



















Christmas Opening Hours

Christmas Eve
 Tuesday 24th December

9am - 12pm

→ Christmas Day

Wednesday 25th December Closed

→ Boxing Day

Thursday 26th December Closed

→ Friday 27th December Closed

→ Monday 30th December Closed

→ Tuesday 31st December Closed

New Year's Day
Wednesday 1st January
Closed

→ Thursday 2nd January Closed

→ Friday 3rd January
Closed

We will re-open again as usual on **Monday 6th January**. If you need an emergency repair carried out, please phone our out-of-hours Emergency number on:

01382 434343

















New Developments

Crudie Farm/Aberfell New Build Development in Arbroath

This development of affordable new builds located on Arbirlot Road West in Arbroath is part of a wider housing development being built by Scotia Homes.

There are 36 Affordable Homes on this site, 29 will be advertised for rent by us and the other 7 are being offered under the Shared Equity Scheme.

Work started on site early 2024 and we are now excited to be accepting the properties on a phased handover basis. The first 2 homes were received in September 2024 with the next phase being handed over during October 24. The remaining properties are likely to be handed over early in 2025 with full completion expected around May 2025.

These well insulted homes benefit from efficient Air Source Heat Pump heating, a hot water system, a fire suppression sprinkler system and are EPC rated B.

With a mixture of flats, bungalows and houses being built, these homes are a great addition to the AHA property portfolio and will help boost



the supply for affordable housing in the local area.

AHA continue to invest in the development of new housing across the Angus and Dundee Local Authority areas. Other sites currently under development are, St Vincents on Pitkerro Road in Dundee, Whitfield Drive in Dundee and Duriehill in Edzell.





Whitfield Drive New Build Development in Dundee

Whitfield Drive is a development of 18 homes for rent being constructed for the Association by George Martin Builders of Dundee.

A mix of a bungalow, flats and houses, this development will increase the supply of affordable housing for rent in the area.

Work to clear the site has only just started but we are anticipating properties to be ready for handover towards the end of 2025.

This new development will compliment the new houses AHA built in 2022 on the former St Lukes and Longhaugh school sites which are just around the corner and, in conjunction with our new build housing sites at St Vincents on Pitkerro Road in Dundee, Crudie Farm in Arbaorth and Duriehill in Edzell, will further increase the supply of quality, energy efficient homes across Dundee and Angus.

Properties anticipating to be ready for handover towards the end of 2025.



How to avoid condensation and mould

At this time of year, condensation can start as moisture in the air, caused by cooking, washing or drying clothes indoors. When moist air hits cooler surfaces it turns to water, which can sometimes lead to mould. Condensation is most likely in places where there is little flow of air, particularly in corners, on or near windows, and behind wardrobes or cupboards.

What can be done to prevent it?

- Wipe down the windows and sills every morning
- Wring out the cloth rather than drying it on a radiator
- · Keep rooms on a low heat setting
- · Cover pans when cooking
- Always vent tumble dryers outside the home
- Close the door when having a shower or bath and turn the extractor fan on.
- If you dry clothes indoors open a window
- Don't dry clothes on radiators
- Leave a space between the back of furniture and the wall to allow air to circulate
- Keep the vents in your windows open
- If mould occurs use an anti-fungal wash and follow the manufacturer's instructions

Please contact the Office to discuss if you are having issues.



Electrical Safety Inspections

The Scottish Government clarified in April 2020 that, in order to demonstrate compliance with Element 45 of the Scottish Housing Ouglity Standards (SHQS) - Safe Electrical Systems, landlords must organise electrical safety inspections by a competent person at intervals of no more than five years. Angus HA has an ongoing dedicated programme of Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR). One of our Electrical Contractors will be in contact to make arrangements for access with those involved in this year's Inspections.

These inspections are undertaken to ensure that the electrical system in your home is and continues to be in a safe condition. As part of this inspection, the electrician may require to carry out essential electrical repairs which are identified.

