

# BALCASKIE

Estate Office, Easter Kellie Farm, Arncroach, Anstruther, KY10 2RF

01333 720200    [www.balcaskie.co.uk](http://www.balcaskie.co.uk)

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## Welcome to Balcaskie Estate

This guide has been created to help you become familiar with your new home, to tell you about Balcaskie Estate and to inform you of the service we provide and what you can expect from us during your time as tenants.

## Balcaskie Estate

Balcaskie Estate is a modern working estate in the East Neuk of Fife, committed to cultivating and caring for the natural environment, nurturing local business and supporting the vibrant community. The Estate covers 2000 ha from the coastline at St Monans to Kellie Law and into the hills beyond. The Anstruther family live in Balcaskie House, at the heart of the Estate and have been part of the East Neuk community since the 12<sup>th</sup> Century.

For further information please visit [www.balcaskie.co.uk](http://www.balcaskie.co.uk)

## Our service commitment

As custodians of the Estate, we take our responsibilities extremely seriously. We have a duty of care to protect and enhance the assets, working with like-minded occupiers to keep our properties in good order, preserving the past and investing for the future.

We therefore aim to provide a professional, efficient, quality service to our tenants as our partners in this endeavour. We very much want you to enjoy being part of the Estate and the East Neuk community.

The Estate is managed by a team located in the Balcaskie Estate Office at Easter Kellie. They are dedicated to the wellbeing of the tenants and are very happy to advise and help you with any issue that may arise.

We take great care to select professional, qualified contractors to deliver our maintenance programmes, working with companies who provide best practice as standard. Wherever possible, we try to appoint local craftsmen and women familiar with the Estate and the quality and standard required.

## Valuing your feedback

The Estate takes pride in investing significantly in the upgrading and maintenance of its properties and land holdings. We want our tenants to enjoy living in Estate properties and work with us in preserving the Estate for future generations.

We are always keen to receive constructive comments about your experience with Balcaskie Estate. You can feed these back to us via the Estate office and for general information on the Estate and to view our regular news updates please visit the website: [www.balcaskie.co.uk](http://www.balcaskie.co.uk).

## Quick reference

### Balcaskie Estate Office contact details:

Easter Kellie Farm, Arncroach, Anstruther, Fife, KY10 2RF | Tel: 01333 720200 | email: [info@balcaskie.com](mailto:info@balcaskie.com)

Estate Factor | Sam Parsons | Tel: 01333 720200 | Mobile: [REDACTED] | email: [sparsons@balcaskie.com](mailto:sparsons@balcaskie.com)

Office Manager | Deborah Ryan | Tel: 01333 720200 | Mobile: [REDACTED] | email: [dryan@balcaskie.com](mailto:dryan@balcaskie.com)

Property Asset Manager | Lara Thompson | Tel 01333 720200 | Mobile [REDACTED] | email: [lthompson@balcaskie.com](mailto:lthompson@balcaskie.com)

A comprehensive List of Useful Telephone numbers is included at Appendix C including out of hours and emergency contact details.

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## A-Z Guide

### Access to your property

While we respect your right to occupy the property without unreasonable interference, we may need to make occasional inspections during the course of your tenancy. We will always give you 48 hours' notice of our intention to inspect and wherever possible will try to attend at a time that is convenient to you.

As the landlord, we have a number of statutory obligations. For example, where gas is in a property, we need to carry out an annual gas safety inspections and would ask for your cooperation in this respect.

In the event of an emergency, such as a major gas or water leak from your property, we may need urgent access to your property. We will always try to contact you to arrange this but if we are unable to do so we reserve the right to enter your property to deal with any such emergency.

### Alterations

All our properties are let as seen when your tenancy is agreed and therefore no alterations are to be carried out by you without prior written consent from the Estate. Your tenancy agreement will have details of specific actions regarding redecoration, fixtures and fixings.

### Anti-social behaviour

Any allegations of antisocial, rude or abusive behaviour towards staff, contractors and/or other Balcaskie Estate tenants will be fully investigated and the appropriate action taken.

### Appliances

You should find information on how to use and maintain the appliances in your property (if applicable) when you arrive. If these are not provided, we would ask that you take a few minutes to familiarise yourself with either a printed or online user manual for each appliance as you may be responsible for the cost of repairs due to incorrect usage or poor maintenance. Repair costs arising from fair wear and tear or because the appliance is faulty will be the responsibility of the Estate.

## Broadband

All of our properties are equipped with telephone sockets and, where properties are not part of the Estate broadband system, some may not be served by your preferred broadband provider.

## Carbon monoxide alarms

Please read the attached detailed information sheet on Carbon Monoxide and Alarms at **Appendix B**. Please read this information sheet carefully and familiarise yourself with the signs of carbon monoxide poisoning and the steps that can be taken to minimise the risk.

## Certificates

For your information, the following certificates can be found at the back of this Welcome Pack:

- Gas certificate (where applicable)
- EPC
- EICR

## Chimney Sweeping

In properties with open fires and multi fuel stoves, tenants must arrange for flues and combustion product pipes to be cleaned at least once a year by a professional chimney sweep (and more often if the fire is heavily used). A copy of the certificate from the sweep should then be forwarded to the Estate Office and held on file. Please note that the inside of multi fuel fires and the throat plate at the entry to the chimney also requires regular cleaning.

