



TENANTS *and* RESIDENTS EAST AYRSHIRE

Federation News

Your Newsletter from East Ayrshire Federation of Tenants and Residents

Spring/Summer 2024



INSIDE: New Comittee, Federation News, Groups & Members, East Ayrshire Council Updates

EAF: Independently supported by the Tenants Information Service,
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Chairperson's Introduction and Welcome...



Hello, on behalf of the Federation, I am delighted to share all the recent news from the Executive Committee, local tenants and residents' groups and Council Officers with you. In this edition you will find out more about our outreach work & new members, scrutiny work, involvement in the Council's rent setting consultation, highlights from our damp and mould survey, news from our joint conference with the Council, national and local homelessness figures, and what we learned at the TIS conference.

The local group news section gives great insight to the excellent work members are doing in their local areas, making neighbourhoods clean, clean and vibrant and making a difference to the lives of people living in our housing and communities.

Updates from Council Services, lets you know how officers are working with and on our behalf, to continually improve services and wellbeing.

Being part of a local group, consultation forum or the Federation is informative and fun, and makes a real difference! So go on, get in touch with us and find out how you can get involved. We have lots of opportunities coming up over the rest of the year and would love to hear from you!

Davey Leggat, EAF Chairperson

Welcome to Our New Members

The Federation is pleased to welcome recent new members. Over the last few months, over 70 tenants have joined us as individual members, with 5 new members elected to our Executive Committee. With strength in numbers, we hope the Federation will grow and develop from strength to strength, making sure we can continue to influence housing and other services in local communities, across East Ayrshire and with the Scottish Government.

Membership is free and open to all tenants and residents' associations, newly developed consultation forums and individual tenants from across East Ayrshire.

To find out more or apply to join, please contact secretary@eafederation.com or call 01563 63100.

Member Quotes

I joined EAF to ensure my voice, as a EAC tenant, is heard, in terms of housing and community improvements. I have a young family, who possibly could be future Council tenants.

I want to assist the Federation to ensure EAC improves our homes and communities for future generations.

As tenants, our voices need to be heard. We should have a better understanding of EAC policies and procedures. A lot of people may not join EAF, due to the jargon of the Council. But EAF eliminates all of that and simplifies it, to ensure a better understanding of the aims, achievements, policies, and procedures of EAC.

Who else, is better to scrutinise EAC?...Their tenants!

Louise McColl

I am the current secretary of Newton TARA and recently joined the executive committee to become more involved in their work; develop personal knowledge and learning and, where relevant, promote changes that will make housing across East Ayrshire more sustainable and successful.

Angela Gracie



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Federation News and Reviews >>

EAF and EAC Joint Tenants and Residents Conference

St. Joseph's Campus, Kilmarnock was the fabulous venue for our first full scale conference since the Covid 19 Pandemic and we are delighted it was hailed a huge success by everyone who came along, to find out more about the Federation, participation opportunities, Housing and Communities Services, meet friends and colleagues, old and new and learn from our excellent speakers, workshops, stall holders and each other.

Our workshops on Damp and Mould, Greener Communities, Cost of Living Crisis: Support Available and Climate Change: Challenge for Housing provided excellent insight and discussions on some of the key issues facing our communities.

Guest Speaker, Lisa Punton, Housing Services Manager from the Council gave an excellent, although quite heartbreaking presentation on the current homelessness crisis in Scotland and its impact in East Ayrshire.

It is a very challenging time for people who are homeless or threatened with losing their home each day, as well as for council and housing association landlords who are trying to provide, safe, warm, and affordable homes.



Did you know that During 2022 / 23...

39,006 homeless applications were made to local authorities in Scotland	32,240 households were assessed as being homeless or threatened with homelessness.	The number of households that became homeless this year rose by 10% compared to the year before.
In East Ayrshire, there were 1050 homelessness presentations.	129 households were living in temporary accommodation, including 27 families and 59 children.	In East Ayrshire, our number of homeless applications were the highest recorded.

To find out more about Homelessness in Scotland see:

- Shelter Scotland: https://scotland.shelter.org.uk/housing_policy/homelessness_in_scotland
- Scottish Government: [Homelessness - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

To find out more or seek advice about homelessness in East Ayrshire see:

- East Ayrshire Council: [Homelessness · East Ayrshire Council \(east-ayrshire.gov.uk\)](http://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk)

Following a perfect "school dinner" style lunch, quizzes and bingo, everyone left happy and energised, taking home some excellent prizes, freebies from our stalls and a bag of fresh ingredients to make a hearty pot of lentil or potato and leek soup!

