



LANGSTANE NEWS



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ISSUE 43 • Winter 2022

Your questions answered!

Our Support Service in action

Guide to recycling

Planned maintenance update

Summer News consultation update

Welcome visits

New Financial Newsletter 2022

Partnership with local organisations to provide support over winter

We are proud to announce our partnership with three brilliant local charities to try and help our communities and support our customers through these challenging times.

The first organisation we have partnered with is Scarf, they will help us provide energy saving advice to our customers. We were awarded £61,000 from the Scottish Government Fuel Support Fund and Scarf will be key to helping us support as many of our customers as we can. This project will take place in two phases, the first assisting our customers who have their gas supply currently capped and the second helping our wider customer group.

In addition to the services offered from Scarf, we are delighted to announce our partnership with AberNecessities who provide disadvantaged families with the essential and basic necessities that no child should go without.

CFINE are our third local partner and we are in discussions with them regarding a referral process for our customers to ensure they can access not only food but the breadth of other services CFINE can offer.

Langstane Housing Association's chief executive, Helen Gauld, said "We are truly delighted to be able to join forces with three very well-respected organisations in the north east. It is vital our combined services work toward helping those who



L-R: Danielle Flecher-Horn - co-founder of AberNecessities, Lawrence Johnston - co-CEO of Scarf, Helen Gauld - Chief Executive of Langstane Housing Association and Fiona Rae - Chief Executive of CFINE

are most vulnerable due to the current cost of living and energy crisis.

Of the families living in our homes, 32% are in arrears of more than one month and many of these families will require support from Scarf, AberNecessities and CFINE to avoid crisis this winter. On top of this we have a number of other customers who are already in arrears and are feeling the pressure of this challenging economic climate and we want to create new ways to help our customers and communities with the things that matter to them most. These new partnerships are the first step in achieving this."

If you would like to be referred to any of these local organisations, please contact our Customer Service Team on 01224 423000.



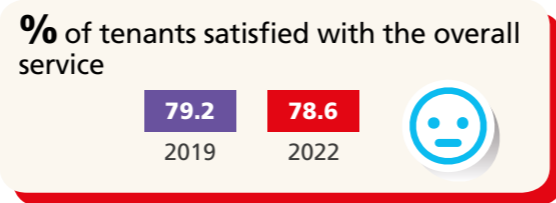
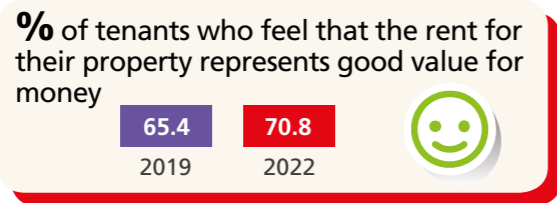
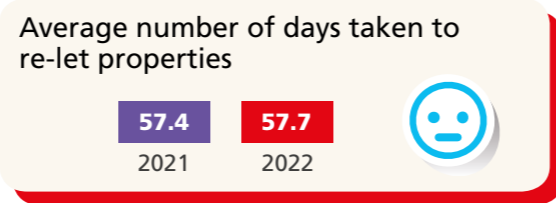
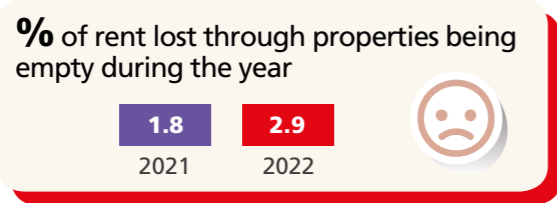
Our performance 2021 – 22

Key

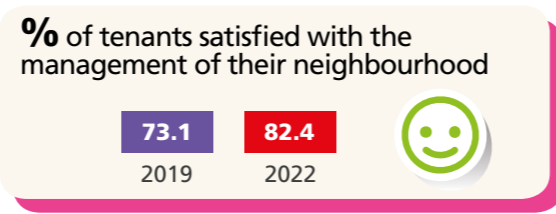
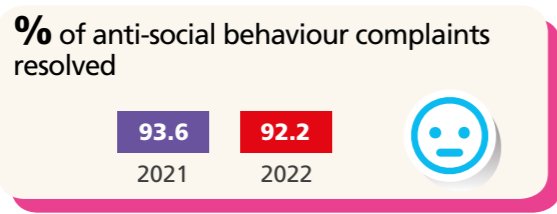
- Better than last year
- Stayed the same
- We hit target
- Not as good as last year