THESE INSPECTIONS ARE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS AND YOU MUST GIVE ACCESS, please contact the office if you have received a reminder to arrange a date for the inspection. CONTINUED NO ACCESS WILL RESULT IN A FORCED ACCESS TO CARRY OUT THE WORKS.



Fire Detection

Importance of working Fire Detection Alarms: Smoke alarms are essential for every home.

They should always be combined with a heat alarm placed in the kitchen. All smoke and heat alarms should be mounted on the ceiling and be interlinked. Interlinked alarms are when one alarm is triggered the rest of the alarms will also go off simultaneously. This means you can be alerted no matter where you are in your home.



Every home must have:

- one smoke alarm in the living room or the room you use most.
- one smoke alarm in every hallway and landing
- one heat alarm in the kitchen

Carbon monoxide alarms should be used if you have heating or cooking appliances fuelled by gas, coal, wood, or oil. This does not need to be linked to the fire alarms.

Looking after your alarms:

Never

- Remove or disconnect alarms.
- Take the batteries out, even for a short
- Paint over or put stickers on the smoke alarm.

If your smoke and heat alarms are not working. Please contact our repairs team on 0345 177 2244 to arrange an Electrician to repair or replace faulty smoke alarms.

The Scottish Fire & Rescue Service can help enhance fire safety in your home with a home fire safety check or visit. They will take you through a questionnaire and then help you sort out a fire escape plan. They can also provide information about smoke, heat and carbon monoxide alarms. https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/contact-us/home-fire-safety-visits/Carbon monoxide

Legionella Alert

Legionella is a type of bacteria found naturally in freshwater environments, like lochs and streams. It can become a health concern when it grows and spreads in humanmade water systems like showerheads, taps, hot water tanks and heaters.

How can I prevent Legionella?

Catching Legionnaires disease in your home is rare but if you have been away from home for more than a week there are a few steps you can take to minimise the risk such as:

- ✓ Flushing out your water system If you aren't using showers or taps regularly, make sure you flush them through at least once a week.
- ✓ To flush out your system you need to run the water in all showers, baths, wash basins, sinks and taps continuously for at least 2-3 minutes, beginning with the sink taps. You must do both hot and cold taps.
- ✓ When turning taps on, turn them on slowly so that you don't splash water, as this might release water droplets into the air.
- Flush toilets with the lid down following a period of non-use.
- When flushing showers, remove the shower head and lower the hose into the bath. If you are unable to remove the head, wrap it in a towel or facecloth to make sure there is no spray that you could inhale. Keep all shower heads and taps clean and free from a build-up of limescale and algae.



- ✓ Garden Taps Help protect your property from potential leaks/floods, by switching off the inside valve to your garden tap.
- √ The recommended temperatures for sitting rooms and bathrooms is 18-21 C (64-70F)
- Do not place large furniture items close to your radiators as it may prevent the room from heating up.
- Make sure all rooms are heated occasionally to reduce the risk of damp or mould forming.
- √ To help prevent any mould appearing, remove excess moisture from windows and surrounding area.
- √ Should any mould appear, clean surface with a mould and mildew spray.
- ✓ Use draught excluders at doors to keep the heat in the room.
- ✓ Close curtains and blinds when it gets dark. This will prevent heat escaping through the windows.
- ✓ If you are going to be away from your property for a few days, keep your heating on, set at 12-15 C (54-59F) but if you are going to be away for a few weeks, please contact the office to advise us, as well as providing emergency contact numbers.
- ✓ It is important that you know how to turn off the water at your property, should the worst happen, so please familiarise yourself with the location of your stopcock.

If you are concerned that your property is using too much energy or your bills are higher than expected, contact us and our Energy Advisor can work with you to reduce your bills.

Staff Updates

Sharon Tkaczyk who has been a Housing Officer for over 20 years with the Association is going part time from 6th January 2025. Sharon will no longer be the Housing Officer for the Whitfield area. Sharon along with Theresa Leiper will be covering Mid Craigie and some of the Rural Areas in Angus.



Marc Docherty will be the new Housing Officer for the Whitfield area, many of you will be familiar with Marc as he has worked with the Association since 2016. Marc joined us on a Modern Apprenticeship and was quickly offered a full time post as a Customer Service Advisor in our Arbroath Office before moving to the Dundee Office as Housing Assistant in 2021.