It was great to be invited and see the amazing work that goes on behind the scenes. Everyone was very welcoming as it was my 1st Conference.

Brilliant day really enjoyed the information provided.

Very well organised really enjoyable day. Well done to everyone involved in the organisation.

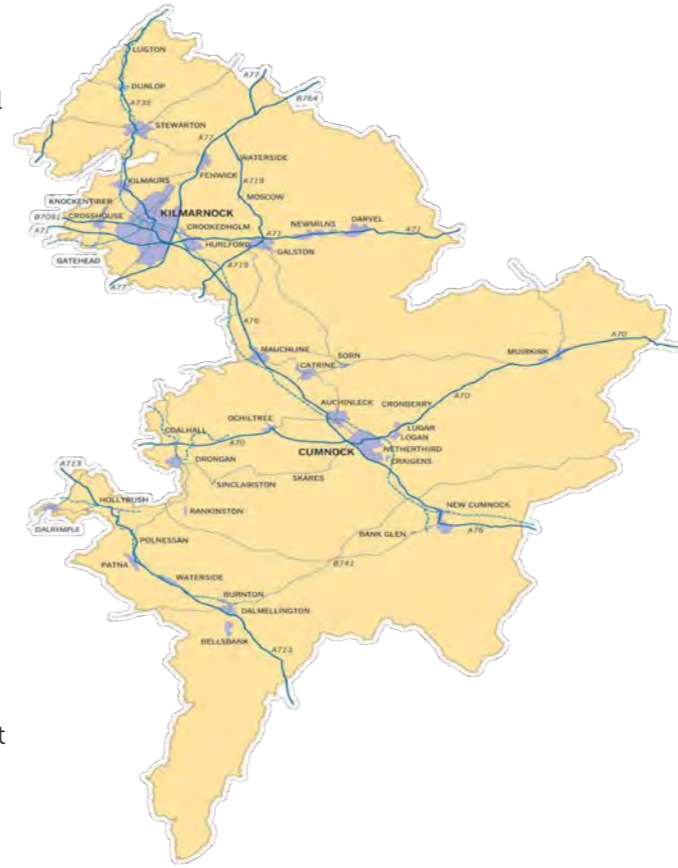
Absolutely loved my day, well done.

Out and About Across East Ayrshire

Over the last few months, we embarked on a road trip with Kevin, the Council's Customer Liaison Officer, and Sharon from Tenants Information Service (TIS), to meet tenants, residents, and community organisations, find out views, priorities and all the wonderful work going on in local areas. It also gave us a chance to let folk know more about the Federation, tenant engagement, participation, and scrutiny opportunities. So far, we have visited, and met with people from Catrine, Craigs, Dalrymple, Darvel, Drongan, Hurlford, Keir Hardie Hill, Kilmarnock College, New Farm Loch, Newmilns, Netherthird, Patna, Rankinston, Shortlees, Skerrington and Stair as well as meeting groups in Centre Stage, where we are based.

From this we have held successful Estate Walkabouts where tenants and residents met with housing and communities' staff, elected members and others to identify potential improvements to their communities and set up new Consultation Forums in John Morton Crescent, Darvel and Rankinston.

We plan to visit more communities and organisations throughout the year. If you are having a meeting or event, we would love an invitation to come see you and your members. Please get in touch via email to secretary@eafederation.com or call us on 01563 631000.



TIS National Housing Conference and Excellence Awards

Members of the Federation, local tenants and residents' groups, EAC's Housing Convenor, Councillor Jim McMahon, Councillor Graham Barton, Housing Services Manager, Helen Merriman, Customer Liaison Officer, Kevin Hamilton, Neighbourhood Coach, David Murray, attended the TIS National Conference and Excellence Awards in Glasgow in November 2023, where we not only learned a lot from the speakers, workshops, innovation theatres and study visits, but celebrated in big style too. Three of our local groups, Gilfoot, Gauchalland East and Townhead along with Neighbourhood Coach, David Murray were finalists.



We want to congratulate TIS on a fantastic conference, we enjoyed every minute of it.

The venue was beautiful the food lovely, the speakers, workshops and the study trip to Lambhill Stables, a community project in the North of Glasgow, were all interesting and informative.

We met interesting delegates from all over Scotland and made contacts to share the work we are doing and to build on it.