Getting good value for rents and service charges

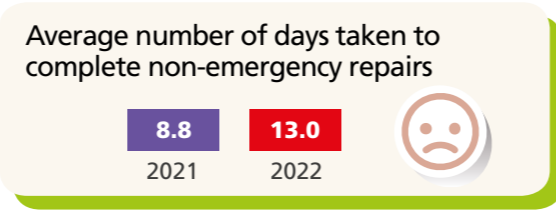
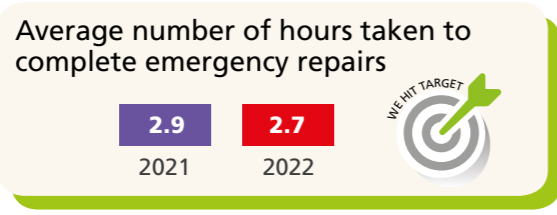
Value for money



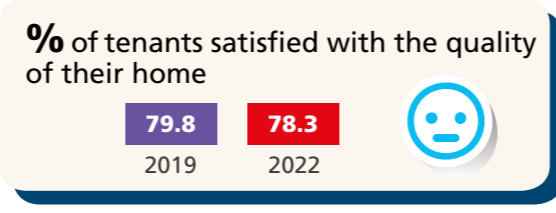
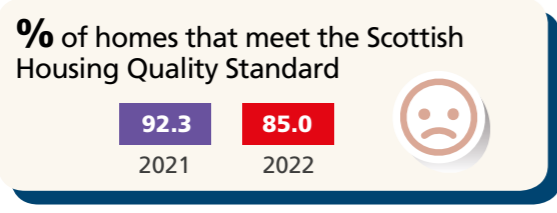
Neighbourhood and community



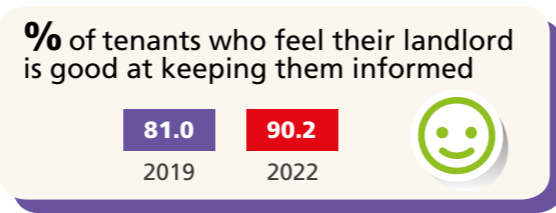
Housing quality and maintenance



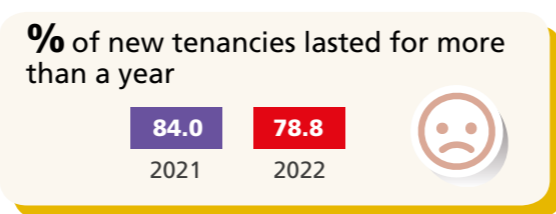
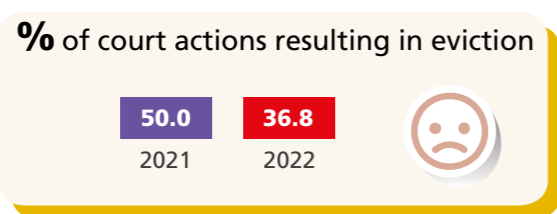
Quality of housing



The customer - landlord relationship



Tenancy sustainment



Catherine Dalgarno shares great progress made in the past year and future plans for our employees



In my role as People and Culture Manager I've been privileged over the last year since joining the team to play a part in modernising and simplifying many of our internal systems and processes and supporting positive change within Langstane.

In our Annual Report we gave you a summary of the great work that is being done, and as we reach the end of 2022 here's an update recognising the contributions made by the team on this journey.

Developing our employees

Change is never easy for anyone, and has seen a steep learning curve for many of the team, coming out of their comfort zones and taking on new systems and tasks. To support everyone with this we're developing a new approach to learning and development. Key programmes so far have been internal

Customer Service training; online IT webinars for all employees on the upgraded Microsoft Office 365 software, as well as for our new HR system. We've focused on other training priorities such as behavioural safety workshops and role specific training. Colleagues across Langstane have embarked on professional qualifications with the Chartered Institute of Housing and on Digital Marketing.

Working together on our Mission

Like all organisations at this point in time, there is a lot to deliver with a significant pace of change and a difficult economic picture across the UK. With that backdrop, we will only be successful when we all play our parts and work together as a team. We take great pride in this work – being mindful that at the heart is our Mission – to provide homes and services that make a positive difference to people's lives.

Enjoy this Winter newsletter and from each and every one of us at Langstane, we wish you a very happy Christmas and best wishes for 2023.

We're coming to you...



We are planning to team up with Aberdeenshire Council's Tenant Participation Promotion Team (TPPT) in 2023 for a touring roadshow. The aim is for us to come to you and visit your communities across the North East.

We will set up local drop-in points where tenants can visit staff and discuss:

- How to become an involved tenant helping us deliver the services that are best for you
- Any issues in your home or neighbourhood
- Your housing options, or chat about any support needs you may have

Tenants can also:

- Speak to staff from Aberdeenshire Council if you have any issues within your wider community
- Catch up with other tenants and have a cuppa and cake...

