



From mountain to sea

Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



Aberdeenshire Council Digital, Food, and Fuel Poverty

A Housing Response

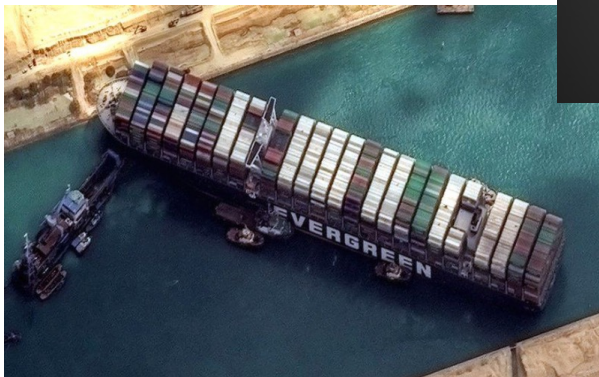
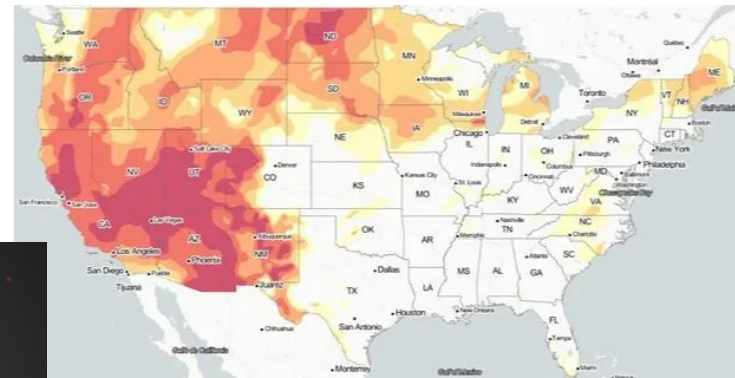
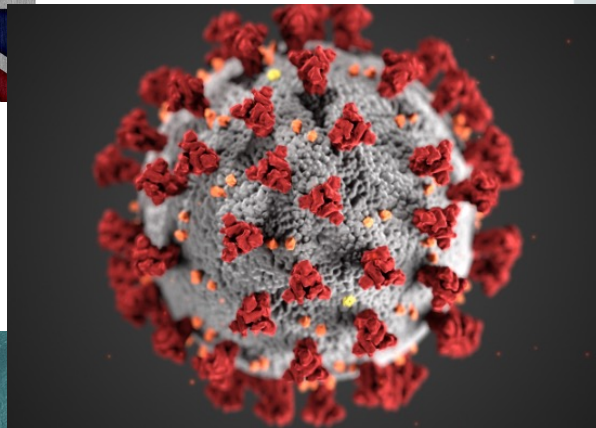
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From mountain to sea

From Covid to Cost of Living





From mountain to sea

2020

Covid Crisis

- Work From Home
- Welfare calls
- Listen to our tenants – what challenges are they facing?
- Refer, refer, refer!
- Is it quick enough?
- Can we take things in-house?



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Flexible Funding

- Flexible funding is given to councils, and departments can bid for a part of the budget.
- 2020 - 2022
 - £52k requested for fuel payments helping 98 tenants
 - £10.2k for energy efficiency or wellbeing improvements such as carpets helping 32 tenants
 - £42k food shopping vouchers have been spent
 - £12k for a specific digital inclusion project for Gypsy/Travellers



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Connecting Scotland was available throughout the Covid crisis. It had multiple rounds targeting various groups such as elderly, households with children in school, and persons not in employment.

£410,808 monetary equivalent



<https://homeheatingadvice.scot/> - Available until end March 2023 or when funding runs out.

Funds are paid direct to supplier, or via voucher to the customers phone if pre-payment meter.

Over £50k awarded



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Databank - <https://www.onlinecentresnetwork.org/>

- This is my most recent project and I am in the process of setting up our referral pathways
- The databank provides free data and/or texts and minutes to community partners to distribute to people they support who are experiencing data poverty. Customers MUST be 18+.

<p>02 Data vouchers are issued. The customer receives the voucher, then calls 02 to activate the voucher. Voucher can be issued monthly for up to 6 months.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 7GB Data - Unlimited calls and texts to UK numbers - If a sim card is needed, this can be provided. - Voucher can be used on existing 02 account. 	<p>Vodafone Sim cards are issued.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 20GB data per month - free calls and texts. - refreshes each month for 6 months. - can be used in an unlocked device - can be used in a Vodafone compatible device such as a smartphone/tablet or mifi device 	<p>Three Sim cards are issued.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 24GB data per month - No calls/texts - can be used in an unlocked device - can be used in a Three compatible device such as a smartphone/tablet or mifi device
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2022/23



Local Authority Covid Economic Recovery (LACER) Fund

Fuel Bank Foundation

- Pre-payment meter vouchers
- Winter Bulk Fuel Grants

£50k awarded

Procured shopping vouchers which could be used over a range of suppliers.



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Methods of Communication

How do our tenants find out about funding?

- Newsletter
- Social Media
- Corporate media
- Roadshows

And most importantly... Word of Mouth!

We rely on our housing officers to have conversations with tenants and pick up on needs.



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Aberdeenshire Council – TPAS National Good Practice Awards Winner “Best Practice Involving All” 2022

The purpose of continuing funding is ensuring our tenants have the means and the ways to engage with us as their housing provider in a way that suits them.

These programs have built an element of trust between tenants and housing provider.

The positive impacts on tenants and opportunities for tenant participation were recognized in May 2022.





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Challenges

Monitoring and Evaluation

Procurement

Paying energy suppliers direct.

BACs payments possible, and easier but there is potential the most vulnerable tenants may be missed out if they can't manage finances or there are situations involving domestic violence or financial coercion.

What next?

Keep applying!

The funding we have received now stands at over £600,000 in 2 years.

We are hoping to recruit for a full time member of staff to specifically work through funding applications and M&E.



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Thank you

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