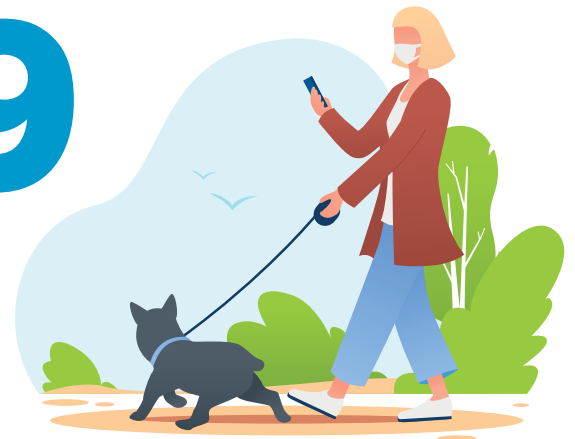


# news Action

SPRING 2021

THE NEWSLETTER OF WHITEINCH & SCOTSTOUN HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD.

## Covid-19 Update



The Office has now been closed for over a year, since the government imposed the first pandemic-related lockdown. In that time, staff have been operating mostly from home except for occasional emergency issues or where matters could only be dealt with by a presence in the Office and, even then, subject to strict social distancing and safety measures.

And, it is understood, that this will be continuing in some form for a while yet. Although we are currently seeing relaxations to the restrictions that have affected us all, the Association is still bound to follow government instruction. This is currently vague, with a suggestion, generally, that as long as infection rates continue to fall and remain lower, “some offices will be able to return to partial working” later. However, it is also understood, from a government spokesperson, that there is an expectation that working from home, where possible, will still be with us for some time to come.

This unfortunately leaves the Association in a position that lacks clarity and means that we cannot give any definitive idea of when things might start to normalise a bit more. We are though now managing to open up some more of our operations with allocations having started up again in a restricted way, non-emergency repairs once again being carried out and our major repairs beginning again with the resumption of the kitchen/bathroom/rewiring programme. Details of each of these are to be found within the newsletter.

As things become clearer, hopefully over the next two months, or so, we will advise of any changes, primarily through the Association’s website. In the meantime, staff will continue to work from home for the most part, continuing to operate and deliver services as best they can as we have been doing throughout the pandemic.



*Aiming for High Quality Homes in a Desirable Environment*

A Charity Registered in Scotland SC035633

## Committee of Management

As with all Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), Whiteinch & Scotstoun Housing Association is run by a voluntary Committee of Management. This can comprise of up to 15 members and currently we have 10. And like many community ownership RSLs in Scotland, our Committee is made up of a combination of local people, both tenants and owners, and people from outwith the area who either have a connection or interest or who bring experience and knowledge to assist and support the Committee and organisation. We always aspire to have a good, strong, local representation, however, particularly from tenants.

It is recognised that this is a particularly challenging time for everyone and this is equally so for the Committee as it continues to operate throughout the pandemic. Normally, monthly meetings are held within the Association's Office but, since lockdown last year, this has not been possible. The solution developed has been to use Zoom, to hold remote meetings but this is not without challenges; discussions over such a format are not as easy as meeting in person while sometimes connections are lost or prove difficult to open in the first instance. Nevertheless, members of the Committee are managing to ensure that the Association continues to run.

Staff support members to participate and the Association will organise training to assist in the understanding of the business from the practical (such as ICT skills and knowledge) to the specific (including housing management, finance, maintenance, etc) all of which are useful for self-development as well.

*So, if you think that you might be interested in supporting the Association and your community, please contact us and the Chief Executive will arrange to discuss what is involved with you.*



## Important Allocations Announcement

In common with other Registered Social Landlords in Glasgow, the Association has responded to the Scottish Government's expectation and is currently offering a high proportion of house lets to homeless household referrals from Glasgow City Council.

This is to assist Glasgow City Council with rehousing the backlog of homeless applicants that built up over the COVID Pandemic

lockdown due to house letting having been severely disrupted.

Accordingly, the number of house lets available to Housing List and Transfer applicants will be substantially reduced during this period of support for Glasgow City Council to rehouse homeless households.

This will be subject to ongoing review in conjunction with Glasgow City Council.



## We need your views on our new Rent Arrears Policy

Where Policies of the Association directly affect tenants, we are bound to consult before these are initially implemented and when they are reviewed. The Association has recently reviewed its Rent Arrears Policy, which outlines how we will respond to tenants who find themselves in arrears of rent. Prior to final implementation of the policy we would welcome your comments on the proposed changes.

Key changes to our previous policy are as follows:-

- we make specific reference to the changes that have been required to address the introduction of Universal Credit;
- we make more specific references to the role played by Association's Tenancy Support

Services (i.e. Welfare Rights Service, Money and Debt Advice, Energy Advice and Tenancy Sustainment) in supporting tenants in rent arrears;

- we explain further the use of Discretionary Housing Payments, particularly in relation to mitigation of the 'Bedroom Tax';
- we make clearer reference to the way in which performance on arrears management and control is reported to Committee;
- we make more specific reference to how rent arrears resulting from recovery of Housing Benefit Overpayments from tenants by Glasgow City Council are managed by the Association;
- we demonstrate a more clearly defined approach to agreeing

and managing rent arrears repayment arrangements with tenants, in effect, that on a third broken arrangement the case will be taken to the Housing Manager for consideration that court action be considered for recover of the tenancy; and

- we make specific reference to Mobysoft (Rent Sense) arrears management software.
- The draft new Rent Arrears Policy can be found on our Website or copies can be sent out by telephoning, emailing, or writing to us. You can send us your comments using the 'Contact Us' form on our website, by e-mailing your comments to [wsha\\_admin@wsha.org.uk](mailto:wsha_admin@wsha.org.uk) or by telephoning the office on **0141 959 2552** where our staff will be happy to record them.