Marc will be attending the Dundee Rent Consultations and 'you are not alone' events coming up where he will hopefully meet our tenants who attend the events.

"Marc said, I am delighted to accept the role of Housing Officer for Whitfield and I am looking forward to contributing to build positive relationships within the community"

Housing Assistant Changes

Nikki Forrest our Housing Assistant in the Arbroath Office is leaving temporarily to take up a new challenge. Nikki has been seconded to Angus Council for 6 months as a Housing Officer. This will give Nikki the opportunity to develop her skills in Housing Management as well as gain more experience. Nikki's post will be covered by Customer Service Advisor, Lauren Thomson. Lauren is looking forward to working in a new team as well as developing her skills.







Customer Service Team

This month we have welcomed two new members to the Customer Service Team, **Elaine Stark and Titilope Adewuyi**. We have said a temporary farewell to Lauren Thomson and Ashleigh Gall. Ashleigh is now on Maternity Leave and Lauren is moving over to Housing to cover Housing Assistant for 6 months.

Mutual Exchanges

Many households may be looking for rehousing for many different reasons. As properties are allocated on the general needs waiting list to those with the greatest housing need, and property turnover can be slow for certain stock or certain areas, rehousing can take several years in some cases. A potentially faster method of rehousing which tenants can feel free to explore is via the https://www.houseexchange.org.uk/ website. Applicants register their property as looking for an exchange with a description of the type and area they are looking for. Should two applicants find a suitable exchange thereafter they would contact both relevant Landlords for an application for a Mutual Exchange.



Each Landlord would acknowledge their application and begin the 28-day processing period to see if the exchange proves suitable. Please note that your rent and recharge accounts must be up to date along with there being no outstanding legal action against your tenancy prior to an exchange being approved. Please note properties must also pass a property inspection and any applicants looking to apply who are aware of outstanding essential repairs or significant cosmetic issues should address these prior to applying for an exchange.

Choice Based Lettings

Policy Changes October 2024

The Association commenced a review of the Choice Based Lettings Policy in August 2024, due to issues raised by staff and applicants, and because of the review the department has implemented the following changes

- It is your responsibility to ensure your registration form is up to date and all requested ID and supporting documents have been updated prior to adverts closing. An application for a property will be bypassed if all documents have not been uploaded once the shortlisting has commenced.
- Applications may be suspended until all requested documents have been uploaded to your These Homes Dashboard.
- Any documents should be uploaded to your These Homes Dashboard and not sent into the CBL inbox. If you email documents into the CBL inbox, these will not be uploaded to your These Homes Dashboard.
- We may make exceptions to the Property Size Criteria depending on individual circumstances. For example:
 - If an applicant has access to care for a child/children who

reside with them through an official Shared Custody Agreement.

- The Association previously allowed applications to refuse an offer of a property on 3 occasions. This has now been changed to 2 times. Following 2 refusals for a property/no response to under consideration contact, an application will be suspended. (for further information, please refer to the Associations Suspension Policy)
- Statutory Homeless Applicants who fail to apply for properties or accept a reasonable offer of accommodation may have their Gold banding removed following discussions with the relevant Local Authority.
- Applicants who reside in a Mobile Dwelling Home (Park Home) will be awarded Bronze Priority.
- Joint Applicant/s may wish to withdraw their own application and reapply separately.
 Following a relationship breakdown (where one or both joint tenant/s withdraws their application both applicants will be required to reapply separately). When they reapply the applicants must advise the



Association they previously had a joint application, once their previous joint application is confirmed the applicant/s will be provided with their original application date.

AHA Suspension Policy Changes October 2024.

The Association commenced a review of the Suspensions Policy in August 2024, because of the review the department has implemented the following changes:-

The Association has reduced the number of Statutory Refusal from 3 to 2. Applicants are reminded that they should only apply for properties that they have a genuine interest in. If you apply for a property in error, you can withdraw your interest through your These Homes Dashboard.