The sessions will run from 10am till 12 noon and the locations are still to be arranged.

We need to hear from you so we know where we are most needed. So if you would like us to visit your local area please get in touch with Samantha, our Customer Participation Officer, at samantha.hough@langstane-ha.co.uk.

New chairperson



Our Board of Management has recently appointed a new chairperson, Mike Martin.

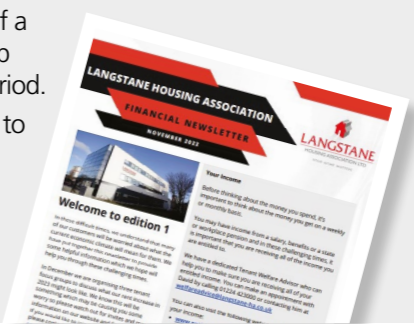
Mike joined [Langstane's Board](#) in January 2019 and brings with him a wealth of experience in the social housing and care sectors.

Mike Martin said "It is a great privilege to become the Chair of Langstane, a privilege but also a considerable responsibility, particularly given the challenging times we are going to face over the next few years. My objective is to ensure we sustain the strengths of the organisation, maintain a secure financial base so we can continue to provide good quality homes and services while also seeking to innovate and develop to continually improve the range and quality of our homes and support services. A big challenge for us all, but one I am looking forward to embracing along with my fellow Board members."

Our new Financial Newsletter

We have recently published the first edition of a new financial newsletter to provide some help and support during this difficult economic period. Visit our website at www.langstane-ha.co.uk to view it.

If you would like a hard copy please contact our Customer Participation Officer Samantha at samantha.hough@langstane-ha.co.uk or 01224 423120.



Planned maintenance update



Our contractors have been working hard on our programme of upgrades throughout the summer and autumn months. So far, we have completed the following works in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire.

The completed works are:

Replacement bathrooms	36a-44f Don Street 1-25 Charlotte Gardens
Heating upgrades	1-60 Charlotte Gardens 90a-g John Street 45-90 Stevenson Court 1-19 Anderson Court



Visit our website to view the full programme on page four of our Summer News 2022:
[Newsletters \(langstane-ha.co.uk\)](http://langstane-ha.co.uk)

Cannabis use

Recently we have been receiving a number of complaints about the use of cannabis by a small minority of tenants. In particular, the smell, as when cannabis is smoked it gives off a strong pungent smell. This can spread out into communal areas and neighbouring properties having an adverse effect on other residents.

Whilst there are a number of views around the use of the drug, and particularly about its use for medical reasons, at this time cannabis is a Class B drug and still illegal. We would remind all tenants that under Section 3.3 of their Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST) Agreement: "you, those living

with you, and your visitors must not use or sell unlawful drugs or sell alcohol." Any misuse of drugs by you, those living with you or your visitors, may result in further action being taken against you that ultimately could put your tenancy at risk.

If you have concerns about illegal drugs and related anti-social behaviour in and around your home, then first report it to Police Scotland on 101. You can also report them anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111. Then please contact your Housing Officer.

To find out who your Housing Officer is please visit our website www.langstane-ha.co.uk and click through



to the [Services \(langstane-ha.co.uk\)](http://langstane-ha.co.uk) page and then click [Housing Services \(langstane-ha.co.uk\)](http://langstane-ha.co.uk) and you will see an option for 'find your housing officer'.

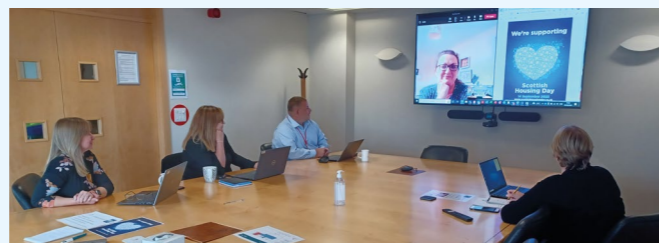
Meet Langstane's Eco Group!

The team come together from across the Association working to achieve some of the goals set down in our Sustainability Strategy. Sustainability is about making sure our current actions and decisions include considering the impact on the world in the future. All group members have an interest in the environmental impact of what we are doing here at Langstane.

Our key objectives are to:

- Improve the energy efficiency of our homes
- Reduce fuel poverty
- Reduce carbon emissions arising from our activities
- Improve business efficiency and reduce waste
- Purchase responsibly

It's not always easy to balance the needs of the Association with the wider impact on the environment, but the group works to make sure that we think about this as a routine part of our approach. It can be something as simple as improving our approach to paper use and recycling, to more complex things like our approach to staff travel and logistics. See our feature on recycling on page 8.