## Tenant Participation Does It Interest You?

The Association is committed to tenant participation; this can take many forms but, we would argue, is best practiced by joining the Committee of Management. However, true tenant participation is what you, as tenants, want.

From past tenant surveys the greater majority of tenants told us that they preferred to receive information through newsletters, like this one, or individually addressed letters covering specific issues. This is something we are now asking in our continuing satisfaction surveys which show that 82% of tenants prefer these two types of communications. However, the

Association would support any other form of participation that people requested. For example, under normal conditions, if enough people asked for public meetings, we would hold these or if enough people wanted to form a registered tenants organisation we would advise and provide support on how to do this.

At the moment, there are obvious limitations on what we can do and these may be in place for some time yet. We will, though, explore what we can do should enough interest be shown and will look to whatever ways we can assist so as to maintain the opportunity for tenant participation.



### Focus Groups/Tenant Scrutiny Panel

We have also asked if any tenants would wish to form a Tenant Scrutiny Panel; this would involve joining a forum where tenants can come together to discuss and comment on performance and how we can perhaps improve. As above, under the current circumstances, we would again look for ways in which we may be able to facilitate this should anyone indicate they were willing to participate.

# Changing the Way We Set Your Rent

The Association has embarked on a project to simplify the way we set rents across our housing stock. For a number of reasons, over the years, our system has become over-complicated and is not in every case easy to explain to tenants so we have decided to go back to the drawing board to develop our rent structure. Due to changing funding regimes over many years, this is a common issue for housing associations across the country and many have carried out or are planning to carry out a review of their rent structures.

We now need your help. We want to understand what tenants think is of most value to them and therefore what type of property, and amenities within it, should command the highest rent.

Around 23<sup>rd</sup> April, all tenants will receive a questionnaire in the post asking a series of questions designed to capture your views. We would encourage tenants who have access to a computer, tablet or smartphone to respond using the survey monkey details on the questionnaire. If this is not possible you can either phone the office and our Customer Services staff will take your responses, or you can post your questionnaire back in the envelope provided.

We really need your views so we can make rents reflect your priorities and we are offering three prizes of £100 to tenants who enter the questionnaire prize draw. The draw closes on 14<sup>th</sup> May so please get your responses back to us as soon as possible.



# Paying Your Rent

All at the Association are keenly aware that times continue to be difficult for many people; if the economic situation is not already affecting many tenants, there are at least worrying concerns for the future.

First of all, we would stress that regular monthly rent payments are the main source of income, which enables the Association to provide the essential services received by all our tenants, for example, repairs and maintenance to flats and common areas. The less rental income the Association receives means less money available to spend on these essential services.

We would also remind all of our tenants that **rents are due on the 28<sup>th</sup> of each month and are payable one month in advance**. For example, this means your rent for the month of December is due to be paid by the 28<sup>th</sup> of November. **Payment made after that date is a payment in arrears**. Payment of rent has to be made every month regardless of other financial circumstances or commitments.

If there is a change in your circumstances, which might affect the payment of your rent, or you are having difficulty paying your rent for whatever reason, it is essential that you get in touch with your Housing Officer immediately to discuss the problem. Your Housing Officer will work with you in dealing with any rent payment problems you are experiencing, which may include making a sensible arrangement for you to pay what you owe over a suitable period of time.

On the other hand, whilst the Association makes every effort to support our tenants who are experiencing financial difficulty, a delay on your part in making an arrangement could result in the Association having no choice but to take Court Action to evict you.

The Housing Association also has Welfare Rights Officers and a Money Advice and Financial Inclusion Officer who can provide advice on benefits you might qualify for and help you to apply for them.

**The Association cannot stress enough the need for our tenants to make paying their rent their utmost priority and where they are experiencing difficulties in doing so to contact the Association immediately.**

### Remember:

- The majority of tenants pay their rent or ensure that housing benefit is in place for this.
- Of those who get into difficulty in paying rent, most seek assistance from the Association, often through the Welfare Rights Officers.
- Most tenants who build up arrears make and keep arrangements to pay them up.
- The minority who do not do these are the ones the Association has to pursue legally and who could lose their homes.

**Don't find yourself amongst the few who could face eviction!**

## WAYS TO PAY YOUR RENT

The Association provides a range of methods by which you can pay your rent in order to make it as easy and convenient as possible for you. Under current restrictions, of course, payments cannot be made at the Office, however, card payments can be taken over the phone. There is a payment App for those of you with smartphones. We can also take Direct Debits for those of you who would find this more convenient. The full range of methods are as follows:

1. Payment by allpay Payment Card at Post Office or 'PayPoint' Outlet (i.e. local shop or garage displaying 'PayPoint' sign) - **Always retain your receipt as proof of payment**

2. Online to allpay at [www.allpayments.net](http://www.allpayments.net)

3. By phone to allpay on **0844 557 8321**

4. By Standing Order

5. By Direct Debit

6. By phone to the Association using your bank account debit card

7. By downloading the allpay Payment App onto your mobile phone

If you require further information on any of the above please do not hesitate to contact the Association where a member of staff will answer your query.

