



NEWSletter

GLASGOW WEST HOUSING ASSOCIATION

SERVICE CHARGES REVIEW

This review, supported by residents attending the ATC 2006, is now underway, with the objective of streamlining administration, simplifying statements, and most importantly, ensuring value for money for residents. As part of the review, Management Information (our independent monitoring consultant) may contact you by telephone for your views on the services provided by our stair cleaning and garden maintenance contractors and also for your comments on the service provided by the Association. Your participation in these surveys would be greatly appreciated.

LAMINATE FLOORING – and other Alterations and Improvements

Please remember that you need our prior written approval if you intend to lay laminate flooring in your home. This type of flooring remains very fashionable and is ideal, particularly if you have small children, dust allergies, or pets, however, there are some factors that you should be aware of before opting for this floor covering:

- You must purchase a good underlay to optimise sound insulation.
- Consider the lifestyle adjustments you may need to make, e.g. stiletto heels and laminate flooring equal a nightmare for your neighbour! Noise disturbance from laminate flooring is anti-social behaviour.
- You will need to uplift the flooring if we need access underneath your floor for repairs or improvement works, e.g. if there's a leak from a water pipe or if we are installing a new central heating system.

Other improvements that you will need our prior written permission for include shower installations, replacement kitchen or sanitary fittings, renewing internal pass doors and/or replacing or installing electrical fittings, including down lighters and wall lights.

We are unlikely to give permission for alterations such as artexing or for painting kitchen unit doors.

If alterations are carried out without our written consent you may be asked to reinstate the property or to pay the full cost of employing our contractors to carry out the work on your behalf.

COMPENSATION FOR IMPROVEMENTS

In some cases you may be entitled to receive compensation at the end of your Tenancy for alterations or improvements you have carried out with our permission. Further information is available from the Property Services Team on 0141 331 6652.

MAJOR REPAIRS PROGRAMME

The major repairs programme is progressing well, with 143 homes so far benefitting from improvement works, including new kitchens, central heating systems and smoke alarms. Replacement windows and bathroom suites are also now underway, as are major works to replace the roof at Derby Street.

We are delighted with the excellent feedback we have been receiving from residents, and we would ask that you also pass on your comments to Management Information, if you are contacted by telephone to participate in the short independent surveys.



GWHA resident, Tanya Romany, in her newly fitted kitchen

WORKING GROUP VOLUNTEERS - TENANTS HANDBOOK REVIEW

Do you have top tips to give to new and existing tenants about being a good neighbour?

Do you have an eye for detail and/or a good sense of humour?

If you answered yes to all, or any part of the above and you are available to attend a maximum of four meetings during October/November, please consider becoming part of our Working Group to review the Tenants

Handbook, which will include a section on "Top Tips for Tenemental Living."

All volunteers are welcome, including new tenants who still remember the type of information that would have been helpful at the start of the Tenancy.

For further details or to volunteer please contact Avril Stewart – 0141 331 6657 or via email astewart@glasgowwestha.co.uk.

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HYNDLAND SECOND STAGE TRANSFER (2ST) PROPOSALS MOVE TO BALLOT

Following a hectic period of activity, on 29/08/08 the GHA Board approved Glasgow West's Business Plan for 2ST, and has agreed to request 'in principle' consent for statutory consultation from the Scottish Housing Regulator.



tenants in Hyndland will take place in November 2008. This will involve a lot of activity by Glasgow West staff in Hyndland over the next few months, to ensure the GHA tenants are aware of the benefits of transfer, and to pass on the strong messages of support from Glasgow West Residents.

Dave Sim, our Chairperson said "Glasgow West and Hyndland Local Management Committee (LMC) are delighted at the decision and we look forward to finally giving tenants in Hyndland the opportunity to vote on our proposals for the transfer of their homes to Glasgow West."

Betty Reilly, Hyndland LMC Chairperson said, "The local Committee have worked long and hard over many years and is thrilled as the GHA Board decision means there is now real progress in moving forward towards Second Stage Transfer (SST)."

