



# **Welcome to Renfrewshire**

A guide to your new area

# Introduction

Welcome! We hope you enjoy your new home. This guide aims to help you settle in and get to know your local area. It's mainly for people who are new to Renfrewshire and provides a summary of the main services, contacts and facilities you might need. These may still be useful even if you are already familiar with the area. There's also a checklist of things to think about when you move into your new home. This guide will give you a flavour of what you can find so go out and explore!



**Paula**  
**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](http://housingoptionsscotland.org.uk)**  
0131 510 1567  
**[info@housingoptionsscotland.org.uk](mailto:info@housingoptionsscotland.org.uk)**



**If you have any questions about this guide, contact Ben Parker on**  
**[ben@housingoptionsscotland.org.uk](mailto:ben@housingoptionsscotland.org.uk)**

# Introduction

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# Introduction

The largest town in Renfrewshire (and indeed, Scotland) is Paisley, with a population of just over 77,000 (2019), but there are lots of other towns and villages in the area providing shops, libraries, museums and sports and leisure facilities, as well as some quieter parks and scenic spots.



The main towns and villages in Renfrewshire are:

Bishopton	Bridge of Weir	Paisley	Johnstone
Kilbarchan	Lochwinnoch	Elderslie	Erskine
Linwood	Houston	Howwood	Renfrew

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

Note: Paisley is currently in the midst of a major regeneration programme which means that some of the information contained in this guide is subject to change (2020-2022).





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



**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:

- ☒ Stopcock (to turn the main water supply on/off)
- ☒ Gas and electricity meters
- ☒ Thermostat for central heating
- ☒ Fuse box
- ☒ Landline telephone sockets
- ☒ Water boiler
- ☒ Access points e.g. to loft points/under floor areas
- ☒ TV and satellite aerial sockets

- **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 details. 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 and applying for grants or loans to improve energy efficiency in your home.



#### [Trusted Traders \(Renfrewshire\)](#)

This site allows you to find trusted trades-people to carry out work in your home. All traders listed have been vetted by Renfrewshire Trading Standards Officers.



#### [Care and Repair \(Renfrewshire\)](#)

This is an independent organisation funded by Renfrewshire Council. It provides free, confidential advice and assistance to older (60+) and disabled home owners and private tenants about home repairs, adaptations and funding work to your home.



#### [Check-a-trade](#)

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

# Essentials

## **Renfrewshire Council Services**

A list of services provided by Renfrewshire Council can be viewed on their website [here](#). Some basic information for your area is provided below. If you need to contact your local council, [contact them here](#).



## **Council Tax**

The council tax you pay is related to the value of the property in which you live and the valuation band (category) it falls into. Charges for clean water and waste water are set by Scottish Water and these charges are billed along with the council tax. You can access and manage your council tax account online, including making online payments through your account. To find out the current rates of council tax and water charges, you can access your local council's website [here](#).

A full council tax charge has to be paid where two or more adults (aged 18 or over) live together in a property that is their main home. However, students and carers are not usually included in this. Discounts for council tax can be applied for apprentices, school leavers, leavers from a care setting, people in hospital, those officially categorised as disabled and anyone with a severe mental impairment. If you need more information about discounts or exemptions, you can access your local council's information [here](#).

## **Waste collection and recycling**

Information about bin collections and recycling can be found on your council's website [here](#). If you live in a flat you may share bins with other residents in your block.

You can find out when each bin is collected in your area by typing in your postcode on the local council's website [here](#). Your bin needs to be available for emptying by 7.00 a.m. on the allocated day/week and must contain only those items deemed acceptable by the council as listed on its website [here](#).

There are five main household waste recycling centres across Renfrewshire – see where [here](#). Renfrewshire Council also operates an 'on-demand' collection service for certain types of textiles and shoes. For further information check the council website [here](#).

## **Transport**



### **Public transport**

There are good bus links in and around most areas of Renfrewshire and to Glasgow. A map of the McGill's bus network in Renfrewshire can be accessed [here](#). There are also good links between various railway stations in Renfrewshire and Glasgow and between Paisley Gilmour Street station and stations in Ayrshire.