## Complaints Handling Procedure

The Association is always aiming to deliver the best service we can. However, we realise that things may not go as intended or that someone receiving the service is not satisfied with it. We therefore have in place a **Complaints Handling Procedure**. This deals with complaints people might have about the service we offer and seek to deliver (it is not about complaints about other tenants' or residents' behaviour which are dealt with through our Antisocial Behaviour Policy).

If you feel you have a complaint, firstly raise the matter with the responsible staff member who will try to deal with it as quickly and informally as possible. The target for dealing with complaints at this level is five working days (although in more complex cases this may be extended to up to ten working days).

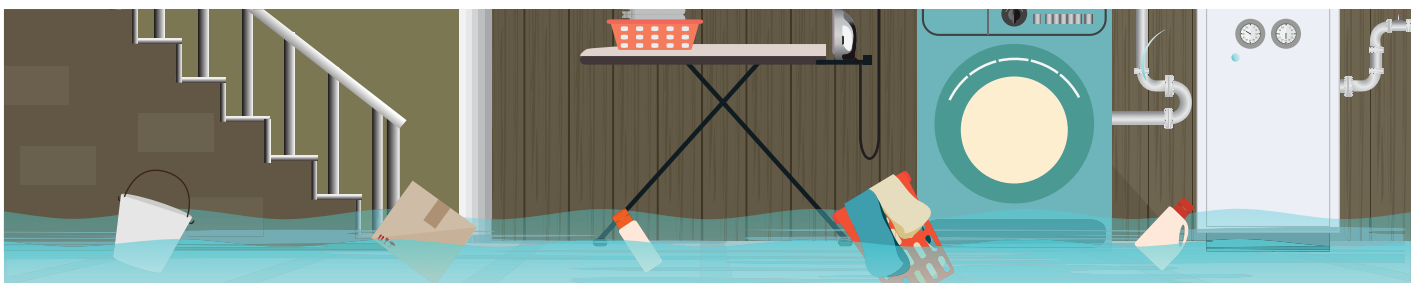
If you are still dissatisfied after this, you can raise your concerns to what is called the **investigation** stage. A senior member of staff, possibly the Chief Executive, depending on the nature of the complaint will deal with this. The target timescale for this stage is twenty working days (or, if particularly complex, to a longer timescale that is agreed as reasonable).

After this stage, if a complainant is still dissatisfied, they have the right to take the matter to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (who will not consider any complaint until this stage has been carried out).

Complaints will normally only be taken if they are received within six months of the event being complained about, or within six months of finding out that there is a reason to complain, but no longer than a year after the event itself.

Our Policy has recently been reviewed and follows a new model prepared by the Ombudsman. Essentially, the approach is the same in the revised version but we will be looking at ways in which we can better present the outcomes of complaints and advise of lessons learned or improvements to services where applicable.

And, if anyone has a complaint about a Committee Member, this should be directed to the Chief Executive, who will deal with it in confidence and may involve the Scottish Housing Regulator, if appropriate. Likewise, if there is a complaint about the Chief Executive, this should be addressed to the Chairperson, who will also apply full confidentiality in dealing with it and will also approach the Scottish Housing Regulator if required.



## Insuring the Contents of Your Home

**Imagine you had your keys stolen and needed replacement locks? What about the destruction a fire would cause to your furniture? It is your responsibility as a tenant or owner to insure the contents of your home so how would you cover the cost?**

Home contents insurance covers loss or damage to all the things in your home which are not part of the structure of the building, such as furniture, decoration, electrical goods and clothing.

The Association is responsible for insuring the fabric of the building you live in; the roof, the walls etc. If you are a tenant we will do this automatically through the 'block' insurance policy. If you are an owner we will charge you a share of the 'block' policy unless you provide us with details of an appropriate policy you have arranged yourself if your Deeds allow you to do so. If you suffer, for example, water ingress from a leaking roof, we will repair the roof, ceiling and walls but not

your damaged furniture and fittings.

The Association does not endorse any particular scheme. Our Money Advice and Financial Inclusion Officer can assist you to source insurance cover and provide details of schemes available to tenants with costs ranging from £1.54 per month depending on your circumstances. For further information contact Karen Auld on **0141 959 2552**.

# Goodbye to Mary and Welcome to Kevin...

The Association is pleased to welcome our new Senior Repairs officer, Kevin McGhee, who will lead the Repairs Team following the retirement of Mary Fyfe.

## Mary Retires...

At the end of December, the Association said farewell to **Mary Fyfe**, Senior Repairs Officer. Mary started her career in banking in the 1970s before studying Town and Regional Planning at Dundee University. This led to a long career in housing including 22 years at West of Scotland Housing Association, 19 of those as Property Services Manager. Mary joined us on 22nd September 2015 to cover the vacant Senior Repairs Officer role and we benefitted greatly from her wealth of experience in the period from then until her retirement. Mary leaves with all good wishes from the Association for a long and happy retirement.



## ...and it's Hello to Kevin

**Kevin McGhee** joined the Association as Senior Repairs Officer on 1st February 2021 from Clyde Valley Housing Association where he was Housing Maintenance Manager. A highly experienced maintenance professional, having worked in the sector for over 17 years, Kevin will be responsible over the next few months for unlocking the reactive repairs on hold due to lockdown and maintaining the throughput of void properties as the Association resumes lettings. He is passionate about customer service delivery and is looking forward to working with staff and contractors to identify areas for continual improvement and efficiencies. Welcome Kevin!



## ...and it's Farewell to two of our Longest Serving Staff

In June we will say farewell to two of our longest serving staff members who have announced their retirement.