## Cleaning

Under the terms of your tenancy agreement you are responsible for cleaning and clearing the property and its grounds. In particular we would draw your attention to your windows and chimneys. If you have a wood-burning stove, please note the recommendations made under this heading.

Please do not use abrasive cleaners on surfaces, paintwork or carpets as any damage caused may lead to a claim being brought against the deposit at the end of the tenancy.

## **Complaints procedure**

We are committed to providing a first-class service to our tenants but recognise that you may sometimes be disappointed in either our service or our product. We apologise if this should happen and would urge you to inform the Estate Office as soon as possible so that we can put things right and improve the service you receive. If you do not receive satisfaction in the first instance, please inform Sam Parsons - contact details in the Quick Reference section on Pg2.

## **Condensation and Mould**

Due to the historic nature of many of our residential properties, some are prone to damp and mould especially during the winter months. A detailed information sheet can be found at Appendix B detailing how to best manage the condition if you experience it in one of our properties.

## **Contact Details**

Please see the Quick Reference section on Pg2 and comprehensive contact details at Appendix C.

## **Continuing the Tenancy**

The tenancy forms part of a Private Residential Tenancy Agreement and continues indefinitely until you would like to leave in which case four weeks' written notice is required. The Estate can only terminate a residential letting on certain grounds. Please see the Scottish Government website giving guidance for Private Rented Sector tenants <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/private-residential-tenancies-tenants-guide/> and the 'Easy Read' notes in Appendix A and also available at <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/easy-read-notes-scottish-government-model-private-residential-tenancy-agreement/>.

## **Council tax**

We have already informed the appropriate local authority that you are now residing in this property. They will contact you directly with details of which band your property is in and how to arrange payment.

## **Defects**

Occasionally, following a thorough refurbishment, some small construction defects may occur in one of our properties. These are generally shrinkage cracks which appear as new plaster dries out over a 12-month period. This should not cause you any concern. However, we would ask all tenants to inform the Estate Office as soon as possible so that the property can be professionally inspected and, if necessary, any appropriate action taken.

## **Deposit**

Balcaskie Estate will forward the tenants' deposits to the scheme administrator of Safe Deposits Scotland scheme (see <http://www.safedepositsscotland.com/>) and shortly after you begin your tenancy you will receive a reference number for the deposit you have paid together with further details about the scheme.

The deposit paid at the start of your tenancy will normally be returned to you in full within 7 days of the end of your tenancy. Please be aware however that delays may occur if, at the check-out inspection, a deduction is made to cover the cost of repairs or if there are any outstanding charges relating to your tenancy which have still to be settled. No interest is payable on funds held as deposits. Please contact the Estate office if you need any further information on the deposit at any time during the tenancy.

## **Drains**

Many of our properties are served by private septic tanks which are emptied on a biennial basis by the landlord. However, they are always susceptible to blockages when used incorrectly. We will try to help you with any blocked drains, WCs or sinks if you are unable to clear the blockage yourself. Please do not flush any large or non-degradable objects such as nappies and wet wipes down the WC as this could cause blockages in the pipework. If we have to rectify this, you will be responsible for any costs incurred.

Where the property is served by a septic tank, please do not use chemicals such as bleach in high quantities as this can damage the workings of the system and will result in the tank not functioning correctly. Further information on the Septic Tank can be found in the 'Septic Tank' paragraph on Pg16 and the detailed information sheet at Appendix B. Please take time to read this thoroughly.

## **Energy Providers**

We have informed the appropriate energy providers that you have moved into your property. We have provided them with an up to date meter reading which may be found in your check-in report. You are entitled to change your provider if you so wish but must arrange this directly and inform Balcaksie Estate of any changes so that we can update our records.

## **Emergencies**

In the event of an emergency when the office is closed (see Office Opening hours section on Pg13) the main telephone number (01333 720200) is forwarded to one of the office team who will ask you as much information about the situation as possible and attempt to assist you over the telephone. If necessary they will call out a contractor or member of the Estate team to assist.

It is important to know where the stopcock and fuse board are in your property so that water or electricity can be turned off in the event of an emergency.

## **Empty premises**

If you plan to leave your property empty for more than 21 days (for example to go on holiday), please let the Estate office know in advance. We may need to gain emergency access to your property while you are away and will therefore need to know how to contact you.

If you leave your property empty for a period of time, especially in the winter months, please ensure there is adequate heating left on so that the water pipes and tanks do not freeze and burst.

## **Exterior maintenance works**

From time to time we will need to undertake planned maintenance works to the exterior of your property. You will of course be informed about these works in advance and we will always try to ensure that any disruption is kept to a minimum. We hope that you will understand that these works are essential so that we can maintain our properties to the highest standard.

## **Faults & Repair Requests**

Please report all faults to the Estate Office. The Office is open Monday to Friday, between 9am and 5pm. This enables us to log the fault, report it to the relevant contractor, and monitor progress until it has been resolved. If you report a fault to us, we will do our utmost to resolve it within a reasonable time of being notified.

### **Fire safety procedures**

The safety and security of our tenants is paramount. In the unlikely event of a fire in your property please act immediately to:

- Exit the building and retreat to a safe distance.
- Dial 999 and ask for the Fire Brigade.
- Call Balcaskie Estate office (01333 720200) as soon as possible.
- Do not re-enter the building until formally authorised to do so (i.e. the property has been made safe).