Update on cleaning satisfaction survey 2022

Part of our cleaning contract is to monitor tenant satisfaction. So in July we carried out a survey to see how you felt about the quality of cleaning in your buildings. This survey was sent to all those who pay for communal cleaning charge. Below are a sample of your comments along with what action we took in response to your feedback.

1,120 emails were sent with **617** hard copies.

We received **281** responses, giving a **16.2%** response rate.

Your comments:



You also told us that you know when the cleaners are in as there is a fresh smell in the block, and you check the sign-off sheets to make sure they have attended. You also noted that wet floor signs are set out.

Outcomes:

Your queries:	Our actions:
You would like to see more wet floor signs!	We worked with the contractor, and they have increased their signage. We have also started adding wet floor warnings to the noticeboards, which advise that the floors get mopped, and that floors may be slippery.
How often is the water changed?	All cleaning staff have access to a fully stocked van with supplies of fresh water. Mop heads are washed regularly and replaced when required.

If you would like to discuss the communal cleaning in your building, please call our Customer Service Team on 01224 423000.

The call will then be passed to your Estates Assistant. If they are unavailable (as they may be out in our neighbourhoods) they will contact you to discuss the issue as soon as possible.

We would like to thank all tenants who took part in our survey; and congratulations to those prize winners who received a £20 shopping voucher of their choice. See page 12 for more information on our prize winners.

Giving us your opinion really does matter as it helps us deliver services that are right for you. Your voice really does matter.

Winter Hints and Tips



Our last few winters have been very cold indeed. Make sure you're ready should the cold set in again this year:

- Do not use boiling water to clear ice and snow as it creates more of a slip hazard; always use salt and grit.
- Report any overflows or leaking guttering if your pathway is getting wet. Report it before it starts freezing over.
- In an extra cold spell keep your heating on constantly at a low temperature.
- If you have an elderly neighbour please look out for them and help where you can.



Welcome to GREC



We are delighted to welcome Grampian Regional Equality Council (GREC) to share our office space at King Street. GREC are a registered charity who take a leading role in advancing equality across the North East of Scotland.

They work to tackle prejudice and discrimination, celebrate diversity and build positive community relations. It's great for Langstane to work more closely with this brilliant organisation and we look forward to the years ahead.

You said - We did

We use your complaints, feedback, and suggestions to improve our services.

You said there were ongoing issues at Charlotte Gardens and Fraser Court, Aberdeen.

Outcome: We have installed a permanent CCTV camera on these schemes so we can monitor the anti-social issues that are ongoing. This will help support the information we are receiving from residents and help us to take the relevant action needed to deal with these problems.

You said you wanted to see staff in your neighbourhoods completing tenant and staff walkabouts.

Outcome: We have completed walkabouts covering our Woodview Court, Redcloak, Charlotte Gardens and George Street schemes in direct response to tenant requests. Our Director of Housing also attended the majority of these walkabouts allowing tenants to receive real time answers to problems on scheme.

You said at a walkabout in partnership with Aberdeen City Council that more lighting was needed in a darkly lit

walkway at the side of our Seaton Place East scheme.

Outcome: Powerful lights have been put in place on this walkway and in the Seaton Place East tenant carpark (as pictured).

If you would like us to visit your neighbourhood and carry out a walkabout please contact Samantha at samantha.hough@langstane-ha.co.uk or call 01224 423120.



How to apply for housing & update on our waiting lists



We've had our own housing portal since 2021, replacing Apply4Homes. Here's some information and updates on our portal and housing list:

- To apply for housing with the Association, either as a new applicant or transfer applicant visit www.langstane-ha.co.uk and click 'Apply for a Home' and follow the instructions to register or update your details.
- We recently contacted any remaining Apply4Homes applicants on our waiting list and asked them to update their application with us. We received a great response rate and managed to help a lot of customers update their status with us.
- Our waiting list currently has 2,667 live applications. We house people as soon as properties become available that meet their needs and priorities. If you need help or advice applying for housing with us email apply@langstane-ha.co.uk or call 01224 423000. You will need your name, address, and date of birth.

Advertising properties on These Homes



We have started advertising some of our vacant properties on both our own website and through These Homes North East Scotland. These Homes is a digital choice-based letting site operated by Castlehill, Hillcrest and Sanctuary Housing Associations. We will also be advertising in the Press and Journal.

We are looking for volunteer board members...

Do you believe in the delivery of high quality services that can and do improve people's lives on a daily basis?

- Have you experience in any of the following – finance, audit and performance management, housing management and construction, health and safety, the legal system, property maintenance, social justice, human resources, equalities, or marketing?
- Are you willing to give up some of your free time to become part of the governing body of a locally based but ambitious housing association?

- We welcome interest from those who share our values and who can bring new thinking to how we operate and approach issues. We also wish our Board to be as diverse as those we serve and welcome those from all sectors of our communities.

If you wish to note an interest or discuss this opportunity informally, please email or phone, giving your name and contact details (email address and / or phone number), Helen Gauld, Chief Executive, on helen.gauld@langstane-ha.co.uk or phone 01224 423004.



Our Housing Support Service in action

(The privacy of the tenant in this story has been protected)

What was the reason for referral?

The tenant is a male in his 50's, living alone with his dog. He struggles with his finances on a daily basis and is now struggling more because of the cost-of-living crisis. Although claiming Universal Credit he is finding it hard to afford to heat his home and has no kettle, so he boils water on his cooker hob to make

a hot drink. At the moment his bedding is a sleeping bag as he doesn't have proper bed covers. He cannot afford a new kettle or bedding.

How did we help?

The team have been able to provide financial help towards heating bills and provided the tenant with a new kettle, a fleece blanket and due to a team member donation, our tenant now has a new duvet.



A great result!

Our tenant was extremely grateful for the help he received and said it would make a huge difference.

Your questions answered

MY VOICE COUNTS

Below are questions asked by tenants during our annual report meeting this year. We promised to get a response from our housing team and feature in this publication.

Q: Why do tenants come and go so quickly from properties?

A: Our stock is made up of a high number of one-bedroom properties housing mainly single people with quite mobile lifestyles. Tenants can leave their properties for many reasons, including:

- Looking for bigger accommodation
- Finding employment in a different area
- Moving in with a partner
- Transferring to a larger property, whether that's with Langstane or another landlord
- Purchasing their own home
- Completing a mutual exchange with another registered social landlord or local authority

Some of our tenants, however, are quite vulnerable and although we can help them manage their tenancy with assistance from our Housing Support and Welfare Benefits services unfortunately some find it difficult to cope and move on.

We also recognise that tenants have a choice about where they would like to live and may choose to move on to a different area or property type than they currently have i.e., from a flat to a house.

Q: What are staff doing to move hard to let properties?

A: We constantly try new methods to let our properties, whilst working within our allocations policy. For example, this year we started using These Homes to advertise a number of our properties across the City and Shire. These Homes is a choice-based lettings service, used by a number of local housing associations. This allows applicants to bid for properties, and provides more choices for the area that they wish to live in. We've also been working closely with several partners to house refugees - in particular people fleeing the war in Ukraine.

You may also have noticed that we are advertising on Facebook and our website: Langstane Housing Association | Aberdeen | Facebook & [Langstane HA \(langstane-ha.co.uk\)](http://Langstane HA (langstane-ha.co.uk)).

Behind the scenes our allocations team are running waiting lists and contacting potential tenants on a daily basis to make sure our properties are let as soon as possible. They also request 'nominations' from the local authority. This helps to relieve some of the pressure on the local authority waiting lists.

JARGON BUSTING:

A nomination is when Local Authorities e.g., Aberdeen City Council, send us an applicant from their waiting list. For more information on how to apply directly for housing or for further information on 'These Homes' with Langstane please see page 6.

If you have any questions you want us to feature in our next edition please send them to Samantha at samantha.hough@langstane-ha.co.uk

Langstane bear on his travels...

Our Langstane bear has been out and about this year visiting areas near you.

If you would like to share an image you've taken with our bear you can send them to us via a private message on our Facebook page Langstane Housing Association | Aberdeen | Facebook or email samantha.hough@langstane-ha.co.uk.



Guide to recycling

Across the three local authority areas there are different approaches to recycling.

Below are details of:

- The bins you should have in each area
- Examples of what can and can't be recycled
- Contact information to learn more about what can and can't be recycled and when your bins are collected

The bins you should have access to are:

Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire	Moray
Mixed recycling bin	Blue lidded bin	Blue bin
General waste	Black refuse bin	Orange box
Brown bin	Food caddy	Purple bin
Communal mixed recycling		Green bin
Communal food bin		Brown bin



Some examples of what can and cannot be recycled in one of the bins per area:

	Bin type	Can recycle	Please don't recycle in this bin!	For more information:
Aberdeen City	Mixed recycling bin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Magazines ✓ Newspapers ✓ Cereal boxes ✓ Drinks cans ✓ Foil trays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Nappies ✗ Food or garden waste ✗ Electrical items 	<p>Aberdeen City Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website: What goes in each bin Aberdeen City Council • Phone: 03000 200 292 (Monday to Friday 9-5pm - option 4)
Aberdeenshire	Blue lidded bin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Butter tubs ✓ Clean yogurt pots ✓ Aluminium trays ✓ Aerosol tins (empty) ✓ Biscuit tins ✓ Cereal boxes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Wet wipes ✗ Sweet packets (plastic) ✗ Toothpaste tubes 	<p>Aberdeenshire Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website: Waste and recycling - what goes where - Aberdeenshire Council • Phone: 03456 08 12 07 (Monday to Friday 8:45-5pm)
Moray	Purple bin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Drinks cans ✓ Plastic drink bottles & containers ✓ Food tins ✓ Foil food trays ✓ Clean tin foil ✓ Aerosols 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Plastic bags ✗ Plastic toys ✗ Oil & paint tins 	<p>Moray Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What Goes Where? - Moray Council • Phone: 0300 123 4565 (Monday to Friday 8:45-5pm)

Queen's Green Canopy

Our tree was planted at Pennan Way on 03 November.

We planted a crab apple tree which will now not only celebrate the Queen's Green Canopy but commemorate the late Queen Elizabeth II (1926-2022).

We will continue to monitor our tree to make sure it thrives in its new home.

For more information on crab apple trees and the Queen's Green canopy visit the websites below:

- [Crab Apple \(Malus sylvestris\) - British Trees - Woodland Trust](#)
- [The Queen's Green Canopy \(queensgreencanopy.org\)](#)



Tackling poverty with CFINE



CFINE are the Community Food Initiatives North East. They offer help and support to individuals, families and communities struggling with food poverty across the North East and into the Highlands.

Here are some places you can get food and hot meals this festive period.

Social Bite – 516 Union Street 01224 981863
Monday – Friday 8am – 9.30am (Breakfast)
2.15pm – 3.30pm (Supper) Service: free breakfast, tea & coffee.
They offer an afternoon service where beneficiaries can go in and receive a hot meal. They will also be offered a piece of fruit and a beverage.

Fountain of Love Church – 31 Palmerston Road 01224 574511
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 12.00pm – 2.00pm
Fountain of love church have reduced the days they provide this service due to covid restrictions, but they are open for beneficiaries to have a free lunch on the days above.

Salvation Army – 28 Castle Street AB11 5BG
Mon & Thurs 10.00am – 1.00pm Tues & Fri 11.30am – 1.00pm
The salvation army has a takeaway service on a Monday and Thursday whereby beneficiaries can drop in past to have a takeaway snack and hot drink.
Tuesday & Friday Manna Cafe - 11.30am - 1.00pm: hot meal provided in The Citadel Community Hub.

Powis Community Centre - 11 Powis Circle 01224 483203
Time: 11.00am to 2.00pm (Mon – Fri)
Surplus food can be collected every weekday and soup available from 12 noon.
Can deliver to those who are housebound, isolating, quarantining or vulnerable if requested. Powis residents only (Powis Circle, Powis Crescent or Bedford Avenue)
Updates are available online at www.facebook.com/powis.community

Bethany Christian Trust
They run a weekly drop in (the Toastie Club) at Trinity Church, 10 Urquhart Road, Aberdeen, AB24 5LL. We provide tea, coffee, soup and a toastie for vulnerable and isolated people in the community and connect with other charities and resources to provide necessary referrals and support.
This runs from 11:30-1 every Wednesday.

Methodist Church - 8 Crown Terrace, Aberdeen AB11 6HE 01224 313940
Open Table offers a free three-course meal between 1pm and 2pm every Sunday at the Methodist Church in Crown Terrace.
Anyone is welcome to come along and enjoy the lunch.

Want more information? Please contact CFINE on:

- Phone: 01224 596156
- Email: info@cfine.org
- Website: www.cfine.org

Help and support information

Breathing space
Confidential phone service for anyone in Scotland experiencing low mood, depression and anxiety.
FREE Phone: 0800 838 587
Website: www.breathingspace.scotland
Opening hours:
Weekdays Monday – Thursday 6pm – 2am
Weekends – Friday 6pm – Monday 6am

Living Life
Living Life is a free phone service for anyone aged 16 and over experiencing low mood, mild/moderate depression and/or anxiety.
FREE Phone: 0800 328 9655
Website: www.nhs24.scot/our-services/living-life/
Opening Hours:
Monday to Friday 1pm-9pm

Penumbra
Short-term support for people, aged over 16, who are feeling overwhelmed, in distress or at crisis point.
Website: www.penumbra.org.uk
Email: aberdeen1stresponse@penumbra.org.uk
Text: 07768 647723
Opening Hours:
Monday to Friday 9am-5pm
Aberdeenshire 1st Response: 0800 135 7950 (free)
Aberdeen 1st Response: 0800 234 3695 (free)
Walk-in Service: 20 Back Wynd, Aberdeen AB10 1JP Appointment service by request

