

Summer 2010 issue

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WE'RE LISTENING! Survey Finds Out What You Think

We're listening to what GHA tenants say!

Thanks to a very large survey of tenant opinion undertaken by the Association we have been able to establish what matters to you as a GHA tenant. The survey was particularly large - tenants in around 900 Glasgow Housing Association (GHA) homes in Maryhill and Ruchill were asked for their views.

Some of the findings of the survey were:

- Tenants value the concierge service in the multi storey flats close to Ledgowan Hall. *The concierge service is vital and is understandably well liked by tenants. We are committed to keeping this service if tenants vote to transfer to us.*
- Some GHA tenants said they don't know enough about Maryhill HA. *So we are working hard to address that and keep you informed.*
- What are you doing about sheltered housing? *The sheltered housing development at Orangate has received a visit by us to explain what is happening. We greatly value the sheltered tenants – we have our own sheltered housing development - and will ensure we meet their needs.*
- There appears to be an issue with homes that are "re-let" as this, on

occasions, can lead to problems. *We work with Glasgow Community and Safety services with the aim of reducing anti-social behaviour and criminal activity within or affecting our tenancies.*

- In one particular area there was concern from tenants living above shops about the state of closes. *Keeping closes clean and meeting the high expectations of people living in the building is a priority for us. We will be looking closely at how we can improve this service.*
 - Lawlessness is a concern in some areas. *The Association understands that this is a very real concern to tenants. We believe in having a close personal working relationship with the community and the police to deal with these issues. That is why we have a tenants organisation and neighbourhood watch scheme in every area.*
 - Some tenants raised concerns about drug dealing nearby. *We have a zero tolerance attitude to this menace. It will NEVER be tolerated and any evidence of such conduct will be investigated and the police involved.*
- Willy Briody, Director Maryhill Housing Association, said: "This survey gives us an important snapshot of what GHA tenants are saying. We're listening carefully to what you are saying and want to hear more of your ideas whether you are an

existing Maryhill tenant or currently with GHA. Only by listening can we fully understand the needs of the people we serve."

We hope to get approval for our business plan from GHA's Board later in the summer. If we get approval GHA will send statutory consultation notices to tenants and organise a ballot for stock transfer. Only GHA tenants will be voting in the proposed ballot which should take place towards the end of the year. There will be no change for existing Maryhill tenants.



Director to visit residents' groups over summer

Willy Briody is to make three visits to three local Residents' Groups over the summer. These will take place as follows :-

Parkhill R.A. to be held at Ruchill Community Centre, Bilsland Drive. Wednesday 14th July 2010 at 6.30pm

Burgh Hall Village R.A. to be held at Shiskine Sheltered Housing Development, Shiskine Drive. Monday 2nd August 2010 at 2pm

Eastpark R.A. to be held in the offices of MHA , 45 Garrioch Road. Monday 2nd August 2010 at 7pm

The visits to East Park, Parkhill and Burgh Hall Village Residents' Associations are designed to explain the process of Second Stage Transfer to EXISTING Maryhill Housing Association tenants.

This is extremely important as it allows the Association to keep existing tenants informed of why it is taking place and what it means for the Association.

The Association understands there will be many questions and we will seek to answer them at our Resident's Association visits.

All Welcome



OPEN DAYS TO HEAR YOUR VIEWS

The Association held three Open Days to inform people of SST and listen to views. They took place at Ledgowan Hall, the new Maryhill leisure centre and Ruchill Community Centre. It gave us the opportunity to go into more details about what the proposed vote means.

Thank you to everyone who came along.

Inside your Maryhill Mercury

- Director To Visit Residents' Groups Over Summer.
- What Does SST Mean For Existing Tenants.?
- Look Out For Our Slogan.
- Minister Visits Halls Saved For Maryhill...
- and much, much more

WE'VE DONE IT BEFORE AND IT WAS A BIG SUCCESS

The Barnes Road Stock Transfer of 1994

As Maryhill Housing Association prepares for the campaign on second stage transfer it is worth remembering that a transfer of homes has taken place before. And what a success that was!

Sixteen years ago in 1994 homes were transferred from Glasgow District Council to the Association AFTER an overwhelming vote in favour by tenants. More than 90 per cent of tenants voted yes to the transfer.