**June Henderson** joined the Association staff on 1st December 1983 as our Receptionist. Following staff restructures, June moved first to our generic Services Delivery Team in 2001, then became Maintenance Assistant in 2007. June's friendly and helpful manner has made her a

favourite with tenants and contractors alike and we wish her a happy and healthy retirement. June says, "When I started with the Association, it was only supposed to be as a temp for three weeks! I have been so lucky to work with many contractors and colleagues, who have become friends. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to deal with so many tenants, and owners, and I have enjoyed watching you and your families grow over the years. Wishing you all every success for the future."



**Jim Calderwood** joined our Development Team on 5<sup>th</sup> December 1988 from Glasgow City Council. As Development Manager, Jim was responsible for overseeing most of the housing rehabilitation programmes in our area, as well as the new build projects at 7 & 9 Methil Street, 13

Victoria Park Drive South, Palladium Place, 54 Earl Street and the Glendore St./Medwyn St./Dumbarton Road development. In 1999 Jim moved to head up our Housing Management Team, which under his leadership has expanded to provide much needed Welfare, Money and Energy Advice services to our tenants. Jim has been a much valued member of the Association's Executive Team, developing policy and strategy and working with the Management Committee to ensure the highest standard of services. A popular member of the staff team we wish Jim all the best in retirement.



## Routine Repairs

From Monday 26<sup>th</sup> April we are planning to resume routine repairs inside homes along with non-essential inspections and surveys. This is in line with the Scottish Government's route map on easing lockdown restrictions.

We are aware that this has been a difficult time for everyone over the last 12 months due to the global pandemic and we have tried to keep services as normal as possible. However, with tighter restrictions on services introduced in January and the overriding need to limit the spread of the virus, this has had an impact on some of our services that we would normally provide within the Property Services Team; essentially, we could only carry out emergency repairs, as our priority is to keep customers, contractors and our staff safe.

As stated, from 26th April, it is our intention to start to reintroduce reactive repairs, in line with Scottish government guidance. We would

however remind customers that there has been a large backlog of repairs that contractors will be working through from this date and these may take a little longer than usual to complete.

As usual, contractors will require to work within current guidelines and follow social distancing measures as will tenants, we would therefore ask for your patience and understanding as we work together to move towards returning the service to levels of normality. Please continue to check our website regularly for the latest information on our services and get in touch if you have any questions.

You can help us by:

- **Advising if you or anyone in your household currently has symptoms, is self-isolating or shielding by calling 0141 959 2552. This helps us to take appropriate safeguarding measures and, where appropriate, to re-plan your repair.**

- **Keeping your distance while we are inside your home. You must make sure that you and any other household members stay at least 2 metres away from personnel at all times. You and your family should stay in another room while we are in your home. If possible, please wear a face covering.**
- **Opening external windows and doors whenever you can as ventilation is very important in helping prevent the virus from spreading.**
- **Clearing the area we need to work of any household items so the time we are in your home is reduced.**
- **Our team may need to leave your home if they feel they are not able to work safely. They will always make sure repairs are made safe before leaving.**

Thank you for your support.

## Cyclical Works

### Electrical Inspection Contract 2018-23

We carry out periodic electrical inspections in your property every 5 years and this work will again be undertaken by our electrical contractor, Fortress. These inspections are carried out to ensure that the electrical system in your home is, and continues to be in a safe condition. As part of this inspection, the electrician may require to carry out any essential electrical repairs identified. This will also include upgrading of smoke, heat & carbon monoxide

detectors in line with the Scottish Government's new fire safety legislation.

**It is essential that you allow access for this work to be carried out as it not only protects you and your family but also your neighbours, should any serious electrical issues occur.** Tenants will be lettered by Fortress advising proposed date for inspections. If you have any queries about these inspections, please contact Jose Migues, Projects Officer.

### Cyclical Painting Contract (external works) 2021 - 2025

The Association is currently going through the procurement process to identify a Contractor who will carry out the Association's five-year external painter work programme. The contractor is due to be appointed in late August. Those involved in Year 1 of the programme will be written to in due course.



# GAS SERVICING IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AS WELL AS OURS!

We have a joint responsibility for your gas safety. As a tenant you must provide us with reasonable access to carry out an Annual Gas Safety check and as a Landlord we must make every effort to ensure that this check is carried out.

**We take this responsibility very seriously.**

Unfortunately, we still find it difficult to get access to some of our properties. This means that staff are contacting some tenants a significant number of times to try and encourage them to provide access

and we have also had to arrange a number of forced accesses. This is time consuming for staff and is also inconvenient for tenants.

It is therefore important that you work with us to make the Service as simple as possible by providing access when requested or by offering an alternative date within the 12 month timescale.

You should be aware that if we do have to arrange a forced access, you will be re-charged all associated costs even if we don't have to force access to your home on the day.

## Gas cookers - a few things to remember



### Changing your gas cooker or gas hob

If you are installing a new gas cooker you must ensure that it is ONLY connected and disconnected by a Gas Safe registered engineer.

### Changing your electric cooker to a gas cooker

If you have an existing gas bayonet and decide to change your electric cooker to a gas cooker you must ensure that it is ONLY connected by a Gas Safe registered engineer. **You MUST also alert the Association to this change by contacting either Julie Law, Jose Miguez or Paul Hughes from the Projects Section.**

### Stabilising your cooker

Please ensure that your gas cooker is fitted with a stability bracket. If you do not do this it should be recorded on the Gas Safety certificate issued to you during the annual gas inspection. The Association again must remind all tenants that it is in their interests to have a stability bracket fitted to ensure that their cooker remains safe and securely in place.