### **Fixing to walls**

You may wish to affix artwork and mirrors to internal walls and for this we would recommend that you use the following fixing methods:

- Metal or plastic self-drive fixings
- Metal cavity fixings.

The person carrying out this work should also remember to use a detector to ensure there are not water pipes or electrical cables hidden behind the plaster wall.

If you wish to make any changes within your property please do ask us for permission before you start. Any damage caused during the process must be rectified and made good as the property must be returned to its original state on the expiry of your lease.

### **Furniture**

Balcaskie Estate does not accept responsibility for any damage to your furniture when moving in or out. Any damage made to our property must be made good.

### **Garden Maintenance**



Under the terms of your tenancy you are responsible for maintaining the garden and exterior curtilage of the property in good condition at all times. Special consideration should be given to plants growing against the property such as ivy and creepers as these can cause unnecessary and costly damage. They should not be allowed to interfere with any windows, drains, woodwork, gutters, downpipes or roofs.

### **Gas emergency**

If you smell gas or suspect a gas leak at your property, please act quickly and take the following safety steps:

- Do not use electrical switches, do not smoke and do not activate any naked flames.
- Get fresh air immediately. Open all doors and windows to ventilate the room.
- Switch off all gas appliance(s).
- Turn off the gas supply at the main stop cock.
- Call the National Gas Emergency number on 0800 111 999.
- Please contact the Estate office so that we can arrange for the appliance(s) to be checked by a registered Gas Safe Engineer.
- If you are feeling ill, contact your GP or local hospital immediately.

### **Gas safety**

Be Gas Safe in your home by following these guidelines:

- A member of Balcaskie Estate will contact you annually to arrange a safety check for all your gas appliances including the servicing of your boiler and to check the gas hob and gas fire if there is one fitted. It is very important that you allow us access to carry out these inspections.
- We will always use a registered Gas Safe Engineer to fit, fix and check appliances in your home. This is the law and will help to keep you safe.
- For your own safety, always ask to see the Engineer's Gas Safe ID card.
- Be aware of any symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning. These include headaches dizziness, nausea, breathlessness and loss of consciousness. If you experience any of these symptoms, contact your GP or local hospital immediately.
- If you can, check your gas appliance(s) for any sign that they are not working properly. These might include a lazy yellow flame instead of a crisp blue one black marks or stains around the appliance or too much condensation within the room.

- Only use gas appliances for their intended purpose. Do not use a gas oven to heat a room or use a gas barbeque inside the property.
- Always try to ensure there is enough ventilation inside the property to allow your appliance to burn correctly. Make sure you are not blocking any air vents that provide an air supply to any of your appliances.
- Do not remove the carbon monoxide detector at your property and inform a member of your Balcaskie Estate team immediately if this needs replacing.

### **Gutters**

A reminder that it is your responsibility to ensure that the gutters and downpipes are kept clear and free from debris and other detritus and suggest this is particularly relevant late in the year once the trees have shed their leaves.

### **Health and safety**

We have a comprehensive Health and Safety Policy in place. For us to adhere to our Policy we will need access to your property to carry out obligatory tests on the following:

- Gas
- Water hygiene
- Fixed electrical appliances.

It is very important that these tests are carried out so your assistance is very much appreciated. We also have to carry out periodic inspections of the interior and exterior of all our properties so that we can assess any necessary redecoration and/or repair works.

### **Heating and hot water**

Information on your boiler has been left for you at the property. The Estate arranges annual servicing of all boilers and will send through confirmation certificates. If you have any problems with your heating and hot water at any time, please inform the Estate office.

If your property has a gas supply we will inform British Gas or another relevant provider that you are residing in this property and provide them with an up to date meter reading, a copy of which should also have been given to you.

Those properties served by the Estate's own district heating system may be billed separately for the heat used. The cost per kWh will be made clear to you in advance. If your heating or hot water are not working, please contact the Estate Office and a member of the team will investigate.

It is advisable to maintain a steady low heat in your property rather than shorter periods of high heat as this can cause damage to the property and is less energy efficient.

If your property has a water cylinder, there will be an immersion switch which can provide hot water from electricity during periods when you do not want to run heating. These are marked "Water Heater" If you are unsure, please contact the Estate Office team for assistance.

### **Heat detectors**

Heat detectors provide early warning of a potential fire outbreak by monitoring changes in temperature. A heat detector has been fitted in your property as an additional safety measure. However, regular maintenance and servicing is vital to ensure these remain effective. Please ensure that you test this device every six months and that any failed system is replaced rather than repaired. If the unit is beeping intermittently please change the battery. If the beeping continues please contact Balcaskie Estate office.

### **Insuring your belongings**

Please be aware that Balcaskie Estate does not insure the contents of your home or your personal possessions and cannot therefore be held responsible for these. You are advised to arrange a comprehensive contents insurance policy as soon as you can after moving into the property.

### **Intruder alarms**

If your property has been fitted with an intruder alarm, then you will be responsible for its maintenance and testing. Please ensure that you familiarise yourself with the device and manufacturers' recommendations.