We didn't expect to win an award, so that was just the icing on the cake. It has been a fantastic morale boost for all of us at East Ayrshire Federation, and our TARA who were all so proud of us and the team.

Lisa Fulton, Chairperson Townhead TARA and EAF Executive Committee

Our Damp and Mould Survey Update

You may recall our damp and mould article and survey in the 2023 newsletter and we would like to thank all the tenants who took part and want to share a snapshot of our findings with you.

✓ **Almost half** of respondents would contact the Council if they found damp and / or mould in their homes.

✓ Just over **one third** of respondents would try to address the problem themselves.

✓ Respondents indicated that East Ayrshire Council **has addressed** the issue in some cases.

✓ **Anti mould paint** was provided by the Council for some tenants to use.

✓ Some tenants were advised that **condensation was the main cause** and to open windows and / or put heating on.

✓ **Almost half** of respondents consider the main cause of damp and mould is **unaffordable heating costs**. Other reasons include lack of ventilation, insulation, maintenance and inspections, information and support, along with, not reporting issue early enough, and work not carried out right first time.

✓ **Not all tenants** know how to prevent damp and mould in their homes.

✓ In some cases where remedial works were carried out, **damp and mould returned**.

✓ Just **over half** of respondents consider more information on what causes damp and mould and how to treat and prevent it is needed.

✓ Some respondents consider that **improvement works** such as new windows, cladding, insulation, and removal of chimneys **could address the issue**.

✓ Some tenants think damp and mould is **"something they have to address themselves"**

✓ Where **disrepair is on the external of buildings**, tenants consider internal damp and mould cannot be resolved.

See the tenant safety section of this newsletter for more information before the council link

We will be discussing our findings and recommendations with the Council in the coming months and will update you in Autumn / Winter newsletter.

For more information on how to report or address damp and mould in your home see [Mould and condensation · East Ayrshire Council \(east-ayrshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk)

YOUR VOICE MATTERS!

Now, we know that being asked how much you would prefer your rent to go up, may not be the kind of thing some of you want to hear about, especially when we are in the middle of a Cost of Living Crisis – but it is really important to the Federation, the Council, Elected Members and of course all tenants that your views are heard!

During December 23 and January 2024, Federation, and local group members along with the Customer Liaison Officer, TIS, Neighbourhood Coaches and other officers worked really hard to encourage tenants to take part in the rent setting consultation. We are really pleased to see that these efforts saw the number of tenants taking part increase from 431 in 2023 / 24 to 1090 in 2024 / 25. However, we want to see that number increase even more in 2025 / 26 and you could help us achieve it!

Of the two options provided – an increase of **6.5%** or average increase of **£5.18** per week or **7.5%** or average increase of **£5.97** per week, the majority of tenants who took part opted for the 6.5% increase, which was then approved by the Council's Cabinet.

Across Scotland, we have learned that rent increases for Council and Housing Association homes have ranged from around **4% to 10%**. The average rent with East Ayrshire Council in 2023 / 24 was **£79.57** per week, compared to the highest Council rent of **£105.17** per week in Edinburgh, and lowest of **£66.36** per week in Moray. The Scottish Average was **£82.66**, with our closest neighbours of North and South Ayrshire, having average rents of **£83.49** and **£80.52** respectively.

Knowing that our rents are a bit less than some areas, doesn't make the Federation complacent, we know we need to work with the Council to ensure tenants get the best services and best value money possible, which is why we continue to work with the Council to review, scrutinise and give our views and recommendations on how things could improve. If you would like to know more about how your rent money is spent, how much repairs, maintenance, and improvements cost and tell us about your priorities for investment in your home, please get in touch. Please get in touch on 01563 63100 or at secretary@eafederation.com

Void Business Unit Scrutiny – highlights so far...

Members of the Federation and local groups have been looking into the standard of homes when allocated to new tenants and how the process from someone giving up a tenancy to a new tenant moving in works. So far, we have looked at the Council's Lettable Standard and compared it to a few other landlords, met with staff at the Void Business Unit and visited houses when they are first empty and then again once the work has been carried out. We have been quite shocked to find out that the condition of some houses when people move out are really poor, which means the money the Council has to spend to make them habitable, safe, clean and comfortable to live in has increased quite a bit in recent years.

Average Costs per property:		
2019 / 20: £2,051.42	2023 / 24: £3,856.10	Increase: £1,084.68

Another busy year at Gauchalland TARA!