## GAS! ISSUES THAT YOU NEED TO CONSIDER

### If you smell gas:

- Turn off all gas appliances and turn off the supply at the gas meter.
- Put out all cigarettes and do not light any matches or switch electrical switches as any spark could cause a fire.
- Open doors and windows to let gas escape.
- Phone Scottish Gas Network on **0800 111 999**

### Gas leaks

- Never try to deal with a gas leak yourself.
- A gas leak should also be reported to Scottish Gas Network on **0800 111 999**

## Planned Programme Works

As you may be aware, the Scottish Government are easing restrictions that will move most areas into Tier 3 from the 26<sup>th</sup> April 2021 and these changes allow for non-essential works such as kitchen or bathroom replacements to be carried out within occupied properties.

As a result, the delayed planned maintenance programme will therefore commence on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and all tenants involved in the pilot phase of the contract have already received a letter confirming their individual start date.

All tenants in Phase 1 of the contract have already been surveyed and will receive a letter in due course to advise of the proposed start date. If the proposed date is not suitable, please contact the Contractor on the telephone number provided in the letter.

In accordance with the Covid 19 regulations, our Contractors will be required to work within the current government guidelines, including wearing a mask and following social distancing rules. Tenants are also requested to respect and follow these safety measures.

Tenants should be aware that the programme may

be subject to change as restrictions are eased or reintroduced and the Association appreciates your patience and understanding as we work towards getting these works fully up and running.

You can help us by-

- Advising if you or anyone in your household currently has symptoms, is self-isolating or shielding by calling **0141 959 2552**. This helps us to take appropriate safeguarding measures and, where appropriate, re-plan your planned works.
- Keeping your distance while we are inside your home. You must make sure that you and any other household members stay at least 2 metres away from personnel at all times. You and your family should stay in another room while we are in your home. If possible, please wear a face covering.
- Opening external windows and doors whenever you can as ventilation is very important in helping prevent the virus from spreading.
- Clearing the area we need to work in including any household items.

Thank you for your support.

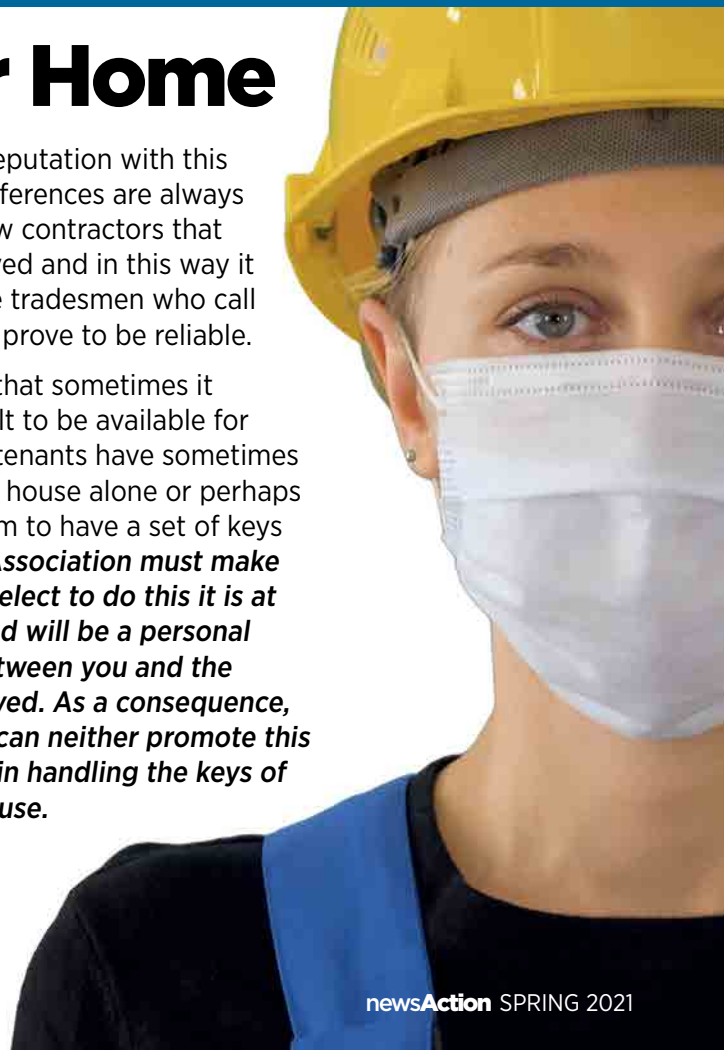
## Contractors in Your Home

In addition to the current procedures relating to contractors and Covid, we always remind tenants about the contractors we employ to carry out repair works to your homes. Rigorous processes are followed in selecting these firms to achieve value for money and hopefully to ensure a quality service is provided. To this end, those contractors that are used are expected to ensure that their staff realise that as they are acting on behalf of this Association they must treat all tenants and other residents they encounter with respect and courtesy at all times. If you ever feel that they fail to do this then you are entitled to use the Association's Complaints Procedure (details of which can be found elsewhere in this Newsletter).

The Association has used many contractors for several years and these

have built up a reputation with this organisation. References are always taken for any new contractors that might be employed and in this way it is hoped that the tradesmen who call to assist you will prove to be reliable.