### **Car users**

For car users, Paisley operates a Residents Parking Scheme and you may be eligible to apply for a parking permit. Find more information [here](#). If you need a disabled person's parking bay outside your home you can request this - see [here](#). If you have severe mobility difficulties you may want to apply for a **blue badge**. You don't need to be a car owner or driver as the blue badge can be used in any vehicle in which you are travelling. Apply online using the council's website [here](#).

### **Glasgow Airport**

Glasgow Airport provides flights to both domestic and international destinations. Take the 757 bus from Paisley Town Centre or book parking at the airport [here](#). Assistance is available for people with mobility difficulties both in the main terminal and Terminal 2 (T2). A leaflet about special assistance is available [here](#).

## **Education**



### **Early Learning, nurseries and childcare**

From August 2020, every young child in Renfrewshire is guaranteed 1,140 hours of nursery care. You need to apply to secure a place for your child in nursery. All the information you need to do this can be found [here](#). Information about different nurseries is found [here](#).

### **Schools**

There are 49 **primary schools** in Renfrewshire, a list of which can be found [here](#). All children in Primary 1, Primary 2 and Primary 3 are entitled to free school meals. After Primary 3, your child may still be eligible for free school meals and clothing under certain criteria - check [here](#). There are 11 **secondary schools** in Renfrewshire, a list of which can be found [here](#). There are 2 **ASN schools** in Renfrewshire - the [Mary Russell School](#) and [Riverbrae School](#). Both schools cater for primary and secondary age pupils.

### **Adult and Community Learning**

Renfrewshire Council provides opportunities for adult and community learning and you can find out more [here](#). You can contact the Adult Learning and Literacies Service via tel: **0141 618 2873**.



# Money, work, and debt advice

## Getting free financial advice



Access information about money matters from **Renfrewshire council** [here](#). The website has information about banking and different types of bank accounts, carers allowance and credit unions, borrowing and debt management.

**Advice Works** and **Advice Renfrewshire** provide confidential and independent services on a range of money and debt issues. You can find out more [here](#).

**Citizens Advice Bureaux** are local, independent charities providing free, confidential advice. Renfrewshire CAB is located on Glasgow Road, Paisley and open weekdays from 9.30am. Find more details [here](#). There are also CAB outreach services across Renfrewshire. More information about these can be found [here](#).

The **Money Advice Service** provides free advice about money matters [here](#).

## Working and employment



If you are seeking work you can visit a local job centre. There are job centres in Paisley, Renfrew and Johnstone. Find addresses and contact details [here](#). The Job Centre website will give you independent advice about job seeking and careers.

**Skills Development Scotland** supports people of working age to build their career skills. Find support in Renfrewshire [here](#). Also see the [MyWorldOfWork](#) website which has a range of resources.

If you are disabled or have a long-term health condition that affects you working, find support in Renfrewshire [here](#).

## Welfare and Benefits



There are different benefits you may be able to claim depending on your current status and eligibility. Find out about UK benefits generally [here](#). Citizens Advice also offer guidance [here](#). More specifically, if you are disabled look [here](#); if you are on a low income look [here](#) and if you are over-65, look [here](#). If you need to start claiming benefits, contact your local JobCentre Plus to make an appointment (**0800 055 6688**).

## Pensions



You can find general government advice about different types of pensions [here](#) and about **Pensionwise**, a free UK government service for people over 50, [here](#). The **Pensions Advisory Service** is free and impartial and gives information and advice about all types of pensions. You can find out more [here](#). **Age UK** also provides information about pensions [here](#), and the **Money Advice Service** gives information [here](#).

## Financial Health and Debt Advice



**Citizens Advice Scotland** offers a financial health check service online [here](#). **Don'tFretAboutDebt** is a Renfrew-based organisation offering free information and advice about debt. You can check their website [here](#). **Step Change** is a debt charity giving free advice about debt in Scotland. You can find their website [here](#). The website has information about types of debt and managing debt. **Money Advice Scotland** can also help people in debt. Check the website [here](#). There is also a **National Debtline** offering free and independent advice [here](#). Tel: **0808 808 4000**. This operates Mon-Fri 9.00am-8.00pm.

## Scottish Welfare Fund



The Scottish Welfare Fund helps families and people in Scotland who are on low incomes through Crisis Grants and Community Care Grants. You can apply through the council for a:

- [Crisis Grant](#) – if you're in crisis because of a disaster (like a fire or flood), or an emergency (like losing your money or an unexpected expense); or a
- [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.