In the spring we cultivated and sold over 4,000 bedding plants. Then it was on to planting our own vegetables – cabbage, cauliflower, carrots, onions, leeks, beetroot, parsley, lettuce, tomatoes, cucumber, chilli peppers and spring onions – sold in our little shop, which supports our local community - keeping us busy throughout the year. We also have a drop-in service for coffee/tea and a chat, where everyone is welcome.

We have a good connection with Galston Early Years Centre, and some of the team went to the nursery, built raised beds and helped the children to plant their own flowers and vegetables, to encourage them to look after their own plants. In September we held a coffee morning in aid of Ayrshire Hospice and raised £385.



In November it was all hands-on deck, making our Christmas wreaths – all 350 of them! From the profit, we donated £1,500 between 4 local organisations – Galston Gladiators Kickboxing Club, Newmilns and Galston Brass Band, West Park Care Home and Ayrshire Cancer Support, which we do each year to help support our local community.

With the help of East Ayrshire Community Payback Scheme, we had the inside of the cabin repainted. It's now spring again and we have just potted up almost 5,000 plants!

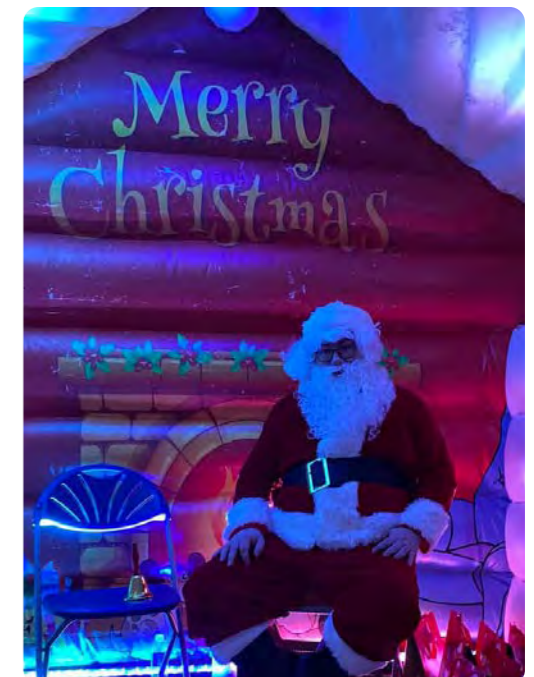
We were also delighted to be shortlisted for two awards – TIS Excellence Award and Scotland Loves Local Award.

Gilfoot Tenants and Residents Association Action Group

We would like to thank the whole of Newmilns and further afield for their support during another successful year for our wee community. Throughout this year we have hosted several low-cost events for families within the community such as G in the Park 2023, a Halloween disco for everyone, fireworks night and our first ever Christmas grotto. We also held an under 18s rave with MC Lugzy which was a great success. Plans are ongoing right now for our G in the Park 2024 which we hope everyone will get behind us for what is sure to be another amazing day for everyone. Be sure to keep your eyes to the skies...

We were also really chuffed to be finalists in the TIS Excellence Awards, Tenants and Residents' Group of the Year Category.

On a final note, once again from us, thank you for all the support we receive we could not do this without you.



Townhead TARA, Newmilns

Townhead TARA, Newmilns formerly known as CATRA, has had another excellent year. In addition to being Winners at the TIS National Excellence Awards in 2023, we have been busy working with the Council, Federation, TIS and other organisations to improve our community. We expanded our area of operation and now cover, Campbell Street, Campbell Court and West Campbell Street, Isles Street, Mill Crescent and Ladeside, Newmilns and are delighted to have increased our committee numbers, with members from across our whole area, including young tenants and residents.

Our Easter Egg hunt and event provided lots of fun, games, and activities for children from across the Irvine Valley, a surprise visit from the Easter Bunny and raffles for the adults. At Christmas we delivered selection boxes to all the local children and had our wonderful Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony.

Our estate walkabouts and looking after our memorial garden and planters means the area is looking great. We couldn't do all of this without the great support we receive from our committee, community, and partner organisations. A big, massive thank you to everyone involved.



Newton TARA, Kilmarnock

have continued to work across our area to help improve our housing, promote connectivity and enhance our already strong, supportive community. Our meetings continue to take place at 6pm on the third Thursday of every month, with the exception of December, and are held in Kilmarnock Baptist Church.

