

SPRING

ON THE HOUSE

ISSUE 69: Spring 2026



for Perth and Kinross Council Tenants



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Introduction

Welcome to this edition of **On the House**, the magazine for Perth and Kinross Council tenants.



Each spring we ask tenants to complete our annual Rent Spending Priorities survey and I would urge you to take the time to complete the survey. It is the start of our rent setting process and helps us ensure that rent is set at a level that ensures we have the resources to provide the services that meet the needs of our tenants. You can read more on pages 4 and 5.

I would also like to thank everyone who took part in the Rent Options Consultation at the end of last year. Just under 3,000 tenants responded to vote on the rent level with the majority – almost three quarters, stating their preference was for a 6.5% increase. This was duly agreed in January and will help us provide a better service for our tenants. As well as providing an additional £300,000 to help bring empty properties back into use more quickly, £200,000 has been allocated to improve the response time for repairs while £40,000 will pay for a handyman to support older people in their homes.

This edition is full of other important information about your Housing Service, including updates on new properties added to our portfolio and our plans to purchase more homes for mid-market rent. We are committed to providing good quality, affordable homes for our residents across Perth and Kinross.

It also features practical advice on how to prevent damp and mould in your home as well as an update on our investment at Double Dykes Gypsy/Traveller site.

Finally, it would be remiss of me not to mention the passing of Michelle Dow earlier this year.

I am sure many of you will have had dealings with Michelle over the years and remember her dedication fondly. A full tribute is on page 12.

Thank you for taking the time to read this edition of **On The House**. I hope you find it informative, and enjoyable.

Councillor Tom McEwan

Convener, Housing and Social Wellbeing Committee

Contact Us

If you would like more information about anything mentioned in this magazine, please drop us an email at Communications@pkc.gov.uk or call us on 01738 476000.

You can also follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/PKCTenants, on X (formerly Twitter) at www.twitter.com/pkctenants and on Instagram at www.instagram.com/pkctenants/ to keep up with all your housing and neighbourhood news.





Shaping the future of our Housing Service - we need your voice

Over the past 10 years, our Council housing stock has grown by more than 1,000 homes. With this growth has come new challenges with greater demands on our teams. To make sure we continue providing the best possible service, we are launching a Locality Housing Review, and your input will play a vital role.

Why are we reviewing the Service?

As our communities evolve, so must the services that support them. The review aims to strengthen our Locality Housing Teams so they continue to be:

- person-centred – focused on the needs and experiences of tenants
- future-ready – able to meet growing and changing demands
- better supported – with the right staffing levels, skills, and training

This review is not about removing the locality approach - in fact, we're committed to keeping it. Our 'place-based' model is central to how we work with communities, ensuring tenants have support that feels local, responsive, and connected.

The goal is simple: to make sure our teams have what they need to deliver the best service to you.

We want to hear from you

A housing service works best when it reflects the needs of the people who use it. That's why we'll be inviting tenants to share their experiences, ideas, and expectations as part of this review.

Your feedback will help shape:

- how we deliver support
- what improvements matter most to tenants
- how we can make the housing service easier to access and more effective

You'll hear more soon about how to take part - whether through surveys, local conversations, or community events. Every voice matters, and we truly welcome yours.

Your rent setting process for 2027 to 2028 is about to get underway!

With this edition of **On The House** you'll find our annual Rent Spending Priorities Survey, which is the first step in working with you to set the rent you will pay for next year – 2027 to 2028.

Your rent pays for all the services we provide, like repairs, new-builds, improvements and neighbourhood services, so it's very important that all tenants have a say in how your rent money is spent and what services you want.

Please take a few moments to tell us what your priorities are when it comes to the Council spending money on your Housing Services.

Fill out the questionnaire and return it to us in the envelope provided. If you prefer, you can take part online at the Council's Consultation Hub by visiting <https://consult.pkc.gov.uk/> or by scanning the QR code below with the camera app on your smartphone.

Please only complete the survey once. By taking part you will have the chance to be entered into a £50 draw to win one of four High Street shopping vouchers.



The results of the consultation will be fed back to tenants, and we will continue to consult with you through the year. From these discussions at least three rent options will be developed for 2027 to 2028 rent levels.

These options will go out for tenants to vote on before a final rent level is agreed by Housing and Social Wellbeing Committee in January 2027.

Make sure you have your say by taking part.

£50 voucher winners

Four tenants who took part in last year's Rent Level Options consultation were chosen at random as the winners of four £50 high street shopping vouchers.