The Association has also added the following Non-Statutory Suspensions:

- Failure to provide Identification or Information
- Violence or threatening behaviour towards staff

Please refer to the Suspension Policy for further information.

We have no room for Domestic Abuse

If you're experiencing domestic abuse, it's really important to talk to someone about it. We're here to help you so you don't have to face it alone



What is Domestic Abuse?

The Association will use Scottish Governments definition of domestic abuse:

Domestic abuse (as gender-based abuse) can be perpetrated by partners or ex partners and can include physical abuse (assault and physical attack involving a range of behaviours), sexual abuse (acts which degrade and humiliate individuals and are perpetrated against their will, including rape) and mental and emotional abuse (such as threats, verbal abuse, racial abuse, withholding money and other types of controlling behaviour such as isolation from family and friends).

Anyone can experience domestic abuse, regardless of race, ethnic or religious groups, wealth, sexual orientation, age, disability or lifestyle. Domestic abuse may include:

- Physical violence
- Emotional/psychological abuse – put downs, verbal abuse and humiliation, blaming, isolation from family and friends
- Sexual abuse rape, unwanted sexual contact, forcing sex with others, making you watch/take part in pornography or engage in prostitution
- Financial abuse having to account for everything you spend, being kept without money, preventing you from getting/keeping a job
- Harassment being watched, being followed, being pestered, receiving unwanted phone calls or text messages

- or Controlling Behaviour This includes a range of behaviour which makes a person reliant and/or dependant on another person by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacity for personal gain, depriving them of the means need for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.
- Coercive Behaviour An act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim. This includes forced marriage and so-called 'honour violence'.

The Association believes that it's tenants and other householders should not live in fear of violence or abuse. The Association takes domestic abuse very seriously and is committed to providing a sensitive and confidential

response to anyone approaching the Association for assistance in cases of domestic abuse.

A home should provide safety and security, but for many people home is anything but safe.

Domestic abuse can happen to anyone, both women and men, and in all types of relationships – heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender.

How can we help?

Angus HA will provide support and assistance to victims of domestic abuse.

We will listen to you and with your permission make referrals to specialist support agencies such as Womens' Aid.

We will assist you to remain in your home where it is safe to do so and can undertake a range of measures to help you feel safer in your home such as fitting external lighting, additional door locks and security chains.

When victims need to move

If victims need to move, we will do all that we can to assist in identifying alternative accommodation. We do not have emergency provision but can support you in contacting Womens' Aid and will retain a duty of care to you should you wish to be re-housed by Angus Housing Association.

Our Domestic Abuse Policy is our promise to our tenants that we will take action to support those who are experiencing domestic abuse in their home.

If you need help.



If you need help when our office is closed, phone the **Domestic Abuse Helpline on 0808 2000 247**

For male specific help call Abused Men in Scotland on 0808 800 0024 (Mon-Fri 9am-4pm)

Tenants Responsibilities and AHA's Responsibilities with household waste



The Association would naturally like all tenants and residents to take pride in their home and the appearance of the surrounding area. One of the most common ways an area can begin to look uncared for is when litter begins to accumulate.

In line with the conditions of the Tenancy Agreement tenants are responsible for placing their household rubbish in the appropriate bin or container which should be put out for collection on the correct day and returned to the proper storage space thereafter.

We understand that your bin can often be full but loose bags should never be left at the side of bins, as not only will this not be collected by the relevant Local Authorities Bin Men, it will likely also be torn by animals and can risk attracting vermin.

Instead, tenants should use their judgement to decide if an

excess bag can remain in the home until their bin has been emptied, if a trip to their local recycling centre is necessary or if there are enough items to require the Local Authority to uplift their items for a small fee which can be booked online.

Across all the Associations stock there will be instances of loose rubbish blowing into a tenant's garden off the street, from nearby shops or from local parks. In these instances, tenants/residents would simply appropriately dispose of this waste in the relevant bin. The Association will not arrange a contractor to clear these instances of loose litter as this would be an irresponsible use of tenant funds.