This year we have carried out several litter picks, our most successful being at Easter where we were joined by elected members and friends from the church. We had "best picker" prizes and handed out treats to anyone that we met in and around the area. We are currently arranging an estate walkabout with council officers, building up to our AGM and plotting what other community activities we can organise – all ideas welcome!

Although Newton TARA has a very small core group who do all of the organising, we do manage to do very big work and tackle social isolation and loneliness when we can. We are always on the lookout for new members and fresh ideas and welcome everyone residing in the area to join us at our meetings.



Keir Hardie Hill Tenant and Resident Association, Cumnock

We are delighted to share the great news that the TARA is now back up and running and we want as many of you in the street to get involved, and have a say to make the street as best as it can be, We meet monthly in the Barrhill centre, so look out for our flyer which will give you all the details. We really want to get some community events up and running and your input is vital. So, join in, answer the survey that will be coming through your letterbox, or get in touch.

"One of the many reasons I have become involved is, being brought up in the street, my affinity and loyalties will always remain here. After the experience of losing a family member, I was forever grateful for the kindness, empathy and support the whole street gave my family and myself, it has always stuck with me just what a community feels like and how they can rally together to help one another. I have always wanted to repay this kindness, and this is what I hope to achieve as part of this group. Keir Hardie Hill has always been a close-knit community and if we can support this further, it would make me really happy"

Teresa Giralda, Secretary, KHHTARA

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Being Active!

Being active helps us to age well, stay independent and enjoy our life to the full, not just good for younger people, it's great for us all as we age. There are so many benefits to be gained if we continue to go for regular walks, be active in our homes or garden, enjoy a swim or take part in a favourite hobby or sport.

Keeping active can contribute to lowering our risk of developing major illnesses such as cancer, heart disease, stroke, and Type II Diabetes. In addition to these physical benefits, being active causes our body to release feel good hormones that lift your mood and can brighten your day. Some activities also provide a focus and give a sense of purpose or achievement.

If you have already been diagnosed with a medical condition, then physical activity can still help with your recovery and improve your health outcomes. **Vibrant Communities** offer specialist classes to support those with long term conditions, such as those mentioned above. through our Activity on Prescription Programme.

Being able to carry out everyday functions and maintain our independence for longer means we can live our lives the way we want to without having to rely too heavily on others. Regular physical activity helps us to maintain our strength, flexibility, co-ordination and balance. And maintaining all of these core skills will also help to prevent falls as we age.

Further benefits include the increased social contact made by joining an activity group, a walking group, or finding people with a shared interest – having a good chat can make sure we don't feel lonely or isolated.

A good night's sleep gives our body and mind a chance to recover and by being physically active we can improve the quality of our sleep giving us more energy for what we want to enjoy doing the next day.

Our brain also benefits from our bodies being active – we need to think about what we are doing, we learn new skills and solve problems whilst being active and we also remember movements for the next time we do an activity.

There are lots of opportunities across East Ayrshire for you take part in activities which keep you active and bring all these benefits. If you would like to find out more about how Vibrant Communities can support you to be active as you age please contact [01563 576254](tel:01563576254) or email chat@east-ayrshire.gov.uk

East Ayrshire Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Team

East Ayrshire Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Team is a dedicated service with a remit to deal specifically with Anti-Social Behaviour.

What is Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)?

The legislation states that a person engages in antisocial behaviour if they act in a manner that causes or is likely to cause alarm or distress or pursue a course of conduct that causes or is likely to cause alarm or distress to at least one person not of the same household as them.

Due to its very nature ASB cannot be prevented and tackled by just one agency. It needs to be a joined up, partnership approach by residents, the council, Police Scotland, and other partner agencies as required.