### **Inventory check-in**

An inventory check-in report will be given to you when you move into your new property. This is a legally binding document listing the contents and condition of the property, its fixtures and fittings. You will need to attend a meeting with a member of the Balcaskie Estate team to go through this so

that you can return the checked inventory with any comments you may have within 48 hours of taking possession of your property.

In the event that you are unable to attend this appointment or neglect to return the inventory to the Estate office within 48 hours you are deemed to have accepted the document as a true and complete record of the condition of the premises when you took over the tenancy.

### **Inventory check-out**

We will arrange for an inventory check-out to be carried out at the end of your tenancy. This report will be made using your inventory check-in document. You will not be charged for either of these services.

The inventory check-out has a bearing on how quickly your deposit can be returned to you. It is important therefore that the property is fully cleaned, that any items which been lost or damaged are replaced and that fixtures and fittings are put back into the rooms in which they originally appeared under the inventory.

### **Keys and locks**

If you lock yourself out of your property or your keys are lost or stolen, please contact the Estate office. You will be responsible for the cost of any replacement keys and/or in instances where the lock has to be replaced, for that of the lock and keys as well as any call-out charges.

### **Legionella**

It is important to please read the attached information sheet on Legionella (see Appendix B) detailing what Legionella is, how it can affect your health and actions to mitigate the risk.

### **Lightbulbs**

All the lightbulbs in your property including those in the appliances will need to be replaced by you. If the replacement of a light bulb is causing you difficulty (for example on a very high ceiling) please inform the Estate office.

## Maintenance issues

Our office hours are Monday to Friday 9.00 am to 5.00 pm. Please report any maintenance issues to the Balcaskie Estate office.

If you have an urgent maintenance issue outside of these hours please call 01333 720200 and leave a message. A member of the office team will get back to you as soon as possible.

## Meters

The gas, heat and electricity meters are read at the beginning and end of your tenancy. Their location will be indicated in your inventory report. Some properties may have a water meter. If you have any questions relating to your water supply, please contact a member of the Estate office. **Please note that meters are not to be changed under any circumstances.**

## Office Opening hours

The Estate Office is open Monday to Friday, between 9am and 5pm.

## Oil and LPG Gas Tanks

Where the property is served by oil or LPG then please be mindful of keeping this topped up, especially during the Christmas period where deliveries may not be as frequent. If the tank is allowed to run dry this may result in the system needing to be re-commissioned by a heating engineer or in extreme cases damage to the boiler. You will be responsible for meeting the recommissioning or repair costs if this is allowed to happen.

## Pets

Pets may be kept at the property with consent of the landlord. This is recorded by way of a side letter and consent would only be granted subject to the pets not causing a nuisance and that the property is maintained in good condition. Any damage caused by keeping pets will be raised as a dilapidation at the end of the tenancy and need to be repaired / made good.

## **Power**

Socket outlets are of a standard configuration and utilise a standard 13Amp 3-pin plug top. Where socket outlets are located below worktops or behind fridges an indicated isolation control switch will be in the vicinity of outlet. Where a fixed electrical appliance is fitted an isolation control switch would be installed next to the appliance.

## **Radiators**

In the majority of properties, the radiators throughout your property can be controlled by a thermostatic radiator valve and you can adjust these to your preferred temperature. Some properties may control the temperature with a wall mounted room thermostat.

## **Recycling**

We would encourage all tenant to recycle as much as possible. Details of collections and recycling centres is available on the Fife Council website <https://www.fifedirect.org.uk/recycling>.

## **Redecoration and repairs**

All repairs and redecoration undertaken at the property can only be carried out with the prior approval/permission from Balcaskie Estate. This not only helps us to maintain quality standards, but also protects you the tenant from any subsequent problems and associated costs. Please contact the Estate office if you are considering repair or redecoration work.

## **Refuse collection**

Refuse is collected by Fife Council. For days/times of collections in your area please visit the Fife Council Bin Collection website at [https://www.fifedirect.org.uk/env\\_bins/index.cfm](https://www.fifedirect.org.uk/env_bins/index.cfm) and search using your postcode.

## **Removals**

For your safety and that of your removals team we ask that no weight or pressure be put on any decorative railings or balconies. Please ensure that the correct hoist is used in the event that furniture needs to be moved through a window and, where necessary, ensure removals teams provide full risk assessment and method statements.

## **Rent**

Rent is payable in advance on a monthly basis starting on the day of occupation. Subsequent payments should be made monthly thereafter.

Please note that your deposit cannot be accepted as full or part payment of rent.

Should you experience any difficulty in meeting these payment dates at any point, please speak to a member of the Estate office team. We will be happy to help wherever possible.

## **Rental difficulties**

If you are experiencing real difficulty in meeting your rental payments due to a change in personal or professional circumstances, then we kindly ask you to contact the Estate Office and arrange a meeting to discuss the issues as soon as possible.

## **Reporting defects**

Please report any defects in your property to a member of the Estate office team immediately. A full list of office telephone numbers/email addresses/mobile telephone numbers is detailed in a separate section in this Welcome Pack.

## **Roof Check**

The Estate arranges for your roof to be checked on a bi-annual basis by a preferred contractor to ensure the roofs remain wind and watertight and in a good state of repair at all times.