You can find more details and how to apply [here](#).



# Health and wellbeing

Renfrewshire is part of the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde area which covers other local authority areas too. More information about the NHS Region can be found [here](#).

## Hospitals



A full list of hospitals in the Greater Glasgow and Clyde area can be found [here](#).

The main general hospital in Renfrewshire is the **Royal Alexandra Hospital (RAH)** in Paisley on Corsebar Road. It has an A&E facility and psychiatric day hospital for older people. NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde operate a **Patient Transport Service** to the hospital. Details about booking this service can be found [here](#). There is **parking** in the hospital grounds with dedicated Blue Badge bays and a vehicle drop-off point immediately in front of both the A&E Department and the main hospital entrance. There are three McGill's **bus services** to and from the RAH - the nos. 10, 20 and 60. Find route maps and timetables for these services [here](#).

Other hospitals in the area include:

**Dykebar Hospital, Paisley** - the main in-patient hospital for mental health treatment in Renfrewshire

**Leverndale Hospital, Crookson, Glasgow** - for acute adult mental health care and it has an intensive psychiatric care unit

The McGill's bus company runs services to other hospitals in the Greater Glasgow and Clyde area. You can find timetables and route maps for these services [here](#).

## GPs and other services



A list of GP surgeries in Scotland can be found [here](#). In the search box, type your postcode. When you find your nearest practice, you will need to register with a GP - find more details about how to do this [here](#). It is useful if you have proof of your new address to register, but this is not essential.

## Dentists



You will need to register with a local dental practice. Find information about registering [here](#). To find a practice in your area, enter your postcode to the search function [here](#).

## **Social Care**



To contact social care call **0300 300 1380**. The number can be used to request a community alarm, register to receive community meals, or contact a social work office. Find more information [here](#).

Practical long term care support is available for people who have difficulty getting up or going to bed; getting washed and dressed; preparing meals and eating; going to the toilet; and keeping their house clean. There are also services providing care (including day care and respite care) for people with learning disabilities or autism, care services for deaf and hearing impaired people, and for blind and visually impaired people. Find more details [here](#).

The **Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership** (HSCP) provides social care services for adults and community health services for both adults and children living in the area. These services include district nurses and health visitors, learning disability services and mental health services; GPs, dentists, and opticians; adult social work, occupational therapy, care homes and domestic violence services; addiction services; gardening assistance services and help with home adaptations, care aids and equipment. There is a dedicated website with more information about the Renfrewshire HSCP [here](#).

Renfrewshire Council can also help you to physically **adapt your home** to better suit your needs if required. Information can be found on the website [here](#). There is also a **garden assistance** scheme which you can find out more about [here](#). This service is free to council tenants and available to house owners for a fee - find out the costs [here](#).

## **Support for carers**



Renfrewshire Council offers a number of support services including drawing up support plans, providing respite care and providing short breaks for adult carers. You can find more information [here](#).

There is also **Renfrewshire Carers Centre**, a charity that provides information and advice, offers training and advocacy and can arrange breaks from caring responsibilities. You can find more information on their website [here](#). This website also provides links to other useful organisations in Renfrewshire and across Scotland. Access these links [here](#). Other useful links are with the [Scottish Government](#), [Carers Scotland](#), [Care Information Scotland](#) and [Carers Trust](#). You can also get help and support if you are a **young carer** - see [here](#) and [here](#).



# Leisure

To stay up to date with Renfrewshire Leisure's services and facilities you can sign up for their e-newsletter [here](#).

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If you enjoy **sport, swimming and other forms of exercise**, Renfrewshire boasts a good number of sports and leisure centres in Paisley, Johnstone, Erskine, Renfrew and Linwood. All centres are wheelchair accessible and free parking is the norm. Find information [here](#) and [here](#). **Swimming pools** can be found in the Paisley Lagoon Leisure Centre, the ON-X (Linwood Sport and Community Centre), Erskine Swimming Pool, Johnstone Community Sports Hub, and the Renfrew Victory Baths (with pool hoist available on request). Other facilities include **fitness and gym suites, squash and badminton courts, football pitches, dance studios** and more. You can find a full fitness programme timetable for Renfrewshire centres [here](#), and more information about the gyms [here](#). There is a member scheme that operates across Renfrewshire allowing access to the full range of facilities at discounted prices. Find out more [here](#).

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You can find a list of **Renfrewshire libraries**, their locations and opening hours [here](#). Join by visiting in person or by completing the online registration form [here](#). Members can view the library's catalogue online [here](#). Click on the 'My Account' tab at the top of the page to view books and other items you have out on loan, renew loans and reserve items. All libraries in Renfrewshire offer free access to computers and the internet and for those interested in online learning, you can also access the Open University's free 'Open Learn' resources [here](#).

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Information about **Renfrewshire museums** can be found [here](#). The **Paisley Museum** hosts significant artefacts relating to art history, science, social history and natural history. The town is well-known for its connections to the Coats textile company and hosts the **Thomas Coats Observatory** - the oldest public observatory in Scotland. There is also the **Paisley Threadmill museum** which tells the history of thread-making in the town (see [here](#)) and the 18th century **Sma' Shot cottages** in Paisley are fine examples of the typical weavers' cottages. There is also a **Heritage Centre** in the town with more information found [here](#). **Renfrew Museum** provides historical insights into the town's royal connections and into its industrial past, including its ship-building history and the world's largest boiler-making factory, Babcocks. Find out more [here](#). **Johnstone** also has a **museum** run by the local history society - see [here](#) and [here](#). It has artefacts from the industrial and social lives of its inhabitants, dating back to 1782.

There are several **cinemas** in the area. There is a **Showcase DeLux cinema** at the **Phoenix Business Park** in Linwood. The cinema is fully wheelchair accessible. The cinema has free parking, provides subtitled screenings, hearing assistance and autism-friendly screenings. You can find more general information [here](#). There is also a **Cineworld** cinema at the **Silverburn shopping centre**. The cinema is on the first floor with lift access. Guide dogs are welcome. The cinema has 14 screens, half of which are accessible to wheelchair users, with dedicated access boxes available. There is good parking available at the centre, with parking bays for Blue Badge holders and there are good bus links to and from Paisley. Both cinemas accept the **Cinema Exhibitors' Association** (CEA) card allowing accompanying carers in free. To apply for a CEA card go online [here](#).



Renfrewshire offers a good programme of professional **theatre, music, dance and creative arts** classes. For general information, go [here](#). If you want to book tickets online for any Renfrewshire events you can do that [here](#). Information about some of the different arts venues can be found [here](#).

**Paisley Arts Centre** (New Street, Paisley) has a varied programme. The main auditorium is accessed from the main floor (wheelchair friendly) and seating for wheelchair users can be made available (tel: 0300 300 1210). There is lift access to the upper floor studio and workshop areas. The Arts Centre does not have car parking facilities. However, there is a multi-storey car park in Storie Street a short distance away. You can access a Paisley parking map for guidance [here](#).

Other entertainment venues include the **town halls** in both **Paisley** and **Johnstone**. Both venues are accessible to wheelchair users. At Paisley, parking nearby is limited (see [here](#) for guidance). There are two free car parks adjacent to Johnstone Town Hall which have designated disabled parking and nearby bus stops too.

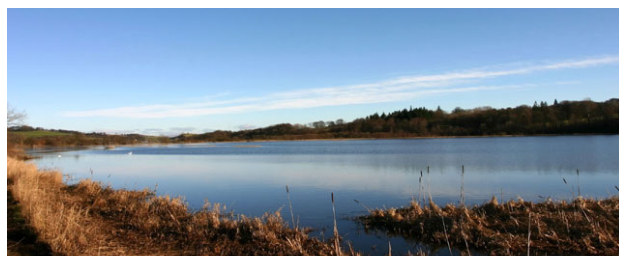
There are also a couple of other music venues on offer in the area. For example, [The Bungalow](#) (Shuttle Street, Paisley), an 'independent and ethical live music venue' and [CC's \(Callum's Cavern\)](#) above the Patter Bar (Old Sneddon Street, Paisley).