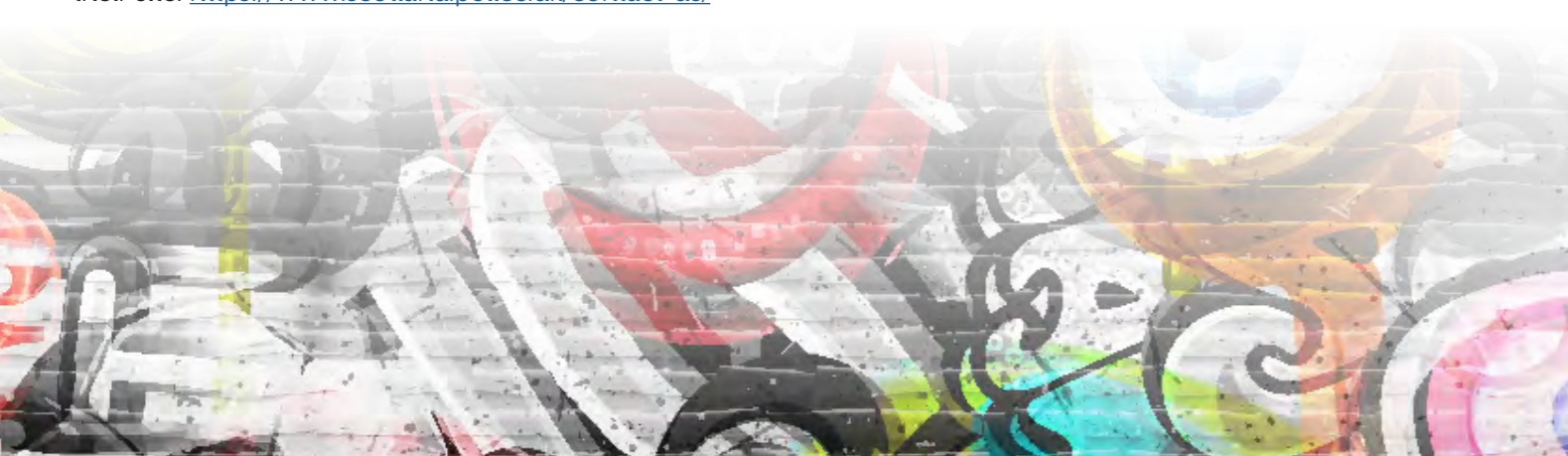
ASB can be a variety of things and can be such things as:	A few examples of what is not constituted as ASB are:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noise Shouting, swearing and arguing Fighting Intimidation through threats or actual violence. Harassment. Verbal abuse etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCTV – concerns around privacy breaches etc, these should be reported to the Information Commissioners office (ICO) Neighbours or friends gossiping about each other, including on social networks. Residents running a business from home. Car repairs at home. Inconsiderate vehicle parking etc. Dog barking and fouling. Smells (e.g. Cannabis smells)

When tackling ASB some of the actions that can be taken by the ASB Team will include offering mediation to attempt complaint resolution in the first instance, verbal warnings, written warnings, interim ASBO's and full ASBO's. We will attempt to engage with all parties both complainer and alleged offender in attempt to address the issues and complaints, and to achieve resolution or case progression if required.

Only by working together with victims and communities can ASB be successfully tackled. We need communities' support, help and co-operation in our joint effort to support victims, and gather independent corroborative evidence in our endeavour to resolve incidents of ASB.

If you or anyone you know are encountering ASB then you can contact East Ayrshire Councils Anti-Social Behaviour Team on 01563 554400 or via email on asbenquires@east-ayrshire.gov.uk You can also contact Police Scotland by calling 101 for a non-emergency or 999 if there is an emergency.

Alternatively, you can access the Police Scotland website and email them direct through the "contact us" link within their site. <https://www.scotland.police.uk/contact-us/>



Universal Credit Support Team

The Universal Credit Support Team has been incredibly effective in assisting Council tenants with a wide range of services, from helping with claim advice, helping people make claims, help with claimant commitments, digital support and also maximizing peoples income. We have dealt with **817** referrals over the last year. We help all residents of East Ayrshire but around 65% of our referrals come from Council tenants.

We also helped people maximise their income last year to the value of **£496,688.93**.

On top of this we administered the Tenant Support Fund, where tenants can apply directly via a dedicated email address or through their Neighbourhood Coach. Support is allocated to rent accounts, sustaining tenancies by intervening at critical junctures when tenants are at risk. Since July 2023, we have supported tenants with **£80,000**, added to rent accounts.

In addition to mitigating homelessness, the Tenant Support Fund plays a vital role in assisting with energy payments, and through our partners **Lemon-Aid**, we have supported tenants by providing **£38,000** of support over the winter. By offering support as well to unforeseen emergencies we've been able to alleviate high energy costs and provide relief to vulnerable households. The flexibility of the Fund allows us to respond swiftly, ensuring the Fund offers assistance promptly. **Over £28,000** has been used for things like providing white goods, carpets and furniture. Through these multifaceted interventions we aim to offer stability and resilience to our tenants.

News on Universal Credit - have you received your migration Notice?

If you are on any of the **legacy benefits** such as Tax Credits, Housing Benefit, Income Support, JSA (income based) or ESA (income based) then you may receive a migration notice from the Department of Work & Pensions to apply for Universal Credit.