## **Saving energy and £££s (list of tips)**

The following tips will save you energy and help to reduce the cost of your electricity and water bills:

- Try to ensure the radiator thermostats are set to the correct level.
- If you set the heating and hot water timers to operate at regular times throughout the day this will ensure that the rooms achieve and maintain a steady and comfortable temperature.
- Always replace the low energy light bulbs fitted in your home with similar low energy light bulbs.

- Please turn room lights and electrical appliances off when not in use – this includes not leaving appliances on standby.
- For more energy saving advice and information please contact The Energy Saving Trust free of charge on 0300 123 1234 (open Monday to Friday 9am to 8pm and Saturday 10am to 2pm).

## **Septic Tanks**

Many of our properties are served by private septic tanks which are emptied on a biennial basis by the landlord. However, they are always susceptible to blockages when used incorrectly. We will try to help you with any blocked drains, WCs or sinks if you are unable to clear the blockage yourself. Please do not flush any large or non-degradable objects such as nappies and wet wipes down the WC as this could cause blockages in the pipework. If we have to rectify this, you will be responsible for any costs incurred.

Where the property is served by a septic tank, please do not use chemicals such as bleach in high quantities at this can damage the workings of the system and will result in the tank not functioning correctly. Further more detailed information on the Septic Tank can be found at Appendix B. Please take time to read this thoroughly.

## **Smoke detectors**

The smoke detectors throughout your property are wired to the main distribution board and fitted with battery back-ups. Please remember to test the operation of the smoke alarm once a month by pressing the test button hard once.

If the unit is beeping intermittently please change the battery. If the beeping continues please contact Balcaskie Estate office.

## **Storm damage**

If you should experience storm damage at any time please inform a member of the team as soon as possible so that we advise and arrange for any necessary remedial works to be undertaken.



## **Surface water drainage**

Surface water is rainwater collected from roofs and roadways and water that runs off paved surfaces. The water then runs into surface water drains which are in turn connected to the main Water Company sewers or into field soakaways. Please do not pour any chemicals or harmful substances down the paved areas or road gullies.

## **Telephone connection**

There are telephone points located on the walls throughout your property. It is your responsibility to arrange for connection of the primary point and to sign up to a line rental agreement.

If you require a BT line, please call them direct on 0800 800 150 and they will arrange to make the line active and provide you with a telephone number. (There is a charge for this service which is payable by you as the tenant.)

## **Television licence**

You will need a licence if you have a television or streaming services in your property. For further information visit [www.tvlicensing.co.uk](http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk).

If you have previously had a television licence you can transfer it to your new property by telephoning the TV Licensing Office on 0300 790 6165 and quoting your TV Licence number.

## **Termination of your tenancy**

The tenancy forms part of a Private Residential Tenancy Agreement and continues indefinitely until you would like to leave in which case four weeks' written notice is required. The Estate can only terminate a residential letting on certain grounds. Please see the Scottish Government website giving guidance for Private Rented Sector tenants <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/private-residential-tenancies-tenants-guide/> and the 'Easy Read' notes in Appendix A and also available at <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/easy-read-notes-scottish-government-model-private-residential-tenancy-agreement/>.

All notices – whether from the tenant or the landlord – must be issued in writing.

## **Upkeep and maintenance**

Balcaskie Estate makes every effort to maintain its properties to a high standard. However, this can only be fully achieved with the support and cooperation of our tenants. Your Tenancy Agreement sets out the responsibilities for the upkeep and maintenance of your property under the heading Tenant's Obligations.

We take pride in our land and property holdings and expect our tenants to do the same. Keeping driveways clear and weeded and ensuring gardens or verges are well tended help us to preserve the integrity of our estates.

## **Utilities**

The appropriate gas, electricity and water providers have been informed of your date of occupation and provided with an up to date meter reading. Charges incurred from the date of occupation will be billed directly to you. You are entitled to change your provider if you so wish but must arrange this directly and inform Balcaskie Estate of any changes so that we can update our records.

Please also note that at the end of your tenancy all accounts must have been settled in full. Any outstanding balances will be pursued directly with you by the relevant utility company.

## **Vermin Control**

There may be occasional issues with vermin especially at the onset of colder weather where there is an increased risk of vermin migrating towards properties and outbuildings in search of food and shelter. If rats and mice do become a problem then you should either contact your local authority for pest control or take appropriate advice from a specialist pest control firm.

## **Water testing**

Balcaskie Estate will arrange to have your boiler serviced and water tested annually.

It is important that your hot water runs at the required temperature. Please advise the Estate office at the earliest opportunity if your hot water loses temperature or your cold water is not as cold as it used to be. We will then arrange for someone to come in and test the system so that any faults can be remedied in good time.

## **Water Pipes**

Every effort is made to ensure that your property is protected against burst or cracked pipes. However, due to the age of some of our historic properties exceptionally cold weather may result in damage to pipework.

In these instances please turn off the stop tap to prevent incoming water supply and undertake all preventative measures to try to minimise the damage. Then call the Estate office as soon as possible so that we can come out and assess any necessary repairs and organise for one of our preferred contractors to carry out the works.

Please ensure that any external taps or pipes are fitted with suitable frost protection during the winter when not in use.

## **Water Supply & Legionella**

Where a water meter is fitted, we will have informed your water provider that you are now residing in the property so that bills can be forwarded to you from your date of occupation.

If you go on holiday or are away from the property for any length of time, please flush all taps for a couple of minutes and fill kettles and water filters with fresh water.

