



Scottish Confederation of Park Home Residents Associations

PARK HOME NEWS SCOTLAND

SCOPHRA, why it matters to YOU!

Special points of interest:

- Every residential park needs a residents' association.
- Should you wish to set up a Residents Association on your site you do so without reference to the site owner
- Qualifying residents associations are protected by law
- A residents association is a great way to build a community

The Scottish Confederation of Park Homes Residents Associations (SCOPHRA) was formed in 2017 to provide an umbrella organisation for existing and embryo Park Home Residents Associations in Scotland with the sole aim of supporting their needs and aspirations under the one banner, giving strength in numbers to individual associations.

SCOPHRA is happy to provide information and advice to individuals or groups of residents who wish to join together to help their Park Community and residents work in harmony for mutual benefit. Associations are a force for community. they combat loneliness by organising outings and social events, some even receive financial support from their local council to

assist this work but most of all they look after YOUR interests. Coming together as an Association will ensure that YOUR interests are protected, that your site owners meet their obligations and that your local licensing authority is aware of any worries or issues you may have about the running of your park.

SCOPHRA's executive are among the most expert people in Scotland on Park Homes matters and the law affecting park home residents.

SCOPHRA resulted from the work started in 2008 by Mike Larkman and Jim Haluch of Willow Wood Park, West Lothian with the assistance of Angela Constance MSP, to lobby the Scottish Government for a fairer deal for Park Home Residents. Their

work with much other help, resulted in the Mobile Homes Act (Written Statement) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 and the Mobile Homes section of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014. The 2014 Act led to the new licensing regime which initiated on 1 May 2019 the effect of which is slowly manifesting itself throughout Scotland.

SCOPHRA is now the Scottish Government's go-to body on matters affecting the park home community and the SCOPHRA Executive meets regularly with officials of the Scottish Government Housing Minister's department.

If you are an active residents association and would like to join us or are looking to form a new association, contact us today - info@scophra.scot

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Why Bother?....

First, by common law, every citizen in the UK has the 'Right of Association'; this means, regardless of the Mobile Homes Act or any other legislation, you and like-minded persons may set up any kind of association to promote the collective interests of a

group. You need no one's permission. Should you wish to set up a Residents Association on your site you may also do so without reference to the site owner or anyone else but if you wish to become a 'Qualifying Residents Association' (QRA) under the

Mobiles Homes Act, with its right of recognition, then this is where the legal guidelines come in under the above regulations.

SCOPHRA can help you set up an association. See us at: www.scophra.scot

Email: info@scophra.scot

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WILLOW WOOD IN THE SNOW

Willow Wood on the web:
www.willowwoodwestlothian.co.uk



A residents association exists primarily to promote and protect the interests of its members, to represent these interests to the authorities and to build community



Association Outings



The Importance of a Residents' Association

What is the point of a Park Home Community RA?

Primarily it is to promote and protect the interests of its members and to represent these interests to the local authority, councillors, the Scottish Government and of course, in interactions with the site owner. While collectively asserting residents' legal rights,

among the interests of members might also be social events, efforts to combat loneliness, fund raising for events etc. Some RA's have garden competitions, garden parties, coffee mornings, tours and outings, visits, Christmas lunches, open days and even a fish and chip night. Others maintain their park, (although this is generally a site own-

er responsibility) volunteer to clear snow, grit park roads and paths, cut grass or maintain a community garden or open space for events. Some own property such as greenhouses, storage huts, marquees for events, tractors, grass cutters and even Christmas lights. All of them stand up for their members as the need arises!

Working with the Scottish Government

From its inception, SCOPHRA has fostered relations with local authorities, Councillors and officials and with the Scottish Government.

Angela Constance MSP (SNP Almond Valley) (former Cabinet Secretary for the Communities) was the inspiration behind the formation of SCOPHRA when she advised our founders that a national group would have more

clout than individual associations. Since SCOPHRA started in 2017 we have fostered a relationship with MSPs and with Scottish Government officials, to the point where both groups consult SCOPHRA on park home and lodge park matters.

On page four we lay out our agenda for the future and we are delighted that Alexander Burnett MSP (Con Aberdeenshire West) is also assisting us at the Scottish Parliament to address SCOPHRA's aims.

Scottish Government officials are regularly in contact with SCOPHRA when any residential mobile (park) home matters arise.

This gives SCOPHRA officials an unique insight and knowledge of park home law in Scotland and with our members being the actual residents, this allows us to speak with some authority on park home matters.

EDITORIAL

Who would have believed that as we start 2021 we will have been in the grip of a pandemic for the past 10 months.

Most park home estates are sited in rural or seaside locations but even those sites in cities benefit from the general layout of sites. Most pitches have small gardens where residents can go outdoors. The open placing of homes makes social distancing easy, yet the proximity of neighbours allows a measure of socially distanced interaction. As an example, one of our member

parks in a rural setting encourages even infirm residents to take daily exercise just walking round the park. One lady in her eighties has completed three laps every day using her stroller, another (a bit younger admittedly) has completed ten brisk laps every day - about 5 miles. Not so easy of course in the winter. Most associations have had to curtail events, no outings or social events but we know of one park where the annual garden competition went ahead with a 250% increase in entries and as you can see opposite, another park held

an open air concert.