You will have 3 months to apply and if don't you could lose your current benefit. Always seek advice and wait for your migration notice before you apply. Call the UC Support Team on 01563 503280 or visit our webpages for lots of information and help.

If you need any benefits advice or help reporting your rent increase (if you are on Universal Credit) then just give us a call on 01563 503280 or visit our webpages at east-ayrshire.gov.uk/universal-credit



The Housing Options Team



The Housing Options Team have been recognised for their hard work and awarded a **Certificate of Excellence 2024** from **iESE**, a not-for-profit organisation created by local authorities as a shared resource to transform public services and retain experience within the sector.

Since 2022, the Housing Options team has shifted towards a trauma-informed approach to tackle homelessness with training to understand the profound impact of trauma, allowing the team to support individuals with a history of homelessness and trauma to rebuild their lives.

This approach aims to break the cycle of homelessness by addressing root causes and collaborating with other public services and community partners. The team has invested time and resources in trauma training, enabling them to offer better support, especially to survivors of domestic violence, child abuse, and repeated homelessness.

Recognising the direct link between trauma and homelessness, as well as other issues like addiction and mental health, the team has learned to identify triggers and prioritise connection. By fostering a culture of care, they have created a supportive environment for vulnerable individuals, leading to improved outcomes.

Examples like the successful transition to Housing First and the transformation of St Andrews Court Hostel demonstrate the effectiveness of their approach. By offering trauma-informed support and transitioning individuals into stable living situations, they aim to break the cycle of repeat homelessness.

Collaborating with the wider community and forming partnerships with trauma-informed care professionals have further strengthened their efforts. Staff well-being is prioritised, ensuring a supportive work environment that enhances service delivery.

Their efforts have resulted in lower repeat homelessness figures and increased tenancy sustainment rates in East Ayrshire. Moving forward, they remain committed to preventing homelessness through collaboration and partnership, aligning with the goal of East Ayrshire Council's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019-2024.

The team have also rolled out a 'Culture of Care' training package across the Housing service, further embedding trauma-informed practice. Housing Options is dedicated to creating a future where homelessness is prevented, and a culture of care prevails for those at risk or experiencing homelessness.



Tenant Safety

As a Council tenant, we want you and your family to be safe living in your home. The Council's Tenant Safety Team is responsible for work associated with Dampness and Mould, Electrical Safety, Asbestos, Fire Safety, Gas Safety, Lifts and Water Safety in the Home. Here is some information and advice on Dampness and Mould, Electrical Safety and Fire Safety in the Home to help you stay safe.

Dampness and Mould: Condensation forms when the air gets cold and the moisture in the air appears as droplets of water on cold surfaces such as windows and walls. You can avoid this by following these easy steps:

Produce less moisture in your home

- Use lids on pans and turn the heat down once the contents are boiling.
- Hang washing outside whenever you can.
- If you use a tumble dryer, make sure it is vented to the outside
- When drying clothes inside, dry in a room with the window ajar and the door closed
- Reduce steam when running the bath by running cold water first and then topping up with warm water.
- Do not use bottled gas or paraffin heaters in your home as these produce a lot of water vapour when the fuel is burned.

Ventilate to remove moisture

- Each morning, air the affected rooms by opening the windows for a little while and wiping down any wet windows and sills.
- Use extractor fans/ hoods in bathrooms and kitchens.
- Leave bathroom and kitchen windows open slightly for 20 minutes once you have finished cooking, showering or bathing. If your windows have trickle vents fitted, leave these open as this will provide a steady flow of fresh air.
- Remember to shut your windows before you go out.

Keep your home warm

- Condensation can be worse in a cold home. This is because cold air cannot hold as much moisture as warm air. Keeping your home warm can really help to reduce condensation.
- Condensation and mould often form in rooms that are unused or under heated. Keep the radiators and heaters down in these rooms to save energy, but do not turn them off completely.

Stop moisture from spreading around your home

- Keep the internal bathroom and kitchen doors shut and these rooms well-ventilated during and after bathing and cooking.
- Wipe down surfaces where moisture settles, such as windows and mirrors.

How to get rid of mould

As soon as you start to see mould growth you need to clean it away. This is your responsibility.

