings is to target social isolation, food waste, fuel poverty and for the residents and tenants to find out what's going on in their area. The first meeting started on Monday 27th February in Caol Youth Centre at 3.30pm and will continue every Monday till June. Both Allenergy and traffic police have attended to give advice and answer any questions.



The **Claggan Residents Association** in Fort William are continuing their efforts

to recruit more residents to get involved in improving their area and have plans to hold a community litter pick. If you live in the Claggan area and would like to find out more about the group, please visit their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/clagganresidentsassociation>



Tenant Participation Officer Lisa Robertson at a tenant participation event in Caithness

Mansfield Residents Association

The **Mansfield Residents Association** in Tain recently held First Aid and DEFIB training for residents in the area to be able to provide more help when incidents occur and hope to further enhance their skills with Naloxone training for recognising the signs of opioid overdose and to understand what steps to take. They are also looking into establishing a Women's group to offer peer support to women in the area for which Tesco have offered a venue and refreshments.



McLean Court Residents Group



Newly established **McLean Court Residents' Group** in Nairn are now a Registered Tenant Organisation, and have several projects planned including raised accessible planters, revamping the garden areas and fundraising for new curtains and seats in the communal lounge. They hold monthly meetings and weekly coffee mornings as well as a fish supper evening every Friday where the suppers are delivered to McLean Court and residents can choose whether to eat together in the communal lounge or take it back to their home.

Queenspark Residents' Group



The **Queenspark Residents' Group** in Nairn hold monthly meetings and all residents of Queenspark are welcome to attend. The next meeting will be on the 15th May at 7pm in the Cadet Hut. Guest speakers are invited to the meetings which have so far included housing officers, Police Scotland, Councillors, local community council representatives and an orchard expert.

In recent months the group has planted four donated fruit trees in a mini orchard in John Street next to their flower bed along with more bulbs. They have also purchased a further five fruit trees and pots and planted these ready for siting around the Queenspark area as part of plans to make better use of communal grassed areas.

Gordons Sawmill in Nairn kindly donated wood for a chatty bench, which is being made by a local joiner free of charge and will incorporate planters. It is hoped the bench will provide a warm welcome to Queenspark and a place for residents to sit and chat.

Morag Anderson, Chair, collected donations of Easter tombola prizes from Tesco for the Queenspark Easter Eggstravaganza.



BINGO

South Kessock Residents Association

South Kessock Residents Association, Inverness, held a fundraising Prize Bingo night and raffle at the Madras Hall on Monday 27th March, which was the place to be as the hall was packed! The group received donations of a huge bounty of prizes from local residents and businesses, which helped them raise a total of £690 which SKRA will use for future community events.

Smithton Residents Association



Tenants and residents from Smithton, Inverness, were joined by the local Scout group and their leaders on 25th March to take part in a community clean up day. Organised by the **Smithton Residents Association**, the volunteers collected rubbish from the park and nearby streets working their way down towards the local shop taking a large amount of litter away from the estate. The volunteers met back up at the park for refreshments and the scouts enjoyed their well-earned packed lunches.

The **Smithton Residents Association** are planning an event to celebrate the King's Coronation on May 6th, this event will be held at the Smithton Hotel. The festivities organised include a musical instruments workshop, fun activities for the kids and an afternoon tea for the local community to enjoy.

(The group's AGM will either be 9th or 23rd of May as they are waiting for confirmation of room availability from Smithton Church)

Windsor Place Residents Association

A soggy day for Windsor Place clean-up! The weather did not deter residents from Windsor Place, Conon Bridge from turning out for their community clean up!



The Hub in Windsor Place is going from strength to strength! Run by the **Windsor Place Residents Association**, recent events have included a successful games night on the 21st February and the book swap and homemade soup were much appreciated additions to the night and proved popular with all in attendance. The food larder at the hub has been opened and residents are welcome to pop in and check what is available before they go shopping. The residents are also encouraged to make suggestions on which dry products they would like to see on the shelves. Emergency provisions are also available.

The group can be contacted by email at WindsorResidentsA@outlook.com or through their Facebook page <https://m.facebook.com/groups/966082160639082/?ref=sha>

CONDENSATION, DAMP AND MOULD - ADVICE AND GUIDANCE FOR TENANTS.

Condensation can be a real problem for tenants but is simple to prevent. Condensation is moisture on the surface of things like windows and walls that, if left, can turn into black mould.

When humid air settles on cold surfaces it turns into condensation. If these water droplets cannot dry off through good airflow or are not wiped away this may become a problem and mould may grow.

Often, condensation can be seen on windows and sills. When more severe, condensation and mould will affect walls, or it may even soak into wallpaper, paintwork and furniture. It can often be found in corners of rooms where there is little airflow.