The Association will however act after appropriate investigation of any Estate Management complaints where a tenant/resident has been highlighted to not be disposing of their waste

appropriately. Such as leaving their bin full for weeks on end, leading to the build-up of excess waste and risking attracting vermin.

Our

Pledge

In this case a member of the Housing team would inspect the area, contact the responsible party, remind them of the conditions of their Tenancy Agreement and if this was not brought up to standard within a timely manner the Association would arrange for this mess to be uplifted, the cost of which would be recharged back to the responsible party.

In rare instances where drug paraphernalia or sharps have been found within common grounds of the Associations stock, the Association will arrange an urgent uplift/safe removal of the items in question as tenants/residents should not put themselves at risk by attempting to touch/remove the items in auestion.

New Blue Bins for Angus Tenants

Angus Council has made changes to recycling collections and has introduced a new blue bin for paper and cardboard. If you live in Arbroath, Carnoustie or Monifieth you should have your new bin by now. This will be rolled out to Forfar and Kirriemuir next and finally, Montrose and Brechin are scheduled for March next year.

You will no longer be able to recycle glass in your grey bin. The number of glass recycling points will be increased and dotted around your town. To find your nearest point and further information on what goes in what bin please visit Angus Councils website.

When your new bin arrives, please ensure you pop your house number on it.

We encourage you to Recycle as much as you can. This is not only good for the environment, but it will reduce the amount of your general waste. Your general waste bins are the smallest of the bins and they only get emptied every 2 weeks. Angus Council will not empty overflowing bins and are now checking the contents of your purple bin. If there is too much recyclable items in your general waste bin, they will stick a tag on it. Tagged bins could be left unemptied until the recyclables are removed.

If you live in a block of flats and have a communal bin store you may want to consider padlocking your bins. We appreciate it can be frustrating if you find someone else's rubbish in your bin, especially if it is the wrong type of rubbish. In this situation we would strongly encourage you to put a padlock on your bin as there is very little action we can take as your landlord.

If you live in a block of flats and have a communal bin store, we are aware that there may be very little room for your new blue bin. We are monitoring this and looking for ways to expand bin stores where we can.

AHA Scrutiny Group



Scrutiny involves our tenants working in partnership with us to scrutinise, provide feedback and recommendations on how we are doing. How do we know how good we are doing if we don't ask.

Groups

We have organised two groups for different localities, one in Dundee and one in Angus as each area have their own interests and it is relevant to what matters to them.

The dates and times for the sessions have been agreed with the groups with lots of tea, coffee and biscuits provided. Travelling expenses are also provided. The sessions are friendly and relaxed.

Feedback

The sessions are facilitated by the TP Team and guest speakers can be invited along if needed. A report is produced at the end of each session and sent to all participants and relevant staff with feedback given at the next session.

You can read the feedback from our first session which was held in Dundee and Angus in September 2024.

The second session was held in November. The Group discussed how the Association set rent levels with guest speaker, Arlene Grant, Director of Finance & Corporate Services. The feedback report will be on our website soon. This can be found under Ways To Get Involved - Angus Housing Association

Interested in taking part?

You can attend as many sessions as you wish, it is up to you. These sessions are held every second month with the next session being held in Dundee on 21st January 2025. The Group will be discussing the Associations standards for letting void properties with a guest speaker from the Maintenance Team.

If you would like to know more, contact **Diana Finnie** in the TP team at **tp@aha.org.uk** or call **03451772244**.

What to do if you are experiencing Anti-Social Behaviour

If you are having problems with a neighbour, we would encourage you to consider the following actions:

Ask yourself if your neighbour has a different lifestyle to you and if their actions really are unreasonable. If it feels safe to do so, speak to the neighbour directly.

This often solves problems at an early stage. You may be surprised to find they are unaware that they are causing a problem.

Listen to what your neighbour says to you. Talking to each other can clear up misunderstandings and often problems can be resolved.