Since then the area has been greatly improved with new homes in an area which now attracts housebuilders creating homes to buy as well. The Association transformed this part of Ruchill with new housing and in so doing transformed the lives of families living there.

The transfer of 367 homes from the local authority was followed by a significant demolition and new build programme. Today there are around 220 homes made up of Housing Association properties and privately owned homes. Prior to the transfer over 50 per cent of the homes were "void" properties which were impossible to let because no one wanted to live there.

Bobby Pollock, Community Development Officer at Maryhill, joined the staff in the early 1990's with a specific remit to work on the Barnes Road project. He said: "The Barnes Road initiative was a significant challenge for the Association. Up till that time Maryhill was largely involved in refurbishing tenements in Maryhill Road. So this was something different. But looking back it was a major success and breathed new life into an area of Ruchill where few people wanted to live. Now it is a thriving community."

Crucial to the giant project was involvement of local people and the Barnes Road Action Group made up of local residents worked closely with the Association on the decision-making process.



Great Homes... some of the new properties in the Barnes Road area.

Willy Briody, Director of Maryhill Housing Association added: "Barnes Road was a significant step forward for this Housing Association and marked a new phase in our work as a community-based housing provider. It also shows that we had the backing of local people to transfer their homes to our Association and the improvements carried out in the years since show what a success it can be."

One of the tenants who moved into the new homes created in the Barnes Road area is Les Currie.

He is in no doubt it was a great idea saying:

"It shows just what can be done by a Housing Association like Maryhill which is run by the community FOR the community. Everyone who knows about this transfer realises what a great success it has been."

MINISTER VISITS THE HALLS SAVED FOR MARYHILL

Praise For "Cultural Gem" As Alex Neil Sees First Hand
How Historic Halls Are Being Brought Back To Life



Looking to the future... Burgh Halls Trust Chair Irene Scott with the Minister. In the background are two of the stained glass panels from the halls.

THE campaign to save Maryhill's historic Burgh Halls took a major step forward this spring.

132 years to the day after the Halls were opened, Housing and Communities Minister Alex Neil visited the ongoing £9.2 million restoration project, which will breathe new life into the iconic Halls and save them for the community.

The Minister's visit follows a contribution from the Scottish Government's Town Centre Regeneration Fund of £1.8 million - the largest single piece of funding in the £9.2 million total. While at Maryhill he signed a steel beam which forms part of structural steelwork which is ongoing at present.

Maryhill Burgh Halls Trust raised this remarkable sum to secure a bright future for the treasured halls and in doing so recapture the splendour of one of the city's best loved buildings. Work began in November 2009 and will be completed in May 2011.

Once restored, the Halls will include a modern public hall, cafe, 11 offices, a commercial and a community recording studio, a nursery, meeting rooms and courtyard garden.

More than 5 years hard work has been put into developing proposals for the project. The Board of the Trust, which comprises local people and representatives from partners Maryhill Housing Association, Cube Housing Association and Glasgow City Council have worked tirelessly to deliver the restoration.

Mr Neil said: "The £60 million Town Centre Regeneration Fund has succeeded in encouraging dynamic public and private sector organisations to get involved in regeneration projects that will have a lasting and widespread effect. The refurbishment of the Maryhill Burgh Halls will restore an invaluable cultural asset in Glasgow, upgrading it as a place for the local community to meet and socialise."

What does SST mean for existing tenants?

Many existing Maryhill Housing Association tenants have been asking : What does Second Stage Transfer mean for me and my home?

You will still receive the same high level of service. The vote on whether to agree to Second Stage Transfer from the GHA to Maryhill HA only affects tenants who are in the current Maryhill Local Housing Organisation. Their landlord is the GHA.

Only LHO tenants will be eligible to vote on whether they want to join Maryhill Housing Association. If a majority of those voting vote yes (and subject to Scottish Government approval) the homes will transfer and Maryhill

will become a bigger Housing Association than it is at present.

Be assured that the same high level of service you receive will be maintained. If the vote is successful many more tenants currently with the GHA in Maryhill and Ruchill will start to benefit from the high quality services we already provide as a landlord to existing tenants. Remember we are here to answer your questions and provide any details that you may need on Second Stage Transfer.