Following a period of statutory consultation, a ballot of

RENT REVIEW 2009/10 – YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO INFLUENCE THE AMOUNT YOU PAY!

Over the next few months our rent review process will begin, with a view to consulting with residents at the Annual Tenants Conference on Saturday, 24/01/09. This Conference provides the best opportunity for you to have your say on the rent review and we would strongly recommend you come along to ensure you influence this very important decision.

JAMES MICHAEL AWARD

Nomination Forms, and further information about this Award, is available from our offices. If you know someone who, like Jim, has made a positive impact on your life or in the community in general, please consider nominating them. The person does not have to be a Glasgow West resident to be considered for this Award.

CASH FOR KIDS

Last year 59 children benefitted from a total of £1210 from Clyde Action, Cash For Kids.

Application Forms are available usually around the beginning/middle of October and require to be submitted shortly thereafter. If you missed out last year, please keep a watchful eye out for our Posters in your Close as these will provide further details on eligibility, and will also note the Day on which Staff will be available to help anyone who wishes to make an Application.

GWHA COMMUNITY FUND - CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Christmas gifts will be issued again this year to our tenants who may be elderly, live alone and are vulnerable. If you missed out last year or if you know of someone else who missed out, please contact Avril Stewart on 0141 331 6657 or astewart@glasgowwestha.co.uk.



All gifts will be delivered, where possible, before Christmas and the cost will be met from our Community Fund, which was established from the proceeds of raffles and fun-days.

OFFICE OPENING HOURS

The office will be closed on the following Public Holidays:-
Friday 26 September Monday 29 September
Where a holiday falls on a Friday the office will be closed from 4pm the previous day. Our office answering machine is operational out of office hours with details of our emergency repairs service and you can also find details of these on the GWHA 2008 calendar.

TIMELINE

Over the past few months, Staff and Management Committee Members have been putting their heads together to come up with the key events in the Association's illustrious 30 year history dating back to 1978.

The process has been a long one, however, we are nearing completion of a 'Timeline' that charts these milestones and will provide a lasting tribute to all who have been involved in making the Association the success it has become.

Dave Sim, our newly appointed Chairperson has been working tirelessly in composing his very own version of the timeline and this will be on the website in the coming months. Many thanks to Dave for his time, knowledge and skill in producing this.

Here's to the next 30 years and much further beyond.....

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) & ANNUAL TENANTS CONFERENCE (ATC)

Glasgow West's Management Committee recently welcomed a suggestion at the AGM for combining the AGM and ATC.

Some thought has been given to this suggestion, however, with two different audiences, members and tenants, differing objectives and timescales, this good idea doesn't readily stack up:

- > The AGM is for shareholders and must be held within 6 months of the year-end (28 March).
- > The ATC, primarily for tenants, focuses on the rent review. This is intrinsically linked to our budget process and financial year and implemented from the 28 March.

Also, taking account of the feedback from the AGM for continuing the current format and the strong attendance levels, the MC concluded that the two events should remain separate.

We agree that recent attendance levels at the ATC are low and have moved the Good Close and Garden Awards, to encourage attendance by residents who may not normally attend the ATC.

We value your attendance at these events and would welcome your views on how we encourage wider engagement.

COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS - ENHANCING CUSTOMER SERVICE

At Glasgow West, we aim to provide all of our customers with the best possible advice and service, and we fully appreciate when you take the time to record your thanks to a member of staff who has been particularly helpful towards you.

Equally, if there are occasions where you feel our service has not met with your expectations, we want you to tell us, to give us the opportunity to rectify matters if we can, but also to help us learn from your experience.

If you have gone through our complaints process and you remain unhappy with our decisions, you are entitled to lodge a Formal Complaint with the Scottish Public Ombudsman service, details of which are available from the website www.spso.org.uk or by telephoning 0800 377 7330, texting 0790 049 4372 or faxing 0800 377 7331.

If you're not sure what you should expect from us, please ask for a copy of our Service Quality Guarantee. This outlines our 'promises', and also our expectations of you.