Please read the important information sheet on Legionella at Appendix B detailing what Legionella is, how it can affect your health and actions to mitigate the risk.

## **Windows**

You are responsible for the cleaning of your windows. If the outside surface of your windows cannot be reached safely then a professional window cleaner should be used.

## **Winter Letter**

The Estate will send out a Winter Property Reminder Letter covering a number of small precautionary winter maintenance points that we advise are carried out to your property before the cold winter weather sets in to ensure continued enjoyment of your property and to avoid damage.

## Wiring

The wiring to your property is fully concealed within the walls. Under no circumstances should unqualified or unauthorised persons make alterations to the fixed wiring. If you have any problems regarding the wiring in your property please contact Balcaskie Estate office team for advice and assistance.

## Wood burning stoves

If a wood-burning stove has been fitted to your property, please ensure that the logs used are of an appropriate length and diameter (see manufacturer's recommendations). Wood should be stored for at least 6 months in order to dry out fully and be properly seasoned. 'Green' or damp wood burns less efficiently and produces more tar.

Tenants are responsible for the safe operation of the stove. This means that you must arrange for the flue and combustion product pipe to be cleaned at least once a year by a professional chimney sweep (and more often if the fire is heavily used). A copy of the certificate from the sweep should then be forwarded to the Estate Office and held on file.

Please note that the inside of the fire and the throat plate at the entry to the chimney will require regular cleaning. **The use of flammable liquid to light the fire and stove is strictly prohibited.**

A further more detailed Information sheet can be found at Appendix B.

## Your tenancy rights

The Government protects the rights of both landlord and tenant by clearly explaining the rights and responsibilities of each party. Your tenancy forms part of a Private Residential Tenancy Agreement. The Scottish Government website has a useful section giving guidance for Private Rented Sector tenants <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/private-residential-tenancies-tenants-guide/> as well as 'Easy Read' notes detailed at Appendix A and also available at <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/easy-read-notes-scottish-government-model-private-residential-tenancy-agreement/>. The Easy Read Notes can help you understand your Private Residential Tenancy. They will also help you to know about your rights, and about the things you should be doing or not doing during your tenancy

Please be advised to check the Government's website from time to time for the latest version of this report to ensure you are aware of any updates.

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## Thank you

All of us at Balcaskie Estate would like to welcome you to your new home and hope that you have found this guide helpful.

We hope that you will be very happy both with your property and with the service we provide to you. We wish to provide excellent customer care at all times. To help us achieve this please do not hesitate to contact us with any queries or questions you may have.

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## Appendices

Appendix A – Scottish Government Private Residential Tenancy Easy Read Notes.

Appendix B - Detailed Information sheets on management of Septic Tanks, Carbon Monoxide, Multi Fuel Stoves, Legionella and Dampness, Condensation & Mould.

Appendix C – List of Useful Telephone numbers including Emergency out of hours numbers.

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## APPENDIX A

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<https://beta.gov.scot/publications/easy-read-notes-scottish-government-model-private-residential-tenancy-agreement/>.

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## APPENDIX B

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## **DETAILED INFORMATION ON CARBON MONOXIDE**

Balcaskie Estate has fitted a carbon monoxide alarm in your property. As with any smoke alarms fitted in your property, you are obliged to carry out any required regular testing to carbon monoxide detectors and to replace any batteries contained within the monitors as is necessary.

Please read the following practical and straightforward advice on what you can do to minimise the risk from carbon monoxide.

### **What is Carbon Monoxide?**

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colourless, odourless, tasteless, poisonous gas produced by incomplete burning of carbon-based fuels, including gas, oil, wood and coal. Carbon-based fuels are safe to use. It is only when the fuel does not burn properly that excess CO is produced, which is poisonous.

### **How can Carbon Monoxide affect your health?**

Carbon Monoxide is potentially fatal, and even low-levels of the poisonous gas can cause lasting damage to your health. When CO enters the body, it prevents the blood from bringing oxygen to cells, tissues, and organs. The gas can kill quickly and without warning. Levels that do not kill can cause serious harm to health if breathed in over a long period. In extreme cases paralysis and brain damage can be caused as a result of prolonged exposure to CO.

### **What are the symptoms of Carbon Monoxide poisoning?**

The early symptoms of Carbon Monoxide poisoning are similar to many common ailments and can easily be confused with food poisoning, viral infections, flu or simple tiredness. Symptoms to look out for include:

- drowsiness
- headaches
- giddiness
- nausea
- vomiting
- pains in the chest
- breathlessness
- stomach pains
- erratic behaviour
- visual problems.

If you experience these symptoms but feel better when you are outside or away from the appliance, you could be suffering from Carbon Monoxide poisoning.

### **How can people be exposed to Carbon Monoxide?**

People can be exposed to Carbon Monoxide fumes from badly installed or maintained heating appliances, or from badly ventilated flues and chimneys. Carbon Monoxide can also be present in smoke from solid fuel, wood or oil appliances

### **What can you do to minimise the risk from Carbon Monoxide?**

Balcaskie Estates has very few LPG gas appliances in its properties, however, if you do have a gas appliance that is owned by the Estate, we will have it checked by an LPG Gas Safe registered engineer every 12 months and we will provide you with a copy of the safety certificate.

