



NEWSletter

GLASGOW WEST HOUSING ASSOCIATION

ARGYLE ADVICE PROJECT – WELFARE BENEFITS PROJECT

Making sure you are not missing out on benefits or credits you are entitled to can lead to other help and services. Getting the right entitlement now can mean, amongst other things, that you qualify for additional help in future with your gas and electricity supply or the switchover to digital television.

The Argyle Advice Project has been up and running since October 2006 and provides a free and confidential welfare rights service for all residents of GWHA. So far we have achieved

- £184,653.96 in increased annual income through benefits and credits for GW residents. Most of this goes directly to the individual, with additional income for older people, families with children, people with disabilities and carers.
- £14,646.52 in backdated Housing Benefit, reducing rent arrears.

- 100% of new tenants receive a benefit check at the time of signing up.

If you have not yet received your benefit check-up from Stephen Fallon or Paul Welsh, please contact the Project Administrator, Jamie Simpson on 0141 331 6665 to make an appointment to call at 5 Royal Crescent or to arrange a home visit if you are unable to manage in to our offices. Please also note

**ARGYLE ADVICE PROJECT DROP-IN SERVICE,
AVALON COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE, 48 CLEVELAND STREET
THURSDAYS FROM 9AM - 12 NOON
13/03/08 - 24/04/08**

If there is a good take-up of the service we will continue to be available in the Centre for the foreseeable future.

SATISFIED WITH GW SERVICE?

Since January 2007, Management Information have been telephoning GW tenants, and other people who have been in contact with our offices, for feedback on the service. This monitoring is completely independent and we thank those of you who have taken the time to participate.

The following is a snap-shot of the feedback from the 400 people (75% of which are GW tenants) who have responded so far. Contact Elaine Travers at GW if you would like more information:

- 93% of people find staff pleasant and helpful.
- 84% of housing applicants know the outcome of their application within the 3 wk target.
- 70% of visitors to the office have not made an appointment. Despite this, 67% are seen within 5 minutes.
- 75% of owners received a detailed response to their enquiry and 71% were very satisfied with the outcome of the contact.
- 96% of tenants fully understood rent account advice and information

There are some areas that we need to get better at. We are working at this and will continue to report results to you via our newsletter. Examples include:

- Completing repairs on the first visit
- Ensuring interview rooms are available for discussions
- Ensuring you know our direct line telephone numbers

ENHANCING SERVICES - A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH TO ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Since receiving your support at the ATC in 2006, GW has been exploring initiatives for enhancing the services available to tackle petty crime and anti-social behaviour in the area.

We are now pleased to announce our new partnership with Glasgow Community Safety Services (GCSS). This partnership will see the introduction of additional services for GW residents and will support GW in its commitment to prevention, intervention, support and enforcement in relation to anti-social behaviour:

If you are experiencing anti-social behaviour, whether that be from teenagers loitering, graffiti, refuse dumping or noise, please report it directly to GW offices.

GW's partnership with GCSS will be closely monitored and your feedback will inform the ongoing review of the service.

STAFF/TENANT NEWS

A big welcome to Mubeenha Muhamad and Hollie Findlay who have recently joined our Business Facilities Team. A fond farewell to June Brown, Jean Fernand and Tony Smith.

5 ROYAL CRESCENT GLASGOW G3 7SL TEL: 0141 331 6650 • FAX: 0141 331 6679
EMAIL: admin@glasgowwestha.co.uk WEBSITE: www.gwha.org.uk
Registered as a Scottish Charity

GOOD CLOSE AND BEST GARDEN COMPETITION

Yes folks, although it's hard to believe, Spring has almost Sprung and we are turning our thoughts to this year's competitions. Why not enter your close or garden?

Previous good garden prize winners have used the cash prize to purchase a garden bench, ornamental trees in tubs, compost bin and plants and shrubs.

Nominations for this year's competition are due in by Friday, 18/04/08 with judging in early May and announcements at GW's AGM on 21/06/08.

There will also be some BLOOMING changes to the competition. Feedback from residents is that the gardens are generally at their best during June/July and, with this in mind, we will be judging later in the year in future. Next year's winners will therefore be judged in June/July this year with announcements at the AGM in June 2009.

Clear as mud??? Further information is available from Elaine Giles on 0141-331 6660.



OFFICE OPENING HOURS

The office will be closed on the following Public Holidays:-

- Friday 21 March
- Monday 24 March
- Monday 5 May
- Friday 23 May
- Monday 26 May

Where a holiday falls on a Friday the office will be closed from 4pm the previous day. The office answering machine is operational out of office hours with details of our emergency repairs service, details of which are also on the GW 2008 calendar. If you require a copy of the calendar with the emergency numbers, please contact the office.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

If you know of a Group that needs access to a local meeting place, please keep GW's facilities in mind. This is a local facility for local people.

Further information on "The Meeting Place" (5 Royal Crescent) and the "Avalon Community Resource Centre" (48 Cleveland Street) is available by contacting Lesley Gillespie on 0141-331 6664.



SECOND STAGE TRANSFER – GREEN LIGHT

GW is delighted to be amongst the first group of organizations to be given the green light to move forward with our proposals for the transfer of the 128 tenanted properties in Hyndland to GW. There's still a long way to go and lots of work to be done but we are pleased with the feedback and support we are receiving from the Hyndland residents and this will inform the Business Plan we are submitting to GHA at the end of March 2008. Discussions with GHA will follow to agree dates for getting to ballot and transfer during 2009.

GW also remain committed to progressing the Argyle LHO transfer and the Local Management Committees are comfortable that Argyle will be a bit further down the line.

GWHA AGM: SATURDAY, 21 JUNE 2008

Please pencil this date in your diaries. Formal notification will follow early June, please advise the day before if you require transport or the crèche facility.