It is understood that sometimes it can prove difficult to be available for contractors and tenants have sometimes left them in their house alone or perhaps arranged for them to have a set of keys for access. ***The Association must make clear that if you elect to do this it is at your own risk and will be a personal arrangement between you and the contractor involved. As a consequence, the Association can neither promote this nor be involved in handling the keys of any tenanted house.***



## Get ready for spring with our top energy saving tips

With longer days and (hopefully) better weather just around the corner, spring is a great time to be looking at ways you could save some pennies. Have a look at these top tips, from Home Energy Scotland, to help you prepare for warmer months ahead and see what you could save over a whole year.

### 1. Reset your thermostats

During the winter, you probably set your temperature at a high level so be sure to reset your thermostats to reflect the warmer weather. Dropping the heat by just 1°C can save you on average £80 per year. And don't forget to reset any thermostat timers – more sunlight means your house will naturally be warmer and lighter, so you'll not need the heating on as much, if at all.

### 2. Get a better energy deal

Did you know that switching energy supplier could save you hundreds each year? According to OFGEM, switching from a Standard Variable Tariff to the market's cheapest tariff could save you around £305. It's easy to switch, and there are a number of energy comparison websites you can use to find the best deal for you, including the Citizen Advice Bureau's Comparison Tool.

### 3. Change the way you pay

Contact your supplier directly to find out if there is a better way for you to pay your bill that might save you money. For example, most suppliers offer a discount for paying your bill by direct debit. You may also get discounts for receiving bills online, as this cuts down on paper and reduces costs for the supplier and is good for the environment.

### 4. Embrace the great outdoors

Take full advantage of the warmer weather by line-drying your clothes instead of using the tumble dryer. This could save on average £35 a year on your electricity bill. Less time spent indoors also means less money spent on your energy bills, so why not head outdoors for a bike ride or take a stroll around the park if you can? *Enter our greener travel quiz to win a Garmin Vivoactive 3 GPS Smartwatch.* Full details at [www.homeenergyscotland.org/wingreentravel](http://www.homeenergyscotland.org/wingreentravel)

### 5. Switch off

If you're planning any day trips away, remember to switch appliances off at the wall. Turning off appliances rather than leaving them on standby could save you around £30 a year on your bills each year.

For more energy saving tips and free advice to help you reduce your bills and keep warm at home, contact our Energy Advice Service on **0141 959 2552** or email [EnergyAdvice@wsha.org.uk](mailto:EnergyAdvice@wsha.org.uk)

Homeowners looking for advice on energy efficiency measures may can contact Home Energy Scotland on freephone **0808 808 2282**, visit [homeenergyscotland.org](http://homeenergyscotland.org) or follow 'HomeEnergyScotSC' on Facebook and @HomeEnergyScot on Twitter.



# What's on at the Whiteinch Centre



## What's on at the Whiteinch Centre

(These articles have been prepared by the Whiteinch Centre)



Just a quick update to all our friends and partners to advise that despite Covid we're still here. We have been organising courses online including, ESOL, Video Conferencing and CV writing. If you would like to find out more about any of these courses - generally run and repeated every 2-3 months - please have a look at our website. [www.whiteinchcentre.org.uk](http://www.whiteinchcentre.org.uk)

In terms of the One Stop Shop advice service, previously held on Tuesdays and Fridays, this will still be available. Please just call the centre (0141 950 4434) to leave a message and our advisor will get back to you as soon as possible.

As detailed elsewhere in the newsletter, we have also commenced a Community Pantry Food initiative which is open every Thursday from 2-4 pm here at the Centre. We aim to provide for anyone from G14 and if you can call in advance that will help us collect and prepare the relevant parcels and packages and food that are donated to us.

For further details please look for recent posts on Facebook or go to our website.

It's still likely to be several months before we can get back to anything like normality but we are making plans and we really, really hope to see everyone soon.

Stay safe and keep in touch!

## WHITEINCH CENTRE FOOD PANTRY

**Are you in need of food support for yourself or your family or do you know someone who may need support?**

The Whiteinch Centre has now established a Food Pantry service in conjunction with FairShare and DRC Youth Service and WSHA. It's run by volunteers who want to ensure that no-one in our area goes hungry!

If you need an emergency foodbag you can pick one up every Thursday between 2-4pm.

To ensure we have sufficient supplies for you it would be really helpful if you could email us or call us with your name and let us know you are coming - this is not a requirement but ensures we will have a parcel for you and means you will not have to wait.

If you have a friend who may be in need, please also contact either WSHA or WCL staff and advise and we can look to prepare a food parcel.

Please email : [reception@whiteinchcentre.org.uk](mailto:reception@whiteinchcentre.org.uk) or call **0141 950 4434**. If no-one is available please leave a message and your contact details and someone will get back to you asap.

We can also provide you with details of other services and similar urgent food services in the area.

Please do not wait...get in touch and receive the support that you deserve - our team of local volunteers are ready and determined to provide for the residents of Whiteinch & Scotstoun and neighbouring streets.



WS Property Management Ltd (WSPM) is the trading subsidiary of Whiteinch & Scotstoun Housing Association Ltd which provides factoring services to almost 600 owners in the Whiteinch and Scotstoun area. As a small company we depend on customers paying their invoices timeously in order that

we can continue to provide an effective factoring service and to ensure the financial viability of the business.

As with other aspects of our business, WSPM is also operating remotely in respect of government guidance for dealing with Covid.