- Wear rubber gloves and wipe the mould off the area using a cloth and anti-mould remover - one which carries a Health and Safety Executive approved number. These are available in supermarkets and DIY stores and should become part of your regular cleaning routine.
- Mould can be washed out of fabrics but may leave a stain. Mildewed clothes should be dry cleaned.
- Avoid vacuuming/ sweeping affected carpets - shampoo them instead.
- If you redecorate, use a good quality anti-mould paint or fungicidal wallpaper paste. If you use standard products, then mould is likely to come back.



[Mould and condensation · East Ayrshire Council \(east-ayrshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk)
[Scottish Government's website for information on home energy and fuel poverty.](https://www.gov.uk)



Electrical Safety: As part of the Council's commitment to ensure that the electrical installation within your home is in a safe condition, we are responsible for ensuring that an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) is carried out by a competent electrician.

As a minimum, this EICR must be carried out:

- Before a new tenancy starts
- During the tenancy, at intervals of no more than five years from the date of the previous inspection

The electrician will check:

- Installations for the supply of electricity
- Electrical fittings (including but not limited to switches, sockets and light fittings)
- Fixed electrical equipment (including but not limited to boilers, panel and storage heaters and hard wired smoke and fire detectors)

Fire Safety: The Scottish Government has advised that all homes in Scotland should have one:

- Smoke alarm in the room most frequently used for general daytime living purposes.
- Smoke alarm in every hallway or landing.
- Heat alarm in every kitchen.

All alarms should be ceiling mounted and where possible should all be interlinked and to comply with the standard, we must install a smoke alarm in the hallway (top and bottom) and living area. A heat alarm in the kitchen. A carbon monoxide alarm in any areas where a combustion appliance is fitted i.e. boiler, gas fire, coal fire etc.

NOTE: This applies to ALL homeowners and landlords.



According to the National Fire Chiefs Council, there were 1,200 fires caused by batteries on waste sites and in bin lorries over the last 12 months alone. This represents an increase of 71% from 2022. According to the same source, approximately 6 billion batteries were thrown away last year alone in the UK, which equates to over 3000 every minute. To help tackle this issue, the Council will be working with our partners in Scottish Fire and Rescue to develop and promote a battery safety campaign over the coming weeks.

This campaign will focus on both batteries and battery-powered appliances, which also pose a fire risk.

In the meantime, tenants are asked to be aware of the risks from batteries and follow these simple safety guidelines:

- Never leave electrical appliances charging unsupervised
- If you have used batteries, either put them in a bag and leave them on top of your recycling bin and they will be collected on your collection day or take them to your local supermarket, many of which have battery recycling points – **never put them in your bin** as they can go on fire if damaged during waste processing, causing pollution and environmental damage, and putting staff and fire fighters at risk
- If you have used battery powered equipment, such as vapes, toys and toothbrushes, take them to your nearest recycling centre (Western Road or Garlaff) for safe disposal.

Once in the waste stream, used batteries present a very real risk to staff, and can be virtually impossible to detect until they go on fire, so please dispose of your used batteries, and used battery powered equipment responsibly and safely.



Tenants Participation, Engagement and Scrutiny Opportunities

As an individual

By joining East Ayrshire Independent Tenant & Resident Forum (ITRF), you will have the opportunity to have your say, by either taking part in online surveys, scrutiny work, giving comments on policies, or if you wish, attending consultation events. To join the ITRF, contact the Customer Liaison Team on 07786661223 or complete the online survey at <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/EACITRF>

You can also join EAF as an individual member to get involved in the Federation's many activities. Contact secretary@eafederation.com or call 01563 631000 to find out more.

Tenants and Residents Associations (TARA's)

Sometimes being a lone voice may feel like being in the wilderness, as for many people, joining or setting up a TARA is the answer. Group members work together with neighbours to influence services in your community. TARA's may also get involved in policy reviews, consultations, and service improvements. Some TARA's also organise community events and other benefits for their local areas and improve community spirit. See page 7 for a flavour of what TARA's are doing.

TARA's also have the opportunity to meet housing and other staff to discuss and resolve local issues and get involved in estate walkabouts with local staff to identify problems and agree solutions for your area.

The Federation, Customer Liaison Team and TIS, will provide all the support you need to get a TARA up and running in your community. Contact secretary@eafederation.com or call 01563 631000 to find out more.

Consultation Forums

Forums are for people who are not part of a TARA, but wish to have a voice in Housing Services Provision and give opportunities for tenants and residents from across East Ayrshire to influence and scrutiise Council Services. To find out more or set one up in your area, contact the Customer Liaison Team on 07786661223 or the Federation on 01563 631000 or email secretary@eafederation.com