How to prevent condensation and mould

The following advice/guidance to tenants can help:

HEAT YOUR HOME

- Maintain a warm environment - constant low heating is better than extreme hot and cold.

KEEP YOUR HOME VENTILATED

- The single most important step is to ensure good ventilation, especially in kitchens and bathrooms. Open windows slightly, use an extractor fan when using these rooms and do not cover air vents. These steps will help to direct moisture outside the house and prevent condensation in your home. Close kitchen and bathroom doors when these rooms are in use to prevent steam escaping into colder rooms.
- Regularly clean all vents and extractor fans to prevent a build-up of dust in these areas.

REDUCE MOISTURE LEVELS

- Dry clothes outside if possible, if you use a condenser tumble dryer ensure to regularly empty the water reservoir and clean all filters. If you use a vented tumble dryer ensure that the vent goes outside and regularly clean to prevent a build-up of lint.
- Cover pans when cooking
- Open windows when running a bath/showering
- Clear windowsills of clutter, so it's easier to open windows
- Leave a gap between furniture and walls

VACUUM REGULARLY

- Vacuuming helps to remove mould spores and dust. Mould feeds on dust
- Do not brush sills etc, as this spreads spores

REMOVE EXCESS MOISTURE

- Wipe windows and sills with a clean dry cloth each morning to remove any water that has settled overnight

What to do if you already have condensation and mould

CONDENSATION

- Use a dry cloth to wipe away moisture from windows, sills, mirrors or walls each morning.

REMOVE MOULD *(wearing gloves)*

- Wash the mould growths using a cloth with soap and water.
- Leave surfaces to dry with plenty of ventilation
- Do not reuse cloths infected with mould/spores to prevent spreading

If the problem persists and you are worried and have any concerns about dampness or mould in the structure of your home, then please contact the **Service Centre** on **01349 886602** to request a maintenance officer inspection.

Your maintenance officer may wish to commission an independent survey from a specialist structural contractor if the problem persists.

Further advice/guidance can be accessed via the following links:-

<https://www.which.co.uk/reviews/damp/article/how-to-stop-condensation-acozb9j5hEsb>

<https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/fixing-damp-and-condensation?loc=scotland>

<https://www.acha.co.uk/resources/Damp-and-Mould.pdf>

Once a condensation and/or dampness/mould report has been reported to the Service Centre or Service Point, the issue will be fully investigated.

Electrical inspections

The Scottish Housing Regulator has confirmed that social landlords in Scotland are required to carry out electrical inspections on all social housing. This is a 5-yearly requirement. During the pandemic, Highland like most other landlords focused on carrying out these inspections at the void stage or when carrying out major works. Highland now intends to resume cyclical inspections to ensure the safety of our houses and it is anticipated that around one-quarter of our properties may be inspected in the coming 12 months.

In the course of 2023/2024, Highland will be issuing work orders to our own electricians and our contractors to carry out these inspections.

The electrician will test and inspect the fixed electrical installations in the property. This will include wiring, plug sockets, light fittings, fuse boxes, electric showers and extractor fans. They can make any immediate hazards safe before they leave your home and may have to return if there are longer-term improvements identified (for example, replacing a fuse box).

The average inspection takes approximately 2 hours and unfortunately the electricity will need turned off for the duration of the inspection.

Please note that this is a health and safety requirement and your cooperation is appreciated in providing access for this work.

Could Telecare help you?



NHS Highland offer a telecare service to anyone who needs it. As we get older, knowing how we can stay safe and independent is very important. Telecare is a monitoring service that supports independent living. It gives confidence that help is available 24 hours a day. With telecare you can get a personal alarm and other monitored devices (such as fall detectors or home sensors) to call the monitoring centre in an emergency.

To find out more contact **NHS Highland's Telecare Team** on:

- Phone: **01478 614211**
- Email: nhshighland.telecare@nhs.scot
- Website – with online referral form on www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/services/pages/technologyenabledcare.aspx
- Facebook – search for: **NHS Highland Technology Enabled Care**



ALIENERGY help tenants with fuel poverty

Fuel poverty is affecting a large number of tenants, particularly in remote rural areas of the Highland region, and many tenants are finding it a struggle to afford to adequately heat their homes.

Although the control of energy prices is outwith the control of the Council, we need to help our tenants mitigate the worse impacts of the cost of living crisis. To do this, Highland Council has funded a partnership with energy charity Allenergy. Their Affordable Warmth Advice Team can access various fuel poverty crisis intervention grants and schemes, alongside support to improve resilience to fuel poverty going forward and assist tenants who are at high risk.

Did you know...

If you are struggling to afford to heat your home, you are not alone.

Over 40% of households in rural Scotland have difficulty paying their heating bills.

