



NEWSletter

GLASGOW WEST HOUSING ASSOCIATION

MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAMME

There have been some unexpected delays to the programme as we continue to negotiate with the contractor for the best quality improvements for your home. Delivering on our promise to you is a priority for us and we will be in contact with you shortly if works are scheduled for your home this year.

Please contact the Property Services Team if you have any queries in the meantime.

ATTENTION ALL OWNERS

Payment of Factoring Invoices

Please note that cash payments are no longer accepted at our office. You can however pay by cheque at the office or by post.

If you wish to pay by instalments, please contact June Brown to discuss.

You can pay at the Bank of Scotland 258/262 Dumbarton Road by using the tear-off slip at the bottom of your invoice.

ACCESS FOR REPAIRS

When you report a fault or a repair to us, we try our best to arrange an appointment that suits you for access. This will generally be either a morning or an afternoon, on a nominated date, within our response times.

It is very important that you keep to appointments you have made, or that you contact the office to cancel.

If a contractor calls at your home and you are not available to provide access, we will have to pass on the charge to you, which is likely to be in excess of £35.00. If the contractor does not keep to an appointment with you, please let us know as you may also be entitled to compensation.

CASH FOR KIDS

If you are looking after one or more children (aged 16 or younger) and getting one of the following benefits:

- income support
- job seekers allowance
- working families tax credit
- housing benefit
- council tax benefit
- disabled persons tax credit

or otherwise on a low income, then you could be eligible for a grant from the Clyde Action 'Cash for Kids' appeal.

Last year, 63 GWHA children benefited from a total of £1,280, which was distributed in the week leading up to Christmas.

Application Forms are available usually about the beginning/middle of October and require to be submitted shortly thereafter.

We will put up posters in the Closes advising of the day that our Staff will be available to assist anyone who wishes to make an application.

If you missed out last year, please keep a watchful eye out for our Posters and get in touch with us as soon as you see them.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

OFFICE CLOSURE

Friday 21 September –
Monday 24 September
(re-open Tuesday 25 Sept at 9am.)

ATC

Saturday 26 January 2008

AGM

Saturday 21 June 2008

ARGYLE ADVICE PROJECT

Our best wishes go to David Kelly and Mark Willis, both of whom have recently left the Project to take up new jobs.

Ian Davidson will be providing temporary cover, 3 days per week, until such times as we have a new member of staff in post. Ian will be available in Glasgow West's offices on Mondays and Fridays.

If you would like to make an appointment for a benefit check, please contact Jamie Simpson, Project Administrator.

CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS

If you are an owner and you do not stay in your flat, please provide us with a correspondence address and contact number.

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.

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.

M8 ANDERSTON BRIDGE TO NOWHERE

A National Lottery Grant is up for grabs through a competition that will be decided by televised public vote later this year. Glasgow City Council is looking for support for the M8 project, which will form part of the Connect2 bid. If this bid wins, Glasgow will stand to gain £1m grant to complete the M8 Anderston Bridge to Nowhere.

The most important stage of the bid will be in early December 2007 when the Glasgow project will feature on ITV as part of a programme dedicated to promoting the Connect2 bid. To help with the TV programme, GCC would like to hear from you if completing the bridge would improve your quality of life.

Contact Adam Bows on 0141-287 9060 or email Adam.Bows@ls.glasgow.gov.uk.

To support Glasgow's bid, pledge online at the Sustrans website: <http://www.sustransconnect2.org.uk/projects/project> and watch out for the live televised vote in December 2007.

CONTACT GWHA

'Direct Line Telephone Numbers for the staff members mentioned in Newsletter Articles'

Jamie Simpson	0141-331 6678	Avril Stewart	0141-331 6657
Jennie Dunk	0141-331 6658	Tony Smith	0141-331 6670
Tracy Sloan	0141-331 6653	Elaine Giles	0141-331 6660
Property Services Team	0141-331 6652	Lauren Connelly	0141-331 6651



Jennie Dunk with Asashi Gallagher

GWHA BOOKWORMS

Glasgow West bookworm Asahi Gallagher, winner of the competition held at the AGM to design a bookmark received a £10 gift voucher and will also get the chance to go to the printers to see her winning design go to print. The bookmark will be included in all future book deliveries... keep a look out for it in your birthday book

Many thanks to Asahi for her lovely design and to all the other children who took part in the competition.

If you want to check that we have your child registered to receive a book from the 'bookworms' please contact Jennie Dunk or Tracy Sloan at the office.