CHILDRENS COLOURING COMPETITION

Thanks to all our talented artists for taking part in GW's annual Colouring Competition. The efforts and attention to detail is amazing and it gets more and more difficult each year to choose the winners. Thanks also to parents for supporting this activity.

The following GW children were this years competition winners. Well done and watch out for this year's Christmas Colouring Competition in the December newsletter.

8- 11 Year Category

First Prize - Asahi Gallacher
Second Prize - Ifra Waqua

4 - 7 Year Category

First Prize - Dylan Kirkwood
Second Prize - Anarachi Duru



Winner Dylan Kirkwood with his brother Adam

PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

The Management Committee has now formally approved the Participation Strategy, committing GW to the priorities, activities and services supported by you and outlined in our last Newsletter.

If you are interested in giving up a few hours of your time to get more involved in the work of GW, or if you would like more information about the Participation Strategy or the support we provide for GW Residents Groups, please contact Elaine Travers on 0141-331 6650.

DEVELOPMENT

Work on GW's biggest development is due to start within the next 3-6 months. The Brechin Street site will provide 60 flats, including mainstream and wheelchair flats for rent and for Homestake. Completion is anticipated around January 2010. Progress on the other GW sites at Dover Street and Corunna Street remains slow due to complex Title issues.

RECHARGEABLE REPAIRS

Occasionally there will be repairs required to your home that will be rechargeable to you. If you owe money for a rechargeable repair, and you have not maintained a repayment arrangement to repay the cost, you may not be able to transfer to another GW property or to participate in home improvement programmes. Please contact the Property Services Team on 0141-331 6652 to discuss.

ELECTRICAL INSPECTIONS

An electrical inspection is required in your home once every 5 years. This check will ensure all the electrical sockets and switches in your home are operating properly. It is different from gas servicing which must be carried out annually. In the event you are asked to provide access for any of these important inspections, your co-operation would be most appreciated.

ENDING YOUR TENANCY

If you leave your home in a condition that is unsatisfactory, you will be recharged the cost of the cleaning, decorating and/or repairs that are necessary to bring the property up to a standard that is suitable for relet. The cost of this is likely to amount to several hundred pounds.

CASH FOR KIDS

A total of £1210 was distributed in the week leading up to Christmas, benefitting 59 GW children.

Please keep a watchful eye on our Newsletters and for Posters in closes around October/November for details of this year's application process. The timescale is usually very tight and it is important that you contact us within the required dates.

RENT REWARD SCHEME – EVERYONE'S A WINNER!

Did you know that we've paid out more than £10,000 in bonus and raffle prizes since the introduction of the Rent Reward Scheme in 2005? That's an average of £80 per Member and makes "Everyone a Winner."

To be sure you don't miss out please contact the office as quickly as possible for an Application Form.



30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

2008 will see GW celebrate its 30th Anniversary... an exceptional achievement for a small organisation that has grown from humble beginnings.

The success of GW is due in no small part to the involvement of tenants and members and once again we would like to call on your assistance to make the celebrations something to remember. If you would like to be involved in any of the celebrations, whether it be in organising or participating, please call Roz Craigie on 0141-331 6650. Our next meeting will focus on developing the ideas suggested by staff, Management Committee Members and tenants attending the Annual Tenants Conference.

ANNUAL TENANTS CONFERENCE (ATC)

Thanks to everyone who made the effort to come along and participate in our 8th ATC.



There was lively debate and audience participation as tenants commented, questioned and influenced the following important decisions:"

- 4.5% rent increase recommended to the Management Committee Meeting.
- Launch of the anti-social behaviour initiative from April 2008.
- The Strategy that will shape GW's priorities and services towards 2015.
- Ideas for marking GW's 30th anniversary this year.

We hope you will tell your neighbours about the importance of this event and encourage them to attend next year. The Evaluation Forms we received will also help inform future events and we are always happy to hear from you if you have any other comments or feedback.

~ YOUR VIEWS SHAPE YOUR SERVICES ~

COMMON HOUSING REGISTER (CHR) - UPDATE

Some legal issues have been hindering progress with the CHR and endeavours are being made to resolve these as quickly as possible. GW continues to support this Project as it simplifies the process of applying for a house. We will keep you posted on developments.

MAJOR REPAIRS PROGRAMME UNDERWAY

If your home is scheduled for improvement works this year it is likely you will already have received a visit from the contractor, CCG, and our Property Services Officer, Richard O'Brien. A programme of works is now being developed and further information on the timing of work within your home will be with you during April. If you have any questions in the meantime, or if the visit has not taken place yet, please contact Richard on 0141-331 6659.

MORTGAGE TO RENT SCHEME

This Scheme, supported by Communities Scotland, is designed to help people who own their homes but are struggling to meet the associated financial commitments. If you know anyone in this position, it may be worth referring them for further information and advice to the Mortgage to Rent Team on 0141-305 4083

CONTACTING YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY POLICE OFFICERS

Strathclyde Police have changed their boundaries. These changes do not affect the catchment area of Anderston Police Station at all. The main change for GW residents is the extension of Partick Police Station to cover areas previously covered by Maryhill.

The undernoted Community Police Officers have asked GW to note their contact details in our Newsletter to highlight how easy it is to contact them.

PARTICK – TEL NO. 0141-532 3507

Constable Mark Barrow
email – mark.barrow@strathclyde.pnn.police.uk
Constable Chris Barton
email – chris.barton@strathclyde.pnn.police.uk

ANDERSTON – TEL NO. 0141-532 3238

Constable Stephanie Rose
Constable Derek Bowman

Please remember that emergencies should be reported on 999