To help mitigate the cost of living crisis, Highland Council has funded a partnership with energy charity Allenergy.

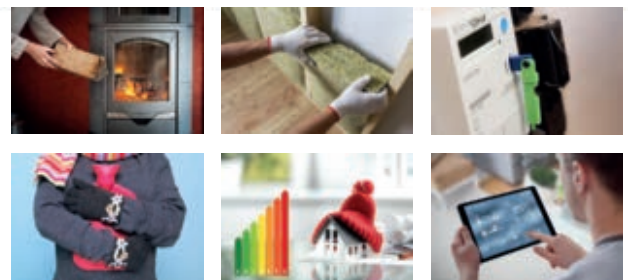
Allenergy's Affordable Warmth Advice Team can access various crisis intervention grants to help with heating costs, alongside support to improve resilience going forward.

Highland Council Tenants can get help and advice from Allenergy by contacting their Housing Officer and asking to be referred to Allenergy - or email tenant.participation@highland.gov.uk

Speak to us about:

Crisis Grants—Bills—Energy Suppliers—Tariffs
Insulation—Appliances—Prepayment Meters
Smart Meters—Debt Relief—Fuel Vouchers

ALIENERGY



Affordable Warmth Service

Free, confidential and impartial
home energy advice and support





Garden Aid Scheme



The Council delivers a garden aid service for elderly and disabled tenants who are unable to cut their own gardens and has no one living locally who can cut their garden on their behalf.

The scheme is fully subscribed for 2023.

Below details the customer care code for our tenants who are in receipt of the service. Please note that the service is likely to start in late April and is weather-dependent. Unfortunately, due to a lack of available contractors in Wester Ross and Skye, there is likely to be a reduced service in 2023 and relevant tenants will be notified of this during April.

- Grass-cutting will commence in April and conclude in early October. **There will be one cut in April, May, September and October. There will be 2 cuts in June, July and August.**
- If your garden has not been cut within the above timescales, please contact the contractor in the first instance; please note that timescales may be impacted by inclement weather.
- Normal working hours are between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday. If contractors wish to work outside these hours, they must get your permission.
- The contractor's staff will carry identity cards. These will include a photograph and name of the person and a name and telephone number for checking purposes.
- Contractors will treat you, your home and garden with respect and consideration. They will protect your garden contents where these do not need to be moved. They will not be allowed to smoke within your home or garden or play a radio or any similar equipment. Similarly, it is expected that you will control any pets while a contractor is in attendance.
- The contractor will pick up any grass clippings and will dispose of these using their vehicles.
- The contractor may ask you to remove any garden furniture or other belongings to enable them to cut your garden; if you do not then they will cut around the appropriate area.
- The contractor will not be expected to cut grass where there is dog mess, but they should notify you of this to allow the work to take place once removed.
- The contractor should not normally require access to electricity supply for the use of power tools. If they need to use your electricity, they will agree this with you before they use it.
- The contractor is responsible for dealing with any complaints in the first instance; if you have any ongoing problems with the grass-cutting service which the contractor cannot resolve, please contact the Highland Council's Service Centre on 01349 886602.

Local Housing Officers have reviewed the cutting list in line with the eligibility criteria and only tenants who are unable to cut their own grass or have no one able to do this for them will be in receipt of garden aid in 2023



Free Period Products in Highland

Free period products are available in Highland to everyone who needs them thanks to Scottish Government funding and partnership work led by The Highland Council. This is in line with the Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021 which aims at fighting period poverty, promote period dignity and break the stigma surrounding periods in Scotland.

There are now over 80 community pick-up points where pads and tampons can be collected. These are in Highland Council and High Life Highland premises such as leisure and community centres, libraries, service points and visitor attractions. Details of these locations and further information can be found on the Council's website at:

www.highland.gov.uk/freepriodproducts

The Highland Council is also working with the social enterprise, Hey Girls, to offer a home delivery service aimed at those living in remote locations in Highland or who would



otherwise have a limited access to the community pick-up points, for example due to a disability. This service also gives access to reusable period products, such as menstrual cups and washable pads.

A further partnership is with CFINE to deliver free period products directly to local food groups, such as community larders and food banks. CFINE operate FareShare Grampian, Highlands & Islands and already distribute surplus food to a network of local groups.



Seeking Research Participants

Homelessness & Autism/ADHD

If you are currently experiencing homelessness
(or have within the past five years)

AND

You are autistic and/or have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder

I would be grateful for your participation.



My name is Aodhan Gallagher and I am a Trainee Clinical Psychologist studying at the University of Glasgow. I am carrying out a research project into homelessness amongst autistic adults and adults with ADHD.

Participation will involve an interview lasting up to 90 minutes with questions relating to your experience of homelessness and how this may have related to your autism and/or ADHD. Those able to take part who come to interviews will be offered £20 Tesco vouchers in return for their time.