DEVELOPMENT NEWS

For those of you who keep a watchful eye on our development programme, we are pleased to report that the Brechin Street development will start on site within the next few months, with an anticipated completion date of mid-2010. Thanks to the local residents who took the time to call at the office to comment on the plans and to help choose the bricks for the structure. Further information on the properties for rent or sale will be available around Summer time, 2009.



Brechin Street site

Slow progress is being made with the sites at Corunna Street and Dover Street, both of which have complex Title issues which are out with our control.

RENT REWARD SCHEME DRAWS

These last few months have been particularly lucky for Desiree Atkinson, Jessie Hutton and Janet Bustard, each of whom won £30 cash prizes in our 30th Anniversary Draws. Congratulations to all 3 of you, and good luck to all Members for the Draws that will take place on 16/09/08, 30/09/08 and 16/12/08. The annual £52 bonus cheques will be issued around mid-December.



Desiree Atkinson receiving prize from Elaine Giles

If you're not already a Member of the Rent Reward Scheme, just think about what you're missing. Application Forms are available from the office.

FANCY A CHANGE?

A Mutual Exchange may be right up your Street!

We currently operate a mutual exchange scheme, which allows tenants to "swap" houses with our permission, and also with the permission of the other landlord

A register containing details of people who have already expressed a wish to participate in this scheme is available at our offices and includes the following. Further information on these mutual exchanges and on the criteria that applies, is available from Lauren Connolly on 0141 331 6651.

REF	ACCOMMODATION	EXCHANGE FOR
746 HA	3apt Argyle St (2nd)	2apt Brechin St/Berkeley St (not grd or top)
486HA	3apt Byres Road (2nd)	4apt West End (1st)
694 HA	3apt Berkeley Street (1st)	3apt West End
613 HA	3apt Colebrooke Street (Grd Floor)	4 or 5 apt All areas considered (grd/1st Floor)

APPLYING TO TRANSFER HOUSE

If your housing needs have changed since you moved in to your current home and you think a transfer to another home would best meet your circumstances, you should complete a housing transfer form. Our Staff will assess your housing needs and your transfer request will be awarded points in line with our Housing Allocations Policy. Those with the most points are top of the Transfer List.

Points are awarded for a variety of housing needs including overcrowding, under occupation, medical problems that may make your current accommodation unsuitable etc. Points are not awarded for lifestyle

choices e.g. wish to have a shower, or a spare bedroom. You may not be able to transfer if you do not keep the terms of your Tenancy Agreement, which include rent payments, rechargeable repairs and the property being kept in good decorative order.

We have a very small number of properties available for let each year and even those with the greatest priority points may still have to wait a considerable number of years to be offered alternative rehousing.

For further information, please contact Lauren Connolly on 0141 331 6651.

TRANSFERRING TENANTS PRESERVED RIGHTS!

If you are one of the few tenants who have a preserved right to buy and a preserved right to a registered rent, you will lose these rights if you transfer to another GWAH property.

UNOFFICIAL SUB-LETTING

How would you feel if you had no home of your own and you knew that a GWAH property was being unofficially sub-let (usually at a rent far in excess of a GWAH rent) or was lying empty and visited once a fortnight by the tenant.

If you are aware this is happening in your area, please contact Jennie Dunk tel no 0141 331 6658 and Elaine Giles 0141 331 6660.

VACATING YOUR FLAT AT THE END OF YOUR TENANCY

At the end of your Tenancy your flat must be cleared of all household furnishings, carpets, white goods and all household rubbish. Sanitary ware and kitchen fittings should be cleaned and left in a hygienic condition. THIS IS A REQUIREMENT OF YOUR TENANCY.



If your home is not returned in good condition we have to pay contractors to clean and clear it before it can be let to someone else. The cost of this will be passed on to you.

RECYCLING UNWANTED HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

If you have good quality furniture or other household items that you no longer need, please consider passing these items on. The British Heart Foundation, a charitable organisation with a shop in Partick (Dumbarton Road) offers a home uplift service for bulk household items and some electrical goods. For further information, or to arrange an uplift, please contact 0844 499 4151.