Papyrus – Prevention of Young Suicide
A national charity dedicated to the prevention of young suicide in the UK and to promote mental health and emotional wellbeing in young people.
Phone: 01925 572444
Text: 07786 209697
FREE Hope line: 0800 0684141
Email: admin@papyrus-uk.org
Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org (for confidential suicide prevention advice)
Website: www.papyrus-uk.org

Combat Stress
The Veterans mental health charity provides timely, effective clinical welfare support to veterans who suffer from psychological wounds.
FREE Phone 0800 138 1619
Website: www.combatstress.org.uk

Man chat
A social media page for struggling men to reach out and a weekly meeting to meet up and hopefully clear their heads without any judgement or worry of who was there.
Email: manchatabz@gmail.com

Update on Summer newsletter 2022 consultation

We asked about how you would like us to communicate with you so we can use the most up to date and suitable ways of engaging with you.

Here is an overview of the questions, responses and what we did in reaction to your feedback:

1,712 emails were sent with **752** hard copies. We received **117** responses, giving a **4.7%** response rate.

Outcomes:	
How would you like to communicate with us?	If social media, which platform?
Face-to-Face: 23% Over the phone: 49% Online, including social media: 50% Video call: 3% Paper, including letter: 45%	Facebook: 73% Instagram: 17% Twitter: 8% Other: 33%
How do you think we could make our communications better?	How do you want to hear about important information e.g., rent increases or changes to policy?
Use technology to share important information: 56% Regular face-to-face group meetings: 21% Asking for feedback directly: 50%	Social media: 10% Email: 64% Letter: 69% Face-to-face meeting: 11%
Would you like to be more involved in the Associations work?	Would you like to attend a staff/tenant session to discuss the results of this survey?
Yes: 26% No: 74%	Yes: 66% No: 42%

Actions:

- Used the results to feed into the review of our Tenant Participation Strategy.
- Invited those interested tenants to a meeting in October to discuss the results of the survey. This was our first hybrid meeting with six tenants joining us at our Aberdeen office to discuss our strategy review and how we will continue to monitor and evaluate the strategy moving forward.
- The feedback was also used to review our Communications Strategy.
- Both strategies were presented to our Board of Management in October.

Welcome visits

Our Housing Services team carry out welcome visits to all new tenants. The visit will be within the first six weeks after a tenant moves into their new home.

Welcome visits are an opportunity for tenants to meet their Housing Officers and discuss how they are getting on.

HISTORY:

Before the housing team took on this responsibility, they were completed over the phone by what was the Social Justice team. They are now our Langstane Housing Support Service.

During a welcome visit there is an opportunity to discuss the following:

- The local area and services available
- Rent and options on how to pay it
- Repair responsibilities and how to report them
- Contents insurance
- Tenant participation

Here's what Tom, our Housing Officer for Peterhead and Fraserburgh said about his experience:

"The welcome visits are carried out after the tenant has had time to settle in and it's another chance for them to meet their Housing Officer and ask any questions about their tenancy or make any changes. The benefit of carrying out the welcome visit is good for both the Housing Officer and the tenant, as any issues that may arise can be picked up sooner and earlier intervention around getting support can be made.

What I enjoy about the visits is it's a chance to sit down and have a chat about how they are finding their tenancy."

To find out who your area Housing Officer is please visit our [Services](#) then [Housing Services](#) page on our website.



Celebrating 45 years at Langstane

CELEBRATING
45 YEARS

Langstane formed 45 years ago with two employees and 250 homes. We now have 78 employees and 2,886 homes.

Our background is unique. We were born of injustices local students witnessed as they volunteered in lodging houses of Aberdeen, specifically the one in East North Street. Living in lodging houses was often unsafe. The accommodation was of very poor quality with only small cubicles available. It is shocking that these were still in operation in the 1980s.

Our founders were determined to end the stigma attached to those living in lodging houses. Occupants were mainly single men, and the common perception was they were alcoholics or had mental



Old office building

health problems. The reality in many cases was very different.

At the time, Langstane's approach was innovative. Housing support was provided to those who needed it, giving people a fighting chance to live independently. A significant milestone came when our founders purchased the East North Street lodging house and renovated it into the flats which now form Peacocks Court.

In 1981 we developed the first purpose-built women's refuge in Aberdeen. Our first Chief Executive, Michael Fitzpatrick, was appointed in 1983. Building started on our first new-build homes in Aberdeenshire and Moray in 1984.

Alan Grant was appointed Chief Executive in 1998, a post which he held until 2015. During his tenure Langstane continued to grow. Our first shared equity homes were developed in Portlethen in 2010, and we acquired our first mid-market rent homes in 2014.