There are lots of **green spaces** for outdoor activities in Renfrewshire:

In Paisley, the largest public park is **Barshaw Park** (Glasgow Road) which has car parking, children's play areas (with accessible equipment), a small railway, a walled peace garden, pond and level paths throughout. **St James' playing fields** on Greenock Road is a large area used for dog-walking and playing football. Smaller parks around Paisley include **Brodie Park** on Braid Road which has play and exercise equipment for children and adults. **Ferguslie Park Gardens** in Thomas Street has a large green area for walks, a play area, pond and level paths in most areas.

Near Erskine Bridge you will find **Boden Boo** - a woodland and beach area which looks across to the Kilpatrick Braes. There are about two miles of informal trail networks, with paths suitable for buggies and wheelchairs. There are a few moderate slopes. Boden Boo is also on the 55km long Clyde Coastal Path if you are feeling especially energetic. More information about Boden Boo can be found [here](#).



**Jenny's Well nature reserve** is on the White Cart water and has a network of paths, benches and a viewing platform overlooking the river. Find out more [here](#). On the main road from Paisley to Barrhead (Caplethill Road) you can visit the **Gleniffer Braes Country Park** with trails, waterfalls and great views over Paisley and Glasgow. This country park is hilly with logged steps in places.

In **Johnstone** you can visit the **Thomas Shanks Park** which has play areas, a skateboard park and two football pitches. The **Finlaystone Country Estate** (on Greenock Rd, Langbank) has a visitor centre, a gift shop, play areas, woodlands, gardens, a falconry and often hosts ranger-led activities. You can find out more [here](#).

If you enjoy outdoor pursuits such as sailing, bird-watching or cycling, or simply want to take a nice walk, there is an **RSPB nature reserve** at **Lochwinnoch** (approximately 10 miles south west of Paisley) and a visitor centre and flat paths beside the **Castle Semple loch**. Known as Clydemuirshiel Park, you can find out more [here](#).

# Key Contacts

## Local council offices



If you need to contact the local council, do so [here](#). A list of emergency contacts compiled by the council is found [here](#). Find out who your local councillor is [here](#) and their contact details [here](#).



## MPs and MSPs



MP for Paisley and Renfrewshire North is [Gavin Newlands](#), (SNP):

Tel: **0141 378 0600**

Email: [gavin.newlands.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:gavin.newlands.mp@parliament.uk)

MP For Paisley and Renfrewshire South is [Mhairi Black](#), SNP:

Tel: **0141 571 4370**

Email: [mhairi.black.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:mhairi.black.mp@parliament.uk)

For the Scottish Parliament, Renfrewshire has three MSPs, each representing a separate constituency - Paisley, Renfrewshire North & West and Renfrewshire South.

Paisley MSP is **George Adam**, SNP. Contact him [here](#).

Renfrewshire North and West MSP is **Derek Mackay**, Independent. Contact him [here](#).

Renfrewshire South MSP is **Tom Arthur**, SNP. Contact him [here](#).



## Advice Renfrewshire

[Advice Renfrewshire](#) is a website providing links and contact details for other organisations in Renfrewshire offering various forms of confidential and impartial advice about money and legal matters, consumer issues, housing and energy.

Tel: **0808 164 2922**

## Roar - Connections for Life

[Roar - Connections for Life](#) is a charity that aims to help reduce loneliness and isolation for older people through befriending and social clubs.

Tel: **0141 889 7481**

Email: [info@roarforlife.org](mailto:info@roarforlife.org)



## Euan's Guide

Euan's Guide is a website which reviews the accessibility of different venues across the UK. You can search by location on the website [here](#).

## Inclusion Scotland

Inclusion Scotland is a charity aiming to ensure inclusive policy, practice and decision-making for disabled people. Their website has information about employability, human rights, poverty and social security and encourages disabled people to become active citizens to secure their rights and entitlements. Find out more [here](#).

## Housing Options Scotland

Housing Options Scotland offer information and advice to disabled people, older adults and members of the Armed Forces Community. Contact us on: **0131 247 1400** or via the website [here](#).

## Veterans

Veterans can receive specific support from national veteran charities and groups.

**Veterans Scotland** have produced an information guide [here](#) which covers lots of contacts and advice. The Scottish Government has also produced two guides - one with [general information](#), one with [information about housing](#).

[Poppy Scotland](#) are also able to offer advice and support.

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