The winners are:

Claire Hood, Perth
Shirley Kane, Milnathort
Brian Ferrie, Errol
Gavin Duncan, Blairgowrie

Congratulations to all our winners. Your prize will be sent out in the post to you - we hope you enjoy it!

Rent level update

In January 2026 councillors agreed a 6.5% rent increase for 2026 to 2027, in line with the views of our tenants.

The increase was recommended following a consultation in November to December 2025 which gathered almost 2,800 responses from tenants.

Thank you to everyone who took part in the consultation.

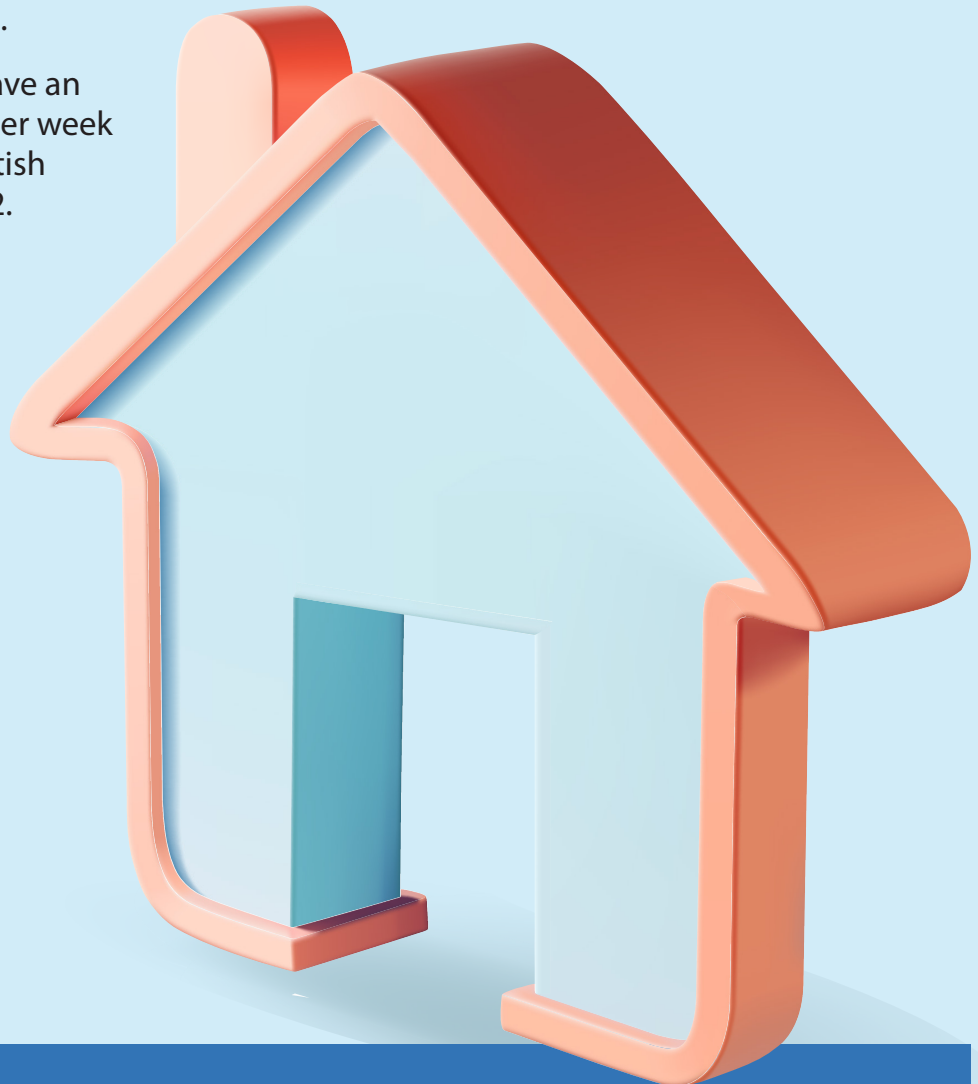
The new rent level came into effect from Monday 6th April 2026. Every tenant will have been sent a letter with details of their new rent. You can also calculate your weekly rent by visiting www.pkc.gov.uk/rentlevel

The increase will pay for enhanced service levels for tenants and rising costs faced by the Housing Revenue Account and reflects our continued commitment to rent levels that are affordable whilst maintaining good performance and high levels of tenant satisfaction.

Perth and Kinross Council will have an average rental figure of £90.01 per week compared to the projected Scottish local authority average of £98.72.

The average weekly rent increase on our properties is:

Bedsit	£3.84
1 Bedroom	£5.15
2 Bedroom	£5.57
3 Bedroom	£6.24
4+ Bedroom	£6.84



Anyone who is struggling to pay their rent can contact us on **01738 476000 (option 2)** to take advantage of a range of financial support and advice that Housing staff and other Council colleagues can provide.