Park home living is a great way of life but it can have its problems. Spare a thought for those who live on parks where relations with the site owner are not what they should be. Site owners need to get the message that the old cry "This is my park and I can do what I like" are gone!

SCOPHRA aims to banish the rogue owners from the Scottish scene. New laws and regulations are there to protect residents and SCOPHRA is playing its part in seeing these enforced.

ROUND THE PARKS

GLENDDEVON (www.glendevonqualifyingresidentsassociation.com)

Members of the Qualifying Residents Association on Glendevon Country Park held a music event earlier last year during the early days of the COVID-19 crisis. Social distancing was strictly adhered to with many residents enjoying the event from the comfort of their decking while others gathered on the park green to listen to a selection of music from two of Scotland's best known folk singers. Gordon Menzies of Gaberlunzie fame kicked things off with over an hour of songs and jokes from his large repertoire keeping the people laughing all the way through. Gordon was followed by Rob Griffith, singer/songwriter who performed many of his own songs and a few singalong ones as well. Burger rolls were provided by the association and people brought their own beverages, the event was blessed by great weather and was thoroughly enjoyed by all.



Arbroath Park Owner in Court

Seaton Park Arbroath caravan site owner, Cresswell Welch, has been charged with multiple offences of co-ercing prospective customers, mainly pensioners into buying homes they did not want by using bullying tactics including conning one victim out of £80000. Welch 57 owns Seaton Park in Arbroath and Marlee Gardens in Blairgowrie. The charges allege that he obtained £79500 by fraud by inducing a 74 year old couple to pay for a mobile

home which was supposed to be 10 months old when it was actually three years old. A further charge alleges that between September and December 2016, Welch misled another buyer about the age and warranty of a mobile home at Marlee Loch Residential Park Blairgowrie, claiming falsely that the age of the home was only two years old and duped the buyer into buying the home that he would not have bought otherwise. Other allegations include that

Welch acted "in a threatening and abusive manner towards a buyer.

Yet another charge alleges that the accused misled a couple as to the age of a park home at Seaton Park Arbroath between 2017 and 2018 and also misled the buyers as to site fees.

Welch, who did not appear when the case was called at Dundee Sheriff Court, denies the charges and the case was moved to Perth Sheriff Court.

Site owner accused of bullying and misleading prospective buyers.

Arbroath man in court on charges concerning park home residents

SCOPHRA MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS
January 2021

Cunninghamhead Estate
Irvine
Glendevon County Park
Perthshire
Marlee Loch Park
Blairgowrie
Monarch of the Glen Park
Montrose
Monksmuir Park
Haddington
Park Village
Crieff
Riverview Country Park
Forres
Seaton Park
Arbroath
Straiton Park
Midlothian
Willow Wood Park

Frequently Asked Questions

MAINTAINING MY PARK HOME

Q. I have heard that some insurers are refusing claims because homes and lodges are not being properly maintained or repainted at specific intervals. Is this correct?

A. Most Park home insurers and warranty providers demand that your home be repainted at two years old and then at three year

intervals. Failure to do so can be regarded as lack of maintenance and grounds for refusing a claim.

It is equally important to ensure that you check for cracks around your doors and windows at regular intervals and have any cracks sealed immediately. This is the most regular route for water ingress into the structure of your home.

Maintaining your home is a must!





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WE'RE ON THE
WEB

Website:

www.scophra.scot

Feedback:

www.scophra.scot/feedback

Email: info@scophra.scot



IMPORTANCE OF LEGAL EXPENSES INSURANCE

We do not think twice when it comes to insuring our park homes against fire, burst pipes or other damage but how often do we consider legal expenses insurance? What happens if you find yourself being pursued in court for a debt you do not owe? It can cost hundreds of pounds to defend yourself. What happens if you are in dispute with your park owner and are wrongly threatened with eviction. For usually less than £20 per year, adding legal expenses insurance to your regular home and contents policy will bring you massive peace of mind.

Check your current policy to see if you are already covered and if not, add legal expenses to your policy today!

SCOPHRA ACTION PLAN 2020-21

SCOPHRA'S aims for the coming year are as below. Join us and help us achieve these aims...

- 1.0 Raise awareness of SCOPHRA, with park home residents throughout Scotland
- 2.0 Seek consistency throughout Scotland in respect of site licence conditions.
- 3.0 Seek the introduction of licence conditions that enforce the Mobile Homes (Written Statement) (Scotland) Regulations 2013.
- 4.0 Regularise park rules either as licence conditions or legislation to parallel the English legislation The Mobile Homes (Site Rules) (England) Regulations 2014
- 5.0 Seek serious action against holiday site owners selling homes as permanent residences. Some residents have incurred massive personal losses this year in this regard.
- 6.0 Seek Tribunal or Arbitration facilities for park homes e.g. giving the existing Scottish Housing Tribunal the powers to include park home issues.
- 7.0 Raise awareness of park home issues with MSPs, Councillors and parliamentary candidates
- 8.0 Seek the formation of a Cross-Party Parliamentary Group on Mobile Homes in the next Parliament from May 2021

CONTACT US AT OUR WEBSITE - WWW.SCOPHRA.SCOT/FEEDBACK