If you have a solid fuel appliance, you should empty the ash can daily, clean the flue ways at the back of the boiler weekly and clean the throat plates at the top of the room heater monthly. You should have your chimney swept at least once a year if burning smokeless fuel or at least twice a year if using wood. An alarm is no substitute for regular maintenance and chimney sweeping.

Know how to spot the signs of Carbon Monoxide around your appliance. Look out for signs such as sooting or staining around the appliance, a pilot light that blows out frequently or excessive condensation in the room. If you are using a gas appliance that should have a crisp blue flame, such as a pilot light, look out for changes. If it turns to a lazy orange flame, the appliance may not be working correctly. Report any signs as soon as possible to the Estate Office.

It is dangerous to block ventilation - blocking ventilation or misusing your appliance can lead to Carbon Monoxide poisoning.

Know what to do and who to call in an emergency. If you suspect a Carbon Monoxide leak, stop using the appliance until it has been checked by a competent engineer. You should open windows to ventilate the area, leave the room to get some fresh air and seek medical advice. If you receive medical attention, be sure to state that you suspect you could be suffering from Carbon Monoxide poisoning to ensure you receive appropriate treatment, and are offered a breath or blood test.

### **Where can I find more information?**

The Solid Fuel Association - [www.solidfuel.co.uk](http://www.solidfuel.co.uk)

0845 601 4406 / 01773 835400 or e-mail: [sfa@solidfuel.co.uk](mailto:sfa@solidfuel.co.uk)

The Health and Safety Executive - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/gas/domestic/co.htm>

## **DETAILED INFORMATION ON DAMPNESS, CONDENSATION AND MOULD**

- Most damp problems are caused by condensation; occasionally damp is caused either by water penetrating from roof and gutter leaks or rising from the ground.
- The only way to control condensation is by adequate ventilation at all times. During the cold winter months a quick "blow through" in the morning, by opening windows, is sometimes all that is needed to clear the build-up of damp air that has accumulated overnight.
- The effects of condensation are most visible on window glass, where large amounts of water form on the cold glass. Warm air inside buildings is capable of holding a great deal of moisture and when the air cools the moisture is released, causing condensation, which is characterised by black or grey mould growth. The most common areas for damp and mould growth caused by condensation are at the skirting level where the wall is cooler and in corners of wall and ceiling, or behind furniture where air flow is restricted.
- The average household produces around 14 litres or 24 pints of water vapour per day. This vapour must be allowed to vent to the outside air; if allowed to linger, this amount of water will be deposited into the building fabric causing considerable damage.
- The main sources of water vapour are:
  - Drying clothes
  - Cooking
  - Kettles
  - Washing machines
  - Bathing

It is therefore of particular importance that you ensure that you allow adequate ventilation when the above activities are taking place.

- Allowing adequate escape of vapour laden air through partially opened windows or by fans, and keeping the fabric of the building relatively warm will help to prevent condensation forming within the property.
- Prevent moist air from cooking and bathing spreading to other rooms by keeping doors closed to the kitchen and bathroom. Drying clothes in the house creates enormous amounts of moisture,

which will cause problems if not controlled.

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## **DETAILED INFORMATION ON LEGIONELLA**

### **What is Legionella?**

Legionella bacteria are common and can be found naturally in water sources such as rivers, lakes and reservoirs, usually in low numbers. The bacteria are usually associated with larger water systems found in factories, hotels, hospitals, museums, and cooling towers. However, they can be found in smaller water supply systems in the home. The bacteria are sensitive to temperature, but the range of 20°C to 45°C is the most favourable for encouraging their growth. The organisms do not usually multiply below 20°C, and will not survive above 60°C.

### **How can Legionella Affect Your Health?**

Legionella bacteria can give rise to a range of illnesses similar to pneumonia. The most well-known of these is Legionnaires' disease. Most people who are exposed to legionella will not become ill, and the disease does not spread from person to person. Although anyone can be affected, it principally affects those who are more susceptible due to age, illness or existing respiratory conditions, those who have a suppressed immune system or who are smokers.

### **How can People be Exposed to Legionella?**

People can be exposed to Legionella bacteria by inhaling small droplets of water containing the bacteria suspended in air. This is usually from a mist or aerosol of water such as from showers or spa baths. There is no risk from drinking water containing the bacteria.

### **What can be done to Minimise the Risk from Legionella?**

- **Run the water off infrequently used outlets.** For taps or showers that are infrequently used, such as an outside tap or shower in a guest room, run them occasionally to flush through any stagnant water. Legionella bacteria can breed in stagnant water. Do this carefully to avoid splashing the water and creating a mist. For example, if the shower head is attached via a hose, remove the shower head from its holder and lay the head in the base of the shower.
- **When you've been away.** If you have been away for a while (one week or more), run the taps and showers for a few minutes on your return to flush through any stagnant water. When doing this, take care to avoid splashes.
- **De-scale Showers.** Every 3 to 6 months, dismantle, clean and de-scale shower heads and hoses.
- **Set the Hot Water Thermostat to 60°C.** This is a possible precaution. If you have a temperature control switch or indicator gauge on your hot water heating system, you

can set it to 60°C – the bacteria will not survive above this temperature. But be careful – this can increase the risk of scalds, so if there are young children, elderly adults or vulnerable persons in the property, this may not be appropriate.

- **Checking the Cold Water Storage Tank?** Where the cold water storage tank can be accessed safely, you can:
  - Check that your tank is insulated and that it has a closely fitting lid. By insulating your cold water tank you can ensure that the temperature of the water remains under 20°C and that Legionella bacteria will not breed. This will also ensure that your cold water tank does not freeze in the winter.
  - Check the condition of the tank and the water in it. Ideally, there should be no debris in the tank and the water should be clear. If the bottom of the tank contains debris and the water has a film of scum on the top you should clean it out, if possible.

Take care and do not put yourself at risk. The risk from entering an un-floored attic space or using a step ladder to gain access to a water tank is likely to be greater than the risk from legionella.

- **Ensure Hot and Cold Water Pipes are Lagged.** Lagging the pipes will ensure that cold water stays cold and hot water stays hot and minimises the risk from Legionella.

Finally, we would like to reassure you that the risk from Legionella bacteria in domestic homes is extremely low. Because houses are continuously occupied and water is used on a regular basis, there is very little chance of water stagnating. If you follow the tips listed above you will reduce the risk still further and have no need for concern.

## DETAILED INFORMATION ON SEPTIC TANKS

### Do

- Act immediately if you find a blockage or any sign of a problem
- Wash dishes in a dishwasher whenever possible (fat is converted into soap in a dishwasher)
- Use toilet fresheners, mild detergents, fabric conditioners and washing powders and liquids in moderation without upsetting the natural balance of the septic tank. All active ingredients in soap and detergents should be biodegradable by law and should be safe for septic tanks in normal use
- Use bleaches and disinfectants – but please use them sparingly – as they can kill the friendly bacteria which make the septic tank work

### Don't

- Fats, oils or heavy grease should not be poured down the drain
- Paints, solvents and motor oils should not be put down the drain
- Never dispose of garden chemicals and pesticides into the septic tank
- Don't use the toilet or kitchen sink as a rubbish bin
- Don't empty chemical toilets into drains or septic tanks
- Nappies, sanitary items, plastic or similar items should not be disposed of into the system – "bag it and bin it" instead
- Don't dig or drive over the drainage field, or cover it with a hard surface
- Don't block air vents
- Don't desludge your tank too often
- Don't allow effluent to collect on the surface of the ground
- Don't enter a septic tank – dangerous gases are produced by the natural treatment process

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## **MULTI-FUEL STOVE INSTRUCTIONS**

### **Fuel**

DO NOT BURN petroleum coke fuels (i.e. House Coal) or household waste.

Burn only dry, well-seasoned wood, that has been cut, split and stacked for at least 12 months. When stacking the wood, ensure there is free air movement around the sides to enable it to dry out.

DO NOT burn wet, creosoted or unseasoned wood, as this will create tar deposits in the stove and chimney and will produce reduced heat output.

Anthracite is an approved natural smokeless fuel (not processed) but can vary greatly in quality and performance. It should be used in conjunction with other approved manufactured smokeless fuels as per the HETAS approved list, which can be found at [www.hetas.co.uk](http://www.hetas.co.uk).

### **Lighting the Stove**

- Load the fire with starting fuel (paper, dry sticks and/or firelighters)
- Light the fire at the base with all air controls open
- Once the fire has established, further fuel can be added

### **Burning Wood**

- With a full load of wood, the stove will need to be refuelled approximately once every 1½ hours.
- The wood will burn more efficiently with the primary air sliders in the closed position and the secondary control left open.
- The secondary control will control the burn rate of the stove.

### **Solid Fuel**

- With a full load of fuel, the stove will need to be refuelled approximately once every 4 hours.
- Solid fuel will burn more efficiently with the secondary air control in the closed position.
- The thermostat control will control the burn rate of the stove.

### **Banking the Stove for Extended Burning**

- If using solid fuel, empty the ash pan.
- Open the air controls and let the fire burn brightly for a short period of time.
- Refuel, then close the primary and secondary air controls as required.
- To revive the fire, open the air controls until the fire is burning brightly, then refuel.

- Set the air controls as required.

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## APPENDIX C

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## Balcaskie Estate

### Useful Telephone Numbers

General Enquiries	
Balcaskie Estate Office	01333 720200
Building works / repairs	Estate Office: 01333 720200 Lara Thompson: 07990 857819
Emergency Number (out of hours)	<u>01333 720200</u> <u>Out of hours, the office telephone is forwarded to a member of the Estate Team who will assist.</u>
Local Services	
Chimney Sweep:	Garry Cameron 07980 072232
Dentist	East Shore Dental Practice, 9 East Shore, Anstruther. 01333 311033
Doctors	Pittenweem & Elie Medical Practice, 2 Routine Row, Pittenweem, 01333 311307
Council Tax – Fife Council	08451 551155
Garage - Local	Bassaguard (St Andrews) 01334 474187
Grass Cutting	John Hamilton 01333 720273 Eddie Provan 07740 678 926
Heating Oil (known as Kerosene)	Crystal Petroleum 01592 720366
Logs	Stuart Provan 07801 029508
Pest Control	Ronnie Morris 07827 327 160
Police – Fife	0845 600 5702
Taxi	KY Cabs 01333 312000
Vets	East Neuk Vets 01333 739199 Eden Veterinary Practice 01334 650888
Waste Disposal – Fife Council	08451 550022

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