If a friendly word does not work and the problem persists or you are worried about approaching your neighbour, please contact our Customer Service Team for advice and assistance on 0345 177 2244 / admin@aha.org.uk

As the ASB may not be caused by another AHA tenant we suggest you also get in touch with your Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Team for further guidance: Dundee City Council ASB Team - 01382 307366 Angus Council - 03452 777 778

What is Anti – Social Behaviour

Anti-Social behaviour is when people act in a way which causes, or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to other people. Angus Housing Association believes that everyone has the right to enjoy a quiet and peaceful life in their homes.

We do acknowledge, however, that some of our residents may experience distress, fear and insecurity as a result of anti-social behaviour. We will therefore make every attempt, within our resources to enable our residents to live in their homes without being harassed, subject to noise, nuisance or intimidation.

Examples of Anti-Social Behaviour

- X Harassment towards neighbours
- X Aggressive or abusive behaviour
- Drug related activity (must also be reported to Police Scotland)
- X Hate crime based on race, sexual orientation. Gender, disability or belief
- 🗶 Vandalism & Graffiti
- X Serious damage to property
- Excessive noise during unsocial hours
- X No-accidental fires

Unfortunately, there will be instances where the Association will not be able to take further action against a tenant despite complainers looking for our input.

Examples of instances the association will not take further as anti-social behaviour complaints are;

- Disputes between neighbours across social media
- Disputes between neighbours where no clear breach of tenancy applies
- Anonymous complaints lacking information such as appropriate address they hope the association will take action against.
- Day to day living noise i.e. washing machine or household appliances on between 8.00-19.00
- Day to day noise of children playing, as estates will often have children playing outside particularly during holidays. AHA will not take action unless the noise is proven to be excessive.

The incidents stated below are also not considered anti-social behaviour, however they may be able to be dealt with under our estate management & pet Ownership procedures. Our customer service team will be able to advise in more detail.

- Dogs barking and issues with pets
- Parking Issues
- Boundary Issues
- Untidy gardens











Family Fun Day

Working in partnership with You're Not Alone – Dundee Community Support Group it was agreed to hold a free family fun day.

The main aims of the event were to promote our new free tenant discount app – Housing Perks and becoming a member of Angus Housing Association as well as promoting the great work of You're Not Alone and their free Thursday and Friday community sessions.

To include as many people as possible the event was held on a Saturday during the school summer holidays.

The fun day was planned with families in mind and also taking into consideration the Scottish summer weather! We had use of the community lounge and the surrounding grassy area at our Dundee office in Ormiston Crescent.

On the day of the event the sun was shining! There were games set up outside in the grassy area from giant Connect 4 to Jenga and Hook a Duck. Inside, we had face painting, arts and crafts and rock

painting as well as a free raffle.

Comments:

"I thought it was a really positive day".

"It was good to see how passionate some people are about the local community, and this was very encouraging".

The highlight of the day was the visit by Eden's Garden and the many animals such as chinchilla, tortoise, rabbit, guinea pig, snake and bearded dragon. "Having Edens garden there was a good opportunity for children to meet animals they may not have met before".

The day was really busy with over 100 people attending. It was great to see families sitting out in the grassy area enjoying a burger and playing games in the sunshine. Some feedback received on the day "Lots of fun for the kids", "Very family orientated and friendly".





Bingo Blether

Bingo Blether continues to be a fun filled afternoon for tenants and the community to attend for some eyes down and a blether with friends. This has now changed to the new day and time of the Last Wednesday of the month, 2pm eyes down for 2:30pm at our Russell Square Community Lounge, Russell Square, Arbroath.

This is open to all so pop along and bring a friend for a cuppa and some prize bingo fun.



Bingo Blether Get Together

In September, the Bingo Blether Group and some of our Angus tenants attended the George Hotel in Montrose for an afternoon of fantastic entertainment, delicious food and great company.



Angus Housing Association would like to thank Aberbrothock Skea Trust for supporting the cost of this trip.

Without the support of external funding, we would be limited in what groups, activities and events we could deliver.

Thank you to everyone who attended the trip, it's fair to say a good day was had by all.

Comments:

"What a wonderful day"

"Thank you, I had such a lovely time"

"The food was excellent, what a fantastic day and the entertainment was such a treat."