Spotlight on Housing Compliance Team



The Housing Compliance Team carries out a range of checks to ensure you and your homes are safe.

The Compliance Team is currently responsible for the servicing and maintenance of assets including:

- **automatic doors**
- **emergency lighting**
- **fire alarms, sprinklers and safety equipment**
- **legionella prevention**
- **heating systems**
- **positive air ventilation systems**
- **Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR)**
- **passenger lifts**
- **private water supplies**
- **scooter charging pods**
- **lightning protection systems**

Key servicing legally requiring access

As your landlord, we are legally obligated to carry out a range of checks to ensure the safety of our tenants. Providing access to our staff to carry out these vital works is part of your tenancy agreement.



Annual gas safety and service checks

We are legally obligated to ensure that the domestic and commercial gas boilers within all properties, are serviced and maintained.

We must ensure that each appliance and flue to which that duty extends is checked for safety within 12 months of installation and at intervals of no more than 12 months since it was last checked for safety.

We offer three scheduled appointments. If no access is given at the third appointment and the meter is external to the property, our contactor will cap the gas supply to ensure tenant safety, and that of their families and neighbours. As a result, there will be no heating or hot water at the property.

If there is an internal meter, a further gain access appointment will be scheduled where a Repairs Inspector will attend with the gas engineer to provide access using a master key (or attend with a joiner to change the lock if required) to carry out the gas service check or cap the gas supply. If meters are capped or a gain access appointment has occurred, there will be a charge of £40.00 plus VAT.

Additional heating systems such as air source heat pumps and solid fuel are also subject to gain access appointments to ensure full working order.



Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR)

We must also ensure all our domestic properties, including common areas of Sheltered Housing, have a current EICR.

Properties must have regular electrical safety inspections carried out, with no more than five years between each inspection. Additionally, inspections must be carried out when there is a change of tenant.

We offer our tenants two scheduled appointments. If these are cancelled or no access is granted, we will then arrange for a member of the Housing Compliance Team to attend with the electrician to provide access using a master key (or attend with a joiner to change the lock if required) to complete the electrical testing. This will incur a charge of £60 plus VAT.

The same process is put in place for any remedial works identified that the contractor has to return to complete.



Fire sprinkler systems

We must carry out servicing and maintenance of fire sprinkler systems.

We offer our tenants two scheduled appointments. If these are cancelled or no access is granted, we will then arrange a gain access appointment where a member of the Housing Compliance Team will attend with the engineer to provide access using a master key (or attend with a joiner to change the lock if required) to complete the electrical testing.

The same process is put in place for any remedial works identified that the contractor has to return to complete.

New Homes

Perth and Kinross Council is continuing to work with developers to develop new homes for our tenants.

This year Persimmon Homes has handed over properties at Broich Road in Crieff and at Westpark in Blairgowrie.

Residents are already living in the 12 properties at Broich Road and benefiting from energy efficient homes designed for sustainable living.

Perth and Kinross Council's multi-million-pound house building programme has seen over 500 new Council homes built for social affordable rent since 2012. This is in addition to our successful buy-back programme which sees us purchase former Council houses, bungalows and flats to increase our stock of affordable housing.

The supply of more affordable homes of the size, type and in the location people want to live, is one of the main priorities of the Council's Housing Service.

Our new affordable homes are all built to the highest standards in areas where there is a shortage of affordable housing.

A range of energy-efficiency measures such as solar panels are included in our new-builds to keep the energy bills of our tenants as low as possible, and to minimise the carbon footprint of the homes.





Stopping damp and mould in your home

Damp in properties is caused by a build-up of moisture. This can be caused by various issues with a building, such as leaking pipes, cracks which allow rain in, blocked guttering, or defects in the foundation. Moisture can also build up from condensation because of daily living activities, particularly in properties which are not properly ventilated.

When moisture in the air meets a cold surface, such as a window or a wall, it condenses into water droplets.

If condensation isn't dealt with, it can lead to mould growing on walls, furniture and even on your clothes. This can be harmful to the health of both you and your family. It's important that your home is heated and well ventilated to prevent too much water moisture building up in the air.

Contributing factors, which can cause excess moisture and condensation, other than a lack of ventilation, include steam from cooking in the kitchen, steam from bathing or showering, overcrowding and the use of bottled gas or paraffin heaters.

Preventing condensation

Following the advice below can help to prevent condensation in your home.

- Don't cover up or block off any vents.
- Extractor fans, in your home, can run automatically when there is moisture in the air. Do not switch these off. They can cost as little as 15p a month to run. A 20-watt fan, running for an hour, uses 0.02 kWh of electricity which costs 15p per month.
- Avoid drying clothes indoors, where possible. If you do have to dry clothes inside, close the door of the room where they're drying, turn the heating on to increase vapour pressure and open a window in that room. This will allow excess moisture to escape.
- If using a conventional tumble dryer please ensure it is vented outside so that the steam is emitted outside your home. This is not required for condenser tumble dryers.
- Dehumidifiers are a good cost alternative to running a tumble dryer, costing as little as 27p per month in comparison to an average 3,000-watt tumble dryer costing £22.81 per month.

- Always maintain a small gap between your furniture and walls, allowing air to circulate.
- Trickle vents on your windows should always be open. They should also be cleaned regularly to reduce debris blocking the vents.

Dealing with condensation and mould

If you find that you do have condensation in your home, you should wipe it away with a dry cloth. If any mould grows you can eradicate it by wiping down walls with a fungicidal wash, which is available to buy in a supermarket.

If you have a persistent damp problem, please call the Council's Housing Repairs Service on **01738 476000** and we will arrange for an inspection of your home.

What help can we offer tenants with damp, mould and condensation?

After completing a damp/condensation inspection we install environmental sensors which can identify the risk of mould, poor ventilation, fuel poverty and, potentially, vulnerable tenants which enables us to take a more proactive approach in the identification and rectification of property repairs, maintenance and the support given to tenants.

iOpt, who are our specialist contractor, provides a tenant app which can be downloaded to your phone or tablet from a link sent to you direct. The app allows you to monitor the data in your home. The sensors monitor the temperature, humidity, dew point and carbon dioxide (CO₂) levels in the home. The data is then monitored and analysed, by an expert team at iOpt. The sensors generate alerts using the data and send it to our Housing Condition Team. When an alert is identified, the tenant will be contacted with guidance on what action(s) are required from tenants and/or from the Council's Housing Repairs or Locality Teams. The sensors have already helped many of our tenants to improve the atmosphere inside their homes, preventing a build-up of condensation.

There are sometimes more complex cases where damp and mould can be caused by the fabric of a building for example. In these cases our Housing Condition Team will provide additional focussed support to tenants to resolve these issues. This will include initial advice and work, followed up by monitoring and further visits to properties.

Other help

Condensation will form in cold rooms. It is recommended to heat your home to a minimum of 18 degrees Celsius, where possible. If you feel that you cannot maintain the recommended temperature, you can receive useful help and advice from the agencies below.

Citizens Advice Bureau

CAB offers impartial advice on things like switching supplier, who the best energy supplier is for you and getting a better deal. The service is completely free and independent.

Scarf

Scarf offers free and impartial advice to homeowners and, also, to tenants from local authorities, housing associations and the private rental sector. They can help householders reduce their energy usage and improve the energy efficiency of their homes. Advisors also offer an advocacy service to help those in fuel debt and can help to identify funding that might be available from government schemes, including benefits to help support you with your energy bills or improve your home, to make it more energy efficient. Call freephone **0808 129 0888** or email heat@scarf.org.uk

Home Energy Scotland

If you are struggling to heat your home affordably, you can contact Home Energy Scotland for free advice and support on **0808 808 2282**. Heat Scotland offers free home visits to look at how you can heat your home more affordably and efficiently. To arrange a visit, please call **0808 129 0888**.

Alternatively, please contact your Local Housing Office on **01738 476000** where a member of the team will be happy to help and provide guidance.

Double Dykes replacement chalets



A multi-million pound project to replace chalets at Double Dykes permanent Gypsy/Traveller site has now been completed.

The site at Ruthvenfield has been completely transformed in the £6.5 million project. Perth and Kinross Council successfully bid for £3,906,000 Scottish Government funding for the refurbishment of the site, with the local authority contributing the remaining 40% of the cost.

Twenty new chalets have now been installed on the site, replacing all the previous chalets which were cold and susceptible to damp.

The chalets benefit from greater energy efficiency.

The chalets were constructed off-site by contractor Ardbeg Modular and transported in sections, then assembled at Double Dykes.

The keys to the final chalets were handed over on Monday 23 February 2026, and all tenants have moved back to the site and are settling into their new homes.

The consensus from the tenants is that they are delighted and love their chalets with many enjoying being back on the site in their new homes.

Works to complete the new water infrastructure, street lighting, and amenity space to the back of the site are due to commence on Monday 13 April 2026. These works are estimated to be complete by early August 2026.



Perth and Kinross Council has adopted Mid Market Rent (MMR) as a key part of its housing strategy

Mid-Market Rent (MMR) is a form of affordable housing. It provides homes at rents set between social housing and private market levels, offering an option for those who cannot access social housing but still require an affordable alternative to the private sector.

Councillors approved plans for the Council to establish a new Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) to deliver MMR homes directly.

The first phase will see the Council acquire 13 new homes at Westfields, Rattray, helping meet growing demand from households who earn too much to qualify for social housing yet are unable to secure a mortgage or afford rising private rents.

In Perth and Kinross, the average house price in 2022/23 stood at £274,907, which would require an income level well above what many essential workers and young families earn.

In many cases, a typical mortgage would require a household income in the region of more than £40,000, depending on deposit size.

At the same time, private rent levels remain higher than the Local Housing Allowance, creating affordability challenges for those who do not qualify for social housing.

Mid-Market Rent provides a bridge between these two options

These homes are aimed at households on low to moderate incomes - often those employed in vital local roles - who need good-quality, long-term housing but cannot buy a home in the current market.

The Council will borrow £1.38 million from the general fund and lend it to the new LLP to acquire the first tranche of 13 new homes at Westfields. The LLP would repay this investment over 30 years, after which any surplus would be reinvested to provide additional MMR homes across Perth and Kinross.

Councillor Tom McEwan, convener of Perth and Kinross Council's Housing and Social Wellbeing Committee, said: "We know that many working families in Perth and Kinross are caught in the middle: they earn too much to be prioritised for social housing but simply cannot afford a mortgage or high private rents."

"Mid-Market Rent offers a fair, secure and affordable alternative."

Demand for MMR continues to grow locally, with current supply from Registered Social Landlords unable to keep pace.

By taking a more active role through its own delivery vehicle, the Council can provide greater choice, more flexibility in allocations, and a more secure tenure option than the wider private rented sector can typically offer.

Perth and Kinross Council is among a small group of Scottish Local Authorities delivering MMR directly and provide a scalable model capable of expanding to additional sites over future years.

Garden Maintenance Service

Are you looking for help managing your garden?

Our Garden Maintenance Service is available for all Perth and Kinross Council tenants to help keep your gardens looking their best.

If you're part of the scheme you will get your grass cut every fortnight, weather permitting, between April and October (14 cuts in total) with all cuttings bagged and removed.

Grass edges will be strimmed every second cut, although not if you have a stone chipped border.

There is also the option to pay for an annual hedge cut – cuttings will be collected and removed.

Your garden must be in good condition and not overgrown.

Charges

Grass

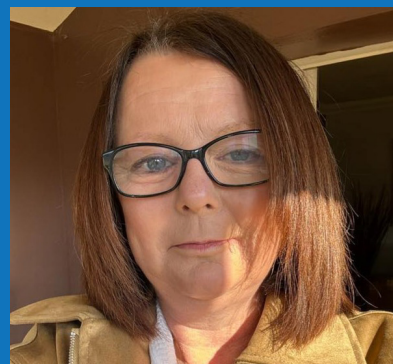
There is a charge of £8.73 per week (£453.96 per year) for this service. The charge is payable over 52 weeks and in advance with your weekly rent.

Annual hedge cut (optional)

There is an optional additional charge of £0.90 per week (£46.80 per year) for this service. This charge is also payable over 52 weeks and in advance with your weekly rent.

How do I apply?

If you are interested in applying for this scheme, fill in a Garden Maintenance Service application form you will find at www.pkc.gov.uk/GMS and return it to your local area office.



It is with sadness we have to inform you of the passing of a much-loved and deeply respected member of your Housing staff who will be familiar to many tenants, Michelle Dow.

Michelle dedicated an extraordinary 36 years to Perth and Kinross Council, and over 30 years to housing alone. Since joining the Council in 1990, she contributed her knowledge, compassion and unwavering commitment across a number of Housing teams. Most recently, she served as our Senior Tenant and Resident Participation Officer, a role in which she truly excelled.

Michelle had a rare gift for putting people at ease. Whether she was supporting tenants, advising colleagues, or guiding new members of staff, she brought warmth, humour and kindness into every interaction. She was generous with her time, always ready to listen, share her experience, and help others find their confidence. Her impact on our services and on the people she worked with is immeasurable.

Michelle was not only an exceptional colleague but a friend to many. Her absence will be felt by both her colleagues, and the tenants she served.

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion, only a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 01738 475000.

You can also send us a text message on 07824 498145.

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.

BSL users can contact us via Contact Scotland BSL, the online British Sign Language video relay interpreting service. Find out more on the Contact Scotland BSL website <https://contactscotland-bsl.org>