You can contact us at the office or call us on 0141 946 2466 or e mail us at yourhomewithus@maryhill.org.uk

Our website address is www.maryhill.org.uk

LOOK OUT FOR OUR SLOGAN!

Maryhill's message for second stage transfer is an increasingly familiar sight. Our slogan - "Maryhill Housing Association - Your Home With Us" is being used throughout the campaign which, subject to GHA Board approval of the business plan for transfer, is expected to lead to a vote towards the end of the year.

Striking and eye-catching, it was devised by Association staff member Angela Cameron.



Development

The Association is pleased to provide an update in this edition of the Maryhill Mercury on our Development Programme.

Campbell Street New Build

The Association is in the process of completing the final end of defects period inspections to the remaining properties. There are still some outstanding repairs to be completed and the contractors performance in this area continues to be closely monitored. The Association wishes to thank all residents who participated in the Design Feedback Survey. Overall 97% of residents surveyed were satisfied or highly satisfied with their new houses. We will be trying to improve the style of questionnaire to make it easier and less time consuming for residents to complete based on feedback from the survey. The Association will also try to prioritise additional storage space in future developments as this was highlighted as a something that should be improved, particularly in relation to kitchen storage.

Botany New Build

The Botany project is due to be completed by September 2010 and the first handovers are expected mid to late July.

Discussions are ongoing with GCC DRS to address environmental improvements/enhancements on completion of new build.

The Consultation group visited the site in April and below is a progress photo taken on site:

The Consultation Group meet regularly to discuss project progress. Should you wish to attend any of the meetings please contact Phyllis Stewart, Development Assistant on 948 1102, pstewart@maryhill.org.uk to be added to the mailing list.



Ruchill Phase 5

The 52 unit new build project at Ruchill Phase 5 (Hugo/Shuna Street) is nearing completion. The first handovers are anticipated late June and completion is anticipated by the Autumn. The development will be a mixture of main door houses and flats and is being built in partnership with Maryhill Housing Association, Horizon Housing Association and the Glasgow Homelessness Partnership. Please see below progress photos of the development taken recently.



Maryhill Locks Phase 2

The Association is working in partnership with the Glasgow Canal Partnership and GHA to deliver the next phase of regeneration, 125 units of new housing, in the Maryhill Locks area. The next phase will include 106 units for social rent (53 for MHA, 53 for GHA) with the balance of units being developed for a mid market rent or low cost home ownership initiative.

The tender for the project has been approved and a preferred contractor has been identified. The partners to the project are progressing the legal agreements and statutory consents require for the development and a site start later in the year is expected.

Maryhill Primary School



Artists impression of one of the NSSE Flats



Artists impression of the development

The Association continues to work closely with the Consultation Group to develop this exciting project, with a site start anticipated in the next few weeks. The project involves 19 new build properties and 9 refurbished units. The project will take just over a year to complete. The new build units will be a mixture of flats and houses. The C-listed Victorian sandstone school building itself will be refurbished and converted to offer a variety of types and sizes of accommodation suitable for two, three and four persons in two and three apartment units.

The properties will be spectacular, benefitting from interesting features including floor space at mezzanine level, private sun terraces, enclosed courtyard, high specification of fittings throughout and secure private parking. The flats are available for purchase through the Scottish Government's support for low cost home ownership, through the New Supply Shared Equity scheme – commonly referred to as NSSE 'Nessie'. These properties are primarily to meet the needs of first time buyers. There will be fuller marketing details available over the forthcoming months. Meanwhile if you would like to be added to our NSSE mailing list or wish to find out more about these properties for sale please contact Phyllis Stewart Development Assistant on 0141 948 1102, email pstewart@maryhill.org.uk or simply call into the office and speak with Phyllis.

If you would simply like to be kept informed of the progress of the Maryhill Primary School Project and the work of the Consultation Group, again please speak to Phyllis.

Development Opportunities

The Association is currently exploring several other development opportunities in the Maryhill and Ruchill areas.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Name: Donna Birrell, Development Manager
Direct line: 0141 948 1119
Email address: dbirrell@maryhill.org.uk

Housing Management

Housing Management Performance 2009/10

In 2009/10 the Association has made significant improvements in reducing the time to relet empty houses, which has in turn reduced the amount of rental income lost for void houses. We have continued the trend from 2008/9 to relet houses on an average of 22 days.