**ATC
SATURDAY 26 JANUARY 2008**

The Annual Tenants Conference continues to be a great success providing an excellent platform for us to talk to you about our plans for the year ahead and to consult with you on the proposed rent increase for 2008/09.

This is your Conference, so if there is a subject that you would like to see up for discussion, please let us know within the next month and we will do our best to accommodate your ideas.

For more information please contact Tony Smith.

WHAT SHOULD YOU EXPECT FROM US?

If you're not sure what to expect from the services we provide, ask for a copy of our Service Quality Guarantee. This outlines our 'promises' to you and it also explains what we expect of you.

If you have any comments to make about our services (good or bad!), please contact the office for a Feedback Form.

SCOTTISH PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN

If you have gone through our formal complaints process and you remain unhappy with our decision, you are entitled to lodge a Formal Complaint with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

The Ombudsman serves as an independent review of complaints that have already been considered by the Association. The Ombudsman will review the process undertaken by the Association to ensure compliance with our policies and procedures.

There may be some issues the Ombudsman is unable to consider, however, if you wish more information about this, the Ombudsman is based at:

4 Melville Street, EDINBURGH EH3 7NS
Telephone number: 0800 377 7330
Text: 0790 049 4372 Fax: 0800 377 7331
Website: www.spso.org.uk

**RENT REWARD SCHEME
HAVE YOU SIGNED UP YET?**

If not, you could be missing out on the following benefits that are available only to Members.

- Free entry to quarterly prize draws.
- £10 bonus when membership is approved
- £50 annual bonus payment in December
- Entry to annual raffle in June

Apply today to make sure you are one of the growing numbers of tenants who are already Members of this excellent incentive scheme.



Elaine Giles presenting raffle prize to Mr Gordon Leith

The next draw will take place in the week beginning 17th September 2007.

ANNUAL GAS SERVICING



We are required by law to carry out an annual servicing of gas appliances in your home (e.g. boiler). This service is imperative to ensure your safety and that of your neighbours and your co-operation in providing access for James Frew Engineers is appreciated.

If you do not co-operate with us in providing access for this important service, we will seek legal action to force access to your home and any resulting costs (which can be substantial) will be passed on to you.

BURNBANK GARDENS

The final phase of the Burnbank Gardens programme was completed on 14th August 2007, with 6 residents receiving keys to their newly refurbished homes.

The 3 HOMESTAKE properties will be handed over to the new residents within the next month or so.

OPTIONS FOR PAYING YOUR RENT

Rent payment facilities are available at the Post Office, or wherever you see the Payzone, Pay Point or e-pay signs. You can also pay your rent by direct debit, internet banking or telephone banking.

For further information please contact either Elaine Giles or Jennie Dunk.

Once again a big thank-you to all our Tenants who pay rent, in full, and on time.

If you are in arrears with your rent and have not agreed a repayment arrangement, it is very important that you contact Elaine Giles or Jennie Dunk without delay.

**FANCY A CHANGE?
A MUTUAL EXCHANGE MAY BE RIGHT UP
YOUR STREET!**

We currently operate a Mutual Exchange Scheme. This is a Scheme that allows tenants to "swap" houses if certain criteria are met.

A register containing details of people who have already expressed a wish to participate in this scheme is available at our offices.

The following is a sample of some exchanges currently held in our register.

REF	ACCOMMODATION	EXCHANGE FOR
482 HA	3apt Kent Road (Grd)	4apt West End, Charing Cross (Grd/1st)
486HA	3apt Byres Road (2nd)	4apt West End (1st)
705 HA	3apt Berkeley Street (Grd)	4/5 apt Charing Cross, Finneston, West End Grd/1st
723 HA	2apt Argyle Street (2nd)	2apt all areas considered (Top Floor)

Applications for exchanges will be considered by us where:

- both parties would benefit from the exchange
- overcrowding or underoccupancy would not occur
- GWHA Tenants have lived in their present accommodation for at least one year
- both parties intend to permanently reside at the new accommodation
- both parties are fully compliant with their present tenancy agreements
- the property is not part of a future improvement project

Anyone who wishes to take part in this scheme should contact Lauren Connolly.

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 GWHA property.

**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 condition 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.

**APPLYING FOR A
TRANSFER**

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 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 meet 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.

UNOFFICIAL SUB-LETTING

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

It is of particular concern to us when we find out that our homes are sub-let without our permission, or that a property has become a 'giro drop' when the Tenant is living elsewhere and collecting mail once a fortnight.

If you are aware this is happening in your area, please contact Jennie Dunk or Elaine Giles.