If you are interested, please contact me on 0804329g@student.gla.ac.uk for more information on taking part. Alternatively, you can ask staff in the Housing & Homeless Service to contact me on your behalf for more information.



Do not dump items beside your bins or surrounding areas

You can take extra waste and large items that do not fit in your bin to your local Household Waste Recycling Centre.

For large items you can request for a Bulky Uplift Service by calling 01349 886603.

- Sofas and chairs
- Carpets
- Cupboards and tables etc
- Beds and mattresses
- Cookers
- Fridges and freezers

Bagged waste **must be** contained within the refuse bins.

Any waste out with the bins will be classed as fly tipping and a charge will be applied.

What is Fly-tipping?

Fly tipping is the illegal dumping of waste on land, often seen in lay-bys, road verges, fields or open space.

Fly-tipping is an offence under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, for which offenders can be fined £200-£40,000 or receive 6 months imprisonment. Fines are unlimited if the case goes to the Sheriff Court or up to 2 year's imprisonment (up to 5 years if hazardous waste is dumped).

If you do see any fly-tipping please get as much information as you can, such as vehicle registration, descriptions of persons involved and the location but without endangering your own life.

For further information and to report fly-tipping:
01349 886603 recycle@highland.gov.uk www.highland.gov.uk



Become a 'Friend Against Scams' and beat the scammers



Tenants are being encouraged by Trading Standards to sign up to the free Friends Against Scams scheme to help beat scammers.

Friends Against Scams is a national campaign launched by the National Trading Standards (NTS) Scams Team to help prevent people from becoming victims of scams by empowering communities to take a stand against scams. Since 2021, 72 people in Highland have joined the scheme.

Trading Standards now wants more people to sign up to the scheme to be able to spot the signs of scams, report them and look out for those who may become victims.

Friends Against Scams offers a free 20-minute online awareness training to let you learn about the different types of scams and how to spot and support a victim.

To access the training and find out more, visit:

<https://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/become-a-friend/highland>



Anyone can join Friends Against Scams and make a difference in their own way.

After the awareness session, why not share the information with others? This could be by talking to your neighbours, friends or family about scams or writing to your local MP asking them to promote scams awareness. You can also promote Friends Against Scams on your social media platforms.

With increased knowledge and awareness, you can make the subject of scams part of everyday conversation with your family, friends and neighbours, which will enable them to also protect themselves and others from scams.

Reporting and advice

You can report scams to Trading Standards on 01463 644570 or to Police Scotland on 101.

If you have made a payment in response to a scam, contact your bank as soon as possible as they may be able to recover some of your money and will refund you in certain circumstances.

If you or someone else is in immediate danger because of a scam – for example, being threatened by an aggressive doorstep caller, call Police Scotland on 999.



Did you know?

Common scams in Highland include those relating to the cost-of-living crisis, online investment offers, fake HMRC emails, bogus bank phone calls, rogue doorstep



#FriendsAgainstScams
www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk
Become a #SCAMBassador Today



USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

Housing Enquiries / Homeless Service	01349 886602
Out of hours Housing emergency repair / homeless service	01349 886691
Welfare Support Team	0800 090 1004
Universal Credit – open from 9:30am until 3:30pm Monday - Friday	0800 328 5644 (phone) 0800 328 1344 (text)
Operations Team (Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reductions and other Council Benefits)	0800 393811
HMRC Helpline – open from 8am to 4pm Monday to Friday	0800 024 1222
Age Scotland	0800 12 44 222
NHS 24 (only to be called if local GP practice is closed)	111
Waste enquiries	01349 886603
Scottish Power	0845 272 7999
GAS (Emergency)	0800 111 999
Home Energy Scotland	0808 808 2282
Police	(Non Emergency) 101
Samaritans	116 123
Social Work-out of hours	0845 769 7284
Funeral Support Payment (Social Security Scotland)	0800 182 2222
CAB	0800 028 1456

USEFUL WEBSITES

Health and Care Advice	https://www.nhsinform.scot/
Scottish Gov Cost of Living Support	http://gov.scot/costoflivingsupport
Highland Council Welfare Team – Worrying about Money leaflet	https://bit.ly/3JnUBNp
Citizen Advice Scotland	https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland/debt-and-money/
Dept of Work and Pensions	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions
Mental Health and Wellbeing	https://breathingspace.scot/how-we-can-help/what-we-do/#
Advice for Refugees And Asylum Seekers	https://www.nhsinform.scot/care-support-and-rights/health-rights/access/healthcare-for-refugees-and-asylum-seekers
Highland Council - Help with Cost of Living	https://www.highland.gov.uk/costofliving
Universal Credit Advice Line	https://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk
Money Advice	https://www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk