



Welcome to Aberdeen

A guide to your new area

Introduction

Hello and welcome to your new home! We hope you're settling in. This guide is written by volunteers with information about some of the things to consider when moving house and to support you in getting to know the Aberdeen area. We hope it provides a useful source for finding out about your local authority, local transport, money advice and where to seek help when you need it. We've provided links to useful websites and given a list of key contacts at the end. So good luck in your new home!



Shanice
Housing Options Scotland Volunteer



This guide has been produced by volunteers at **Housing Options Scotland**. We are Scotland's housing charity for disabled people, older adults and members of the Armed Forces community. If you need help with your housing situation, contact us:

housingoptionsscotland.org.uk
0131 510 1567
info@housingoptionsscotland.org.uk

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If you have any questions about this guide, contact Julia Bandel on
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Background information

Aberdeen is a port city in northeast Scotland, where the Dee and Don rivers meet the North Sea. With an offshore petroleum industry, the city is home to an international population. It's also known as the 'Granite City' for its many enduring grey-stone buildings. Population is estimated at 200,680 for the city of Aberdeen.

Find out more about Aberdeen and its surrounding villages and towns [here](#).



ABERDEEN CITY



Moving home

When you move into a new home there are several things you need to think about:

Tell others about your change of address.

This might include:

- Friends and family
- Your employer
- Your local job-centre
- Your bank, insurance, pension and credit card companies
- Your doctor and dentist
- [Aberdeen City Council](#) (for Council Tax)
- [The electoral register](#)
- [The DVLA](#) (Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency)
- [The DWP](#) (Department for Work and Pensions)
- [TV licensing](#)
- [The Post Office](#) re-direction service
- Telephone, TV and broadband providers
- Charities you might support



Find your way around your new home. Consider getting two copies of keys cut for your new home and ask for instructions/booklets for all appliances to be left for you. Also make sure you know where to locate the following:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gas and electricity meters | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fuse box |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thermostat for central heating | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Landline telephone sockets |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water boiler | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TV and satellite aerial sockets |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hot and cold water tanks | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Access points e.g. to loft points/under floor areas |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stopcock (to turn the main water supply on/off) | |

- **Take gas and electricity meter readings.** Do this at your old and new property when you leave/move-in. This will make sure you only pay for the energy you use.
- **Settle up bills at your old property.** Make sure you pay for all bills due - rent/mortgage; council tax; gas/electricity; garden/common area maintenance.
- **Think about changing providers.** Moving to a new home gives you the chance to review the costs of services you use and try to find better deals. Look at comparison sites [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#) to help.



The following websites might also prove useful for you throughout/after your move:



[Energy Saving Trust Scotland](#)

For advice about saving on your energy bills, grants and loans for energy efficiency improvement.



[Trusted Traders](#)

A directory of trusted traders in Aberdeen, if you are looking to have work carried out in your home.



[Care and Repair Aberdeen](#)

Provides independent advice and assistance to people over 60 years of age who require house repairs or minor adaptations to their homes.



[Check a trade](#)

A tradesperson finder website - tradespeople are included based on recommendations from customers and monitored based on customer feedback and trade reputation.

Council services

Council Services

Aberdeen Council provides a [range of services](#). There is a list of A-Z services provided at the bottom of the page. Several services are provided online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week which can be found [here](#).

[Contact your local council](#).



Council Tax

The amount of council tax you pay relates to the valuation band of your property. Water and waste water charges are set by Scottish Water and billed alongside council tax. You can apply and manage your council tax account online and make payments through the council account. To find up-to-date rates of council and water charges, please click [here](#).

A full council tax charge is payable if there are two or more adults (aged 18 or over) living in a property as their main home. Students and carers usually aren't counted in your household numbers. Discounts also apply for apprentices, school leavers, care leavers and hospitalised, disabled or severely mentally impaired people. For more detailed information please click [here](#).

Waste collection and recycling

The council provides [information about bin collections and recycling](#).

Information regarding recycling centres in Aberdeen can be found [here](#), and you can [book an appointment at a recycling centre](#) based on what you wish to recycle.

[Learn about what you can put in your bin](#). Each area in Aberdeen has its calendar for bin collection. Just type your postcode into the search box [here](#) to find the calendar for your street.

If you are unable to put your wheelie bins out for collection yourself the council can help you. They can collect the bins from an agreed location outside your property, for example, your doorstep, empty them and return them. [Apply for assisted collection](#).

Transport

Public transport

Traveline Scotland is an excellent resource to use for finding public transport. Their website has a journey planner which you can use to plan all sorts of journeys across Scotland and the UK.

Aberdeen is served by two major local bus operators: [First Bus](#) and [Stagecoach](#).

The [Grasshopper ticket](#) is a practical, convenient and cost-effective way to travel in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. Simply hop on and off the buses of any operator with a single multi-operator bus ticket.



If you are over 60 or have a disability, you can [apply for free bus travel](#).

Aberdeen City Council also operates a [community transport service](#) for those unable to use conventional bus services. The service is fully wheelchair accessible and can be booked by phoning **01224 523765**.

Frequent **Scotrail** train services link Aberdeen with Huntly, Inch, Inverurie, Dyce, Portlethen, Stonehaven and Laurencekirk, as well as bigger cities such as Edinburgh and Dundee. [Check the accessibility for each train station](#). Additionally, [LNER](#) offers direct train service to bigger cities in Scotland and the UK's East coast, including Edinburgh, York, and London.

Cars

The council offer electric vehicle charging points for the public to use across the city. [Find more information on electrical vehicle charging points](#).

A [Car Club](#) is an organisation that owns several cars which are shared amongst its members. Members simply have to book a car, via the phone or the internet, when they need it and are charged on a pay-as-you-drive basis.

The **Blue Badge Scheme** is designed to help people with mobility problems travel independently by allowing them or the person driving them to park close to their destination. [Applications can only be made online.](#)

There are a number of **car parks** in Aberdeen, including several free ones. The interactive map shows car park locations. [Apply for a car park permit.](#)

Disabled parking spaces are available for the use of any vehicle which is legally displaying a valid disabled person's badge. [Apply for a disabled parking space near your property.](#)

Cycling

Several maps showing suggested [cycle routes](#) around Aberdeen have been produced, either by **Aberdeen City Council** or **Aberdeen Cycle Forum** (a voluntary group encouraging and developing cycling) with sponsorship from Union Square shopping centre. The maps are also available from [libraries](#) or the Transport Strategy team.



The **Aberdeen Cycle Forum** also offer useful [resources for cyclists](#) in Aberdeen on their website, including tips to keep your bike secure.

Education

Early learning, nurseries and childcare

The annual entitlement to free Early Learning and Childcare provision is 600 hours for all three and four-year-olds, and [eligible two-year-olds](#). For general information about the service or application forms contact the **Family Information Service** at fis@aberdeencity.gov.uk. For more specific enquiries contact **Ashgrove Children's Centre** at 01224 482293 or ashgrovechildrenscentre@aberdeencity.gov.uk.

Schools

Aberdeen Council publishes [everything you need to know about learning and education](#) in the area, including information on [how to apply for a school place](#).

Your child might qualify for free school meals if you receive certain benefits. [Check your eligibility and apply for free school meals](#).

Your child might also be eligible for free school transport. [Apply for free school transport online](#). For further information there is a [FAQ section](#).

Universities, colleges and adult learning



[The University of Aberdeen](#) is Scotland's third-oldest university and offers a great range of degree programmes at different levels of study.



[Robert Gordon University](#) awards degrees in a wide range of disciplines from BA/BSc to PhD, primarily in professional, technical, health and artistic disciplines.



[North East Scotland College](#) is spread throughout Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, and offers a variety of vocational education and training courses.



[Scotland's Rural College](#) is a higher education institution that combines education, consulting and research in Scotland. It focuses on agriculture.

Aberdeen City Council has a webpage listing different [learning opportunities for adults](#).

Money and work

Financial advice

[Citizens Advice Aberdeen](#) provides information and advice on a wide range of matters by face-to-face appointment, by phone and online. It can offer home visits for people with impaired mobility. The service specialises in welfare rights, including Universal Credit, debt, budgeting, employment, housing, energy, and immigration and consumer rights.



There are a couple of websites to help with managing money - see [Money Matters](#); or the [Money Advice Service](#) which has a useful Budget Planner tool [here](#). If you have a health issue or a disability you can check out information [here](#).



[Aberdeen City Council](#) has a team that provides advice on money, budgeting and debt.

[Scotland's Financial Health Service](#) is a gateway to free and impartial advice about your finances.

[Age Scotland](#) can provide tailored money advice for people aged 50 and over.

Benefits and grants

Stirling Council provides [advice services](#) and [information on Council Tax, benefits and grants](#).

[Turn2Us](#) and [Entitled To](#) offer reliable online benefits and grants calculators as well as good information and advice.

Scottish Welfare Fund helps families and people in Scotland who are on low incomes. You can [apply to the Scottish Welfare Fund through the Council](#) for a:

**The Scottish
WELFARE FUND**

- [Crisis Grant](#) – if you're experiencing a crisis because of a disaster (like a fire or flood), an emergency (like losing your money or an unexpected expense); or if you're a victim of domestic abuse and need help with things like moving away from an abuser.
- [Community Care Grant](#) – to help you or someone you care for to start to live, or to carry on living, a settled life in the community.

Work

Jobcentres deal with new or existing benefit claims and provide advice and support with finding work. **Aberdeen Jobcentre** offers support to help you find a job, improve your job skills and claim for Jobseeker's Allowance, Incapacity Benefit, Universal Credit, Support Allowance and Income Support. You can find them at:



*Aberdeen Jobcentre
House 12, Ebury, 14 Dee St, Aberdeen AB11 6DR
Telephone: 0800 169 0190*

Skills Development Scotland is a national agency that supports people of all ages to develop work and employability skills, undertake further learning and manage their careers.



Aberdeen City Council's 'New Year, New Skills, New Start' initiative brings aims to upskill people of all ages.

Debt advice

Free advice and help on debt and money management is available from **Step Change** debt advice, **Money Advice Scotland**, and the **National Debtline** on 0808 808 4000 Monday to Friday 9.00am to 8.00pm.

Pensions

The **Scottish Government** provides [advice on the state pension and workplace pensions](#).

Money Helper is a government-backed service providing [free, impartial information about a range of pension issues](#).

Health and wellbeing

National Health Service

NHS Grampian is responsible for providing health and social care services for people living in Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire and Moray area. There are several hospitals in the NHS Grampian region. [Find out more information about the hospitals.](#)



[Find your nearest local GP, dentist, pharmacy, optician, Accident & Emergency and sexual health clinic.](#)

It is important that you and the people you live with [register with a local doctor](#) and [register with a dentist](#). In case of an emergency, if you aren't registered with a dentist, help is available by contacting the **NHS Grampian Dental Information and Advice Line** DIAL on 0345 45 65 990.

For minor illnesses, pharmacies may be able to provide advice and prescriptions more quickly. [Find your nearest pharmacy.](#)

Social Care

[Aberdeen City Council](#) provides a range of social care services for adults and older people including care assessment, services for people with a physical and/or learning disability, and self-directed support. They can also support you if you are a carer.

For more resources and information on self-directed support, visit the Aberdeen City [MyLife portal](#).

The [VSA Carers Service](#) Aberdeen, located on Castle Street, offers advice, information and support on all aspects of caring directly to carers.

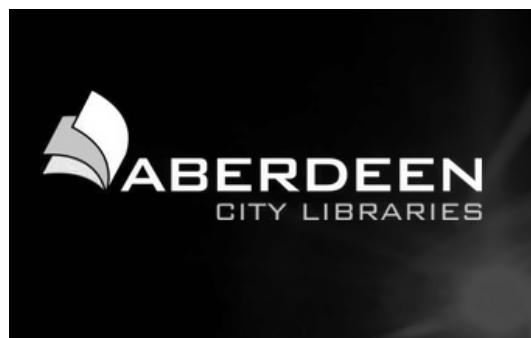
NHS Grampian have additional information for carers [here](#).

Leisure

Libraries

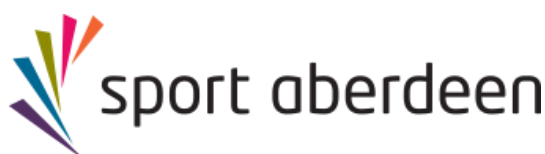
There are several libraries in Aberdeen. [Join the library](#) to borrow books and digital resources, access a computer, and use the Internet for free.

You can click [here](#) to search the library catalogue and find your closest library [here](#).



Sport and leisure

[Sport Aberdeen](#) manages sport and leisure facilities on behalf of Aberdeen City Council. They offer a [wide range of activities](#) for all ages, genders and abilities, including public sessions, private hire, lessons, classes, coaching, holiday camps and children's parties. [Find out more about their different membership options.](#)



Alternatively, the [Aberdeen Sports Village](#) offers a wide range of indoor and outdoor sports and exercise facilities as well as an aquatics centre.

If you are receiving some form of benefits, you may also qualify for **Access to Leisure**. That can include free swimming and discounts on sporting and leisure activities. [Find out more about the scheme and check your eligibility.](#)

Arts and culture

Aberdeen has a vibrant arts and culture scene. To find out about which local theatre, comedy, and musical performances are on, visit [Aberdeen Performing Arts](#).

Visit [Aberdeen Archives, Gallery and Museums](#) for information on Aberdeen Art Gallery, Aberdeen Maritime Museum and more.



Cinemas

Cineworld on Union Square: The cinema is wheelchair accessible, offers disabled parking, allows guide dogs, and regularly shows subtitled films.

Vue Aberdeen: Screens are located on the first floor and in the basement and are all accessible via a lift. There are accessible toilets on all floors. The cinema also hosts an autism-friendly screening at 10am on the last Sunday of every month.

Both these cinemas are part of the CEA scheme. Eligible disabled people over 8 years old with a **CEA Card** can get a free ticket for a someone to go with them. Check your eligibility [here](#) and apply [here](#).



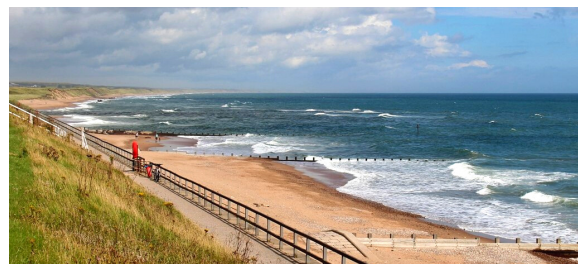
Parks and greenspaces

Duthie Park is located on the banks of the River Dee and notable for its winter gardens. The park ranger service provide a variety of activities for schools and community groups throughout the year.



Hazlehead Park is heavily wooded and contains many walking tracks. There are football pitches, two golf courses, a pitch and putt course and a horse-riding school. The park has a collection of sculpture by a range of artists.

Aberdeen Beach and Queen's Links is a popular recreational area of the city. There is an adventure playground for children of all ages and Codona's **Amusement Park**. A great place for ice cream, family fun, food, walks and jogging.



Key Contacts

Aberdeen City Council and elected representatives

Your local council office can help you with:

- Paying Council Tax and rent
- Housing, including bidding on properties
- Reporting noise and anti-social behaviour
- Information about grants for community projects
- Parks and green spaces
- Road issues



If you have a query or problem that the local officers can't resolve, you can get in touch with your elected representatives.

[Find your local councillor's name and contact information.](#)

[Find your Member of the Scottish Parliament's name and contact information.](#)

[Find your Member of the UK Parliament's name and contact information.](#)

Other contacts



[Housing Options Scotland](#) offers housing information and advice to disabled people, older adults and members of the Armed Forces Community. Telephone: **0131 247 1400**



[Euan's Guide](#) is a website which reviews the accessibility of different venues across the UK.



[Inclusion Scotland](#) is a charity for disabled people offering information about employability, human rights, poverty and social security.