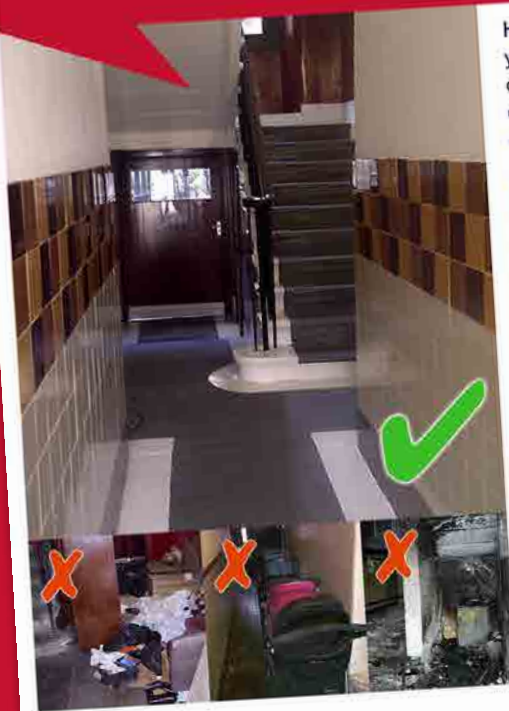
Many customers are finding it easier to budget by paying their standard factoring charges in advance by monthly standing order. If you are interested in finding out more about this payment method, please contact Bob Innes our Factoring Manager by phone on **0141 959 3145** or by e-mail at [admin@wspm.org.uk](mailto:admin@wspm.org.uk).

# Fire Safety - Common Close and Stairway

Many of you may be aware of a recent fire in one of the Association's closes. Thankfully, nobody was injured. All flats were undamaged but the close itself needed extensive repairs. **All residents are reminded that the Common Close is not an extension of your home to store items. Please**

**ensure that bikes, prams, household rubbish and any other items are not stored within the common close.** Primarily this is to ensure a clear escape route in the event of a fire (see Fire Safety Guidance below).

## The close is your only way of escape in the event of a fire.



Have you ever thought what you would do if fire were to break out in your close? It may not necessarily be in your flat! A fire started in a common close could kill you and your family. Even a small bag of rubbish can create enough smoke to fill a whole close. Items left in a close are often deliberately set on fire.

### Keep it clear

- Get rubbish, old furniture, etc out of the building
- Make sure storage areas are kept locked
- For advice on uplifting items contact your local Council

### If fire does start

- Keep doors closed to prevent smoke filling your house
- Dial 999 and ask for the Fire and Rescue Service, giving as much information as you can

For free home fire safety advice  
**CALL 0800 0731 999**  
or visit our website at  
[www.firescotland.gov.uk](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk)



**SCOTTISH**  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE  
Working together for a safer Scotland

## AVOIDING BOGUS CALLERS

Bogus callers, sometimes known as conmen or doorstep thieves, are people who trick their way into people's homes with the intention of stealing money or property. **Unfortunately, we have had recent reports of such unscrupulous people working in the area so we would caution everyone to be extra vigilant.**

These people often work in teams of two or more and they usually prey on older or vulnerable people. Bogus callers can use many different guises to gain entry to your home, often pretending to be workmen. If you are in any doubt about the person on your doorstep, follow this advice:

### Always

- ask to see the caller's identity card and check

it thoroughly. If you feel unsure ask the caller to wait on the doorstep while you phone the company to check

- lock the door while you go to use the telephone and don't open the door until you are totally convinced. Anyone who is genuine will not mind you doing this
- ask the caller to return at an agreed day and time when you have someone with you. Don't let callers put pressure on you to let them in
- if in doubt - keep them out
- if you are suspicious - ring the police



## Missed Collections

### Household Rubbish – Green Bins

All household rubbish is now collected on a rolling eight day cycle. To confirm when your household rubbish will be collected please check on Glasgow City Council's website ([www.glasgow.gov.uk](http://www.glasgow.gov.uk) - click on Bins and Recycling then click on Collection Days and input your post code at the top right hand corner of the page). The Collections Calendar will confirm the date when household rubbish is next due to be collected at your address.

If you are experiencing problems with Glasgow City Council not uplifting household rubbish, please call them to report this on **0141 287 9700**.

Should you have a problem of rubbish not being

uplifted and it persists for 2 weeks or more or is happening on a regular basis – please contact the Association to make them aware of this.

### Recycling Bins – Blue Bins

If you are experiencing problems with Glasgow City Council not uplifting the blue recycling bins, please call them to report this on **0141 287 9700**.

Should you require a BLUE recycling bin to be replaced, please contact Glasgow City Council on **0141 287 9700** to arrange this.

Should you have a problem of recycling not being uplifted and it persists for 2 weeks or more or is happening on a regular basis – please contact the Association to make them aware of this.

## Fly Tipping

We are aware that fly tipping (the dumping of waste such as discarded furniture and other household items on the street) is a problem in the area. Fly tipping is not only unsightly it can also represent a danger to local residents and passers-by.

Fly tipping is illegal and if those doing it can be identified they will be subject to a fine of £200.

Accordingly, if you witness fly tipping please report it direct to Glasgow City Council's General Cleansing by phone on 0141 287 9700, on line through the Glasgow City Council website ([www.glasgow.gov.uk](http://www.glasgow.gov.uk)) or by downloading the Council's smartphone app.

In order that a fine can be imposed it is ideal that when reporting fly tipping you can provide details of the person responsible (including, where applicable, a vehicle registration number). Hopefully, if people are caught and fined it will deter fly tipping in future.



# Comprehensive Bulk Uplift Service has Begun

Residents will be aware that throughout the summer of 2020 there was no weekly bulk uplift service from Glasgow City Council and had it not been for our partner company, WS Estate Services Limited, the environment in the Whiteinch & Scotstoun area would have been so much worse than it was.