Since 2015, under current Chief Executive Helen Gauld, we have had many things to celebrate. Making significant strides in tenant participation,



New office opened in 2007

we have won awards both as an organisation, and side by side with our tenant Ronnie Boyle. Our Peterhead Caley Fisheries building was opened by then Housing Minister Kevin Stewart and was a finalist in the 'Best Regeneration Project' category of the Herald Property Awards.

Unfortunately, stigma can and does still surround social housing today. We continue to champion the rights of those who are disadvantaged in the housing market. We are proud to provide homes and services that meet the needs and aspirations of our tenants current and future. We work hard to do better tomorrow than we've done today.

What the rent increase 2023 means for you

New legislation has been passed by the Scottish Government - the Cost of Living (Tenant Protection) (Scotland) Act 2022. This means that between now and the end of March 2023 all rents, for social housing tenants and for private tenants, have been frozen by the Scottish Government as a result of the cost-of-living crisis.

This hasn't affected your rent yet as we only set rents once a year around March/April.

The Scottish Government will decide early next year whether housing associations will be allowed to raise rents, if necessary, in 2023/24. Both the Scottish Government and Scottish Housing Regulator have said that we should still carry out our normal consultations with tenants on rents for next year.

It is especially important that our consultation with you finds the right balance between rent affordability and the need to maintain our services and continue investing in our homes. This includes things like replacing kitchens, bathrooms, and windows. We arranged focus groups in December to explain the process and hear what your concerns were ahead of the formal consultation which begins in January 2023. Thanks to all who contributed. The comments and concerns raised in the focus groups and in the formal consultation will be forwarded on to our Board of Management.

As you know, housing associations are charities which exist to provide good quality homes at affordable rents. We will always do our best to keep your rents as low as possible.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why are you consulting with tenants when the Scottish Government has frozen rent increases?

A: Rents are currently only frozen until 31st March 2023. The advice from the Scottish Government is to consult with tenants in the normal way focussing on budget requirements and affordability.

Q: When will you know if the freeze has been lifted?

A: We will know by the 14th January 2023.

Q: Will you increase rents by inflation and if you do how will tenants be able to afford this?

A: We will try to keep rents as low as possible taking rent affordability and our budget requirements into consideration.

Recipe

Frozen banana and chocolate lollies

Use up your leftover bananas with this great recipe which feeds four!
Preparation time – 10-20 mins

Ingredients

- 4 bananas
- Chocolate (dark or milk)
- Sprinkles to decorate (optional)
- 4 wooden lolly sticks

Recipe

- Peel bananas and put in freezer till frozen
- Melt chocolate then leave to cool but don't let it set
- Take bananas out of freezer and while still frozen, cut in half and poke wooden lolly stick into end of banana
- Cover the banana in cooled chocolate, add sprinkles then leave to set



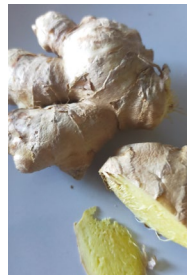
- Wrap in clingfilm, put in a freezer bag and freeze
- When frozen you can eat them

Thanks to **Love Food Hate Waste** for this recipe. Full recipe can be found here: [Frozen banana and chocolate lollies | Love Food Hate Waste.](#)

Tenant Corner

Top tip for keeping warm this winter!

Warm your body from the inside by eating ginger. You can buy a small bit from some supermarkets. Peel the ginger and chew, or add a slice to a cup of tea or cut up and stir into hot food.



Congratulations to our recent prize winners!

Since the summer we have completed two tenant surveys with another five lucky winners:

The prizes were:

- **2 x £20** shopping voucher for our Communal Cleaning Satisfaction Survey 2022.
- **3 x £20** shopping vouchers for our Summer News consultation 2022

Our winners are:

Grant from Aberdeen (pictured) and Julie from Fraserburgh (pictured)

Brian from Aberdeen (pictured), Paula from Aberdeen (pictured) and Ian from Ellon.

We hope you all enjoy your vouchers and thank you to everyone who responded.



Please take part in our surveys and consultations. Responses are reported to our Board of Management to help inform their decisions. Results of consultations are published on our website. Your voice really does count.



Office Closures

We wish you a great festive season!

Please remember both our offices will be closed between the following dates:

Offices are closed from Friday 23rd December 2022 from 1pm until Wednesday 4th January 2023. Our offices re-open at 9am on Wednesday 4th January 2023.

Please accept our apologies for any inconvenience this may cause.

Emergency Numbers

Emergency Repair Cover when our offices are closed:

Please contact **Orbis Protect on 0151 343 2906**. The call will then be passed to an appropriate contractor for your area. Response time for attendance will be 6 hours.

To report any other emergency repair:

Gas (Heatcare Oil & Gas)	01343 842 042
Gas emergency	0800 111 999
Electricity - Power Cut	0800 300 999
Loss of Water Supply	08000 778 778