The City Council has now introduced a charged service available to any resident who contacts them with the specific details of an uplift, costing £35 per uplift of no more than 10 items which will be collected in a period of up to 28 days. However, this has left the Association concerned over the amount of time bulk could be left out, the potential for confusion if more bulk is added, what happens if collections are missed, etc with all the health & safety and environmental issues that are likely to arise in connection.

We feel that we had no choice but to take a proactive approach to these issues and, indeed, on their website, the City Council signposts tenants to their Housing Association to address local issues relating

to bulk. Working with WS Property Management and WS Estate Services we have, therefore, introduced a cyclical bulk uplift programme from the backcourts and streets in our area. WS Estate Services have two new employees, George Glackin and Jade Welch, who are employed specifically to manage the bulk in the area.

With the exception of those residents in the houses in our Edzell Development, tenants and owners should leave their bulk items in the backcourt where they will be uplifted within 7 days. Tenants in the Edzell houses should leave the bulk in their gardens and contact the Association to advise. It will be picked up within 7 days by WS Estate Services. Private owners in the Edzell houses should use the Council's 10 items, 28 days service.

By introducing this service we hope to play our part in making Whiteinch & Scotstoun a cleaner, more attractive area to live in. We hope you agree.

## Some Useful Numbers

As highlighted in previous newsletters, the Association often receives enquiries or complaints about problems in the area for which we do not have responsibility or the ability to resolve. Whilst we are happy to provide appropriate advice and assistance where we can, including referring complaints to the appropriate organisation, it will often be easier, quicker and perhaps more satisfactory for you to contact directly those who can deal with the issue concerned.

We have previously listed various phone numbers that you can call to report your concerns on a variety of matters but thought it would do no harm to do so again:

- Graffiti, fly tipping and fly posting removal - **0300 343 7027**
- Needle uplift - **0141 287 9700**
- Water mains leakage or bursts - **0845 600 8855**
- Roads and lighting faults - **0800 37 36 35**
- Police Scotland - **101**
- Crimestoppers - **0800 555 111**
- Abandoned cars - **0141 276 0859**
- Noise Pollution - **0141 287 6688**
- Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability (NRS) - **0800 027 3901** (if calling from a mobile - **0141 287 1057** or **0141 276 7400**)
- Dog Fouling Team - **0300 343 7027**
- Vermin Infestation - **0141 287 1059**



# Let us know...

Do you have any comments to make on what you've read in this Newsletter, perhaps on some of the specific areas where we've asked for your views? Do you have any comments to make on our service in general? Do you want to get more involved in our work? If the answer to any of these questions is 'yes', then please share your comments on the tear off slip below and return it to the address below.

Please make your comments on the tear off slip below to: -

Karen McQueen, Deputy Chief Executive & Secretary,  
Whiteinch & Scotstoun Housing Association Ltd.,  
The Whiteinch Centre, 1 Northinch Court,  
Glasgow G14 0UG

Or e-mail your comments to  
wsha\_admin@wsha.org.uk

Name: .....

Address: .....

Note your comments here: - .....

## Cantonese

如果你需要這份不同語言版本的簡訊，請聯絡WSHA辦事處 Karen McQueen (地址: The Whiteinch Centre, 1 Northinch Court), 或致電 0141 959 2552, 或電郵 [kmcqueen@wsha.org.uk](mailto:kmcqueen@wsha.org.uk)。

## Gaelic

Cuiribh fios gu Karen McQueen aig oifis WSHA aig Ionad Whiteinch, 1 Northinch Court, neo air a fòn aig 0141 959 2552, neo air post-dealain aig [kmcqueen@wsha.org.uk](mailto:kmcqueen@wsha.org.uk) ma tha thu ag iarraidh dreach dhan iris-naidheachd ann an cànan eile.

## Mandarin

如果您需要此报纸的其他语种译本，请与位于Whiteinch中心，1 Northinch Court WSHA 办公室的 Karen McQueen 联系，或者致电 01419592552，或者发电子邮件至 [kmcqueen@wsha.org.uk](mailto:kmcqueen@wsha.org.uk)。

## Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać tłumaczenie niniejszego biuletynu, prosimy o kontakt z Karen McQueen w biurze WSHA w Whiteinch Centre, 1 Northinch Court lub telefonicznie pod numerem 0141 959 2552 lub na adres e-mailowy: [kmcqueen@wsha.org.uk](mailto:kmcqueen@wsha.org.uk).

## Urdu

اگر آپ اس نیوز لیٹر کو کسی مختلف زبان میں حاصل کرنا چاہتے ہوں تو براہ مہربانی  
”وائٹ انچ سینٹر“،  
1 نارٹھ انچ کورٹ میں واقع ”ڈبلیو ایس ایچ اے“ کے دفتر میں Karen McQueen سے  
”کیرن میک ایون“  
ٹیلیفون نمبر 0141 959 2552 کے [kmcqueen@wsha.org.uk](mailto:kmcqueen@wsha.org.uk) کے ذریعے رابطہ کریں۔  
ذریعے یا ای میل

As with all of the Association's policies and procedure, this newsletter, in full and in part, can be made available in summary, on tape, and in translation into most other languages. It can also be downloaded from the website at [www.wsha.org.uk](http://www.wsha.org.uk)

Please contact Karen McQueen at the office at the Whiteinch Centre, 1 Northinch Court, or by telephone on 0141 959 2552, or by e-mail at: [wsha\\_admin@wsha.org.uk](mailto:wsha_admin@wsha.org.uk) if you would like a version in a different format.