You will see that recovery of debt from both rent and factoring charges has been challenging in the last year. This may be partly contributed

to the difficult economic climate affecting our residents.

The Association recorded increases in the levels of debt owed in both rent arrears and Factoring in 2009/10 and is currently reviewing the management processes to help reduce the levels of debt.

Over the year the Association had seven evictions for non payment of rent and the Association has taken legal action against owners to recover Factoring charges owed.

2009/2010 Housing Management Performance Report Key Performance Indicators

	Target	2009/10	2008/9	2007/8
Nos Relet Days - All voids	21	22	28	36
% relet < 2 weeks	40	35.4	22.6	22.0
% relet 2-4 weeks	30	43.75	35.5	14.8
Lost Rent from Empty Houses as % of Rental Income (Void Loss)	0.80%	0.32	0.8	0.8
Current Tenant Non Tech Arrears (no HB due) as % of Rental Income	2.50%	3.35	3.2	2.7
Factoring Arrears	6%	24%	20%	-

Welfare Rights

Are You A Single Parent And Need Advice?

In addition to the Welfare Rights service offered by the Association, there is an organisation that may be able to aid you in various areas of your life. This ranges from meet other parents in a similar situation as yourselves to legal advice, training education, childcare, budgeting and money matters. One Parent Families Scotland is located at 100 Wellington Street or you can call 0808 801 0323 (free call, this includes mobiles) for further information.

INFORMATION CONTACT:

Name: David Atkinson, Welfare Rights Officer
Direct line: 0141-948-1106
Email address: datkinson@maryhill.org.uk

Complaints Received by the Association

For the period from January to April 2010 the Association has received one complaint (water ingress) which went no further than stage 1.

Stage 1	
MHA Director	1
Stage 2	
MHA Committee	0
Stage 3	
SPSO	0

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Name: Lilian McPake
Direct line: 0141 948 1121
Email address: lmpake@maryhill.org.uk

MARYHILL ONLINE

The Association, in partnership with Culture and Sport Glasgow, continues to provide IT courses for tenants of all ages. Courses run for approximately 8 weeks and are held on a Friday afternoon. Courses are open to all MHA and GHA tenants. The current course finishes at the end of June 2010 and has proved to be very successful.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Name: Tricia Fossett
Direct line: 0141 276 0920
Email address: lmpake@maryhill.org.uk

IN May tenants in five areas of Glasgow voted to transfer ownership of their homes from Glasgow Housing Association (GHA) to community-based Housing Associations.

Tenants in Cathcart, Levernwood, Holmbyre, Wellhouse and Blairtummock Local Housing Organisations (LHO's) were asked to give their views on Secondary Stage Transfer (SST).

A majority of tenants who voted in all five LHO's did so in favour of transferring a total of 1,037 houses to community-based housing organisations.

The ballots, in which tenants voted by post, text, phone or online, began on Wednesday 21st April and ran for 21 days until Wednesday 12th May.

Sandra Forsythe, Tenant Chair of GHA said: "We are committed to moving forward with the Second Stage Transfer of homes from GHA where it is what tenants want, and we are delighted another five transfers are going ahead. This is a tribute to the hard work and dedication of GHA staff and staff from the five community-based Housing Associations over the past few years."

TENANTS' SAY YES

Voters across the city choose to move from GHA to Local Housing Associations



Eight second stage transfers have gone ahead since March 2009, bringing the total number of homes transferred from GHA so far to 2,898.

When the five transfers which have just been voted on go ahead it will bring the total

number of homes transferred from GHA to community-based Housing Associations to 3,935.

GHA is looking towards the ownership of up to 16,500 homes passing to community-based Housing Associations in 2010 and 2011.

A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR MARYHILL LOCKS

*The Shape Of Things To Come...
The Maryhill Locks Development.
Image reproduced by kind permission of Architects Hypostyle*



Plans to build new homes and create a vibrant, popular community in Maryhill Locks are moving forward.

A range of partners are working on the proposals including Glasgow Housing Association (GHA), Maryhill Housing Association, Glasgow City Council, the Scottish Government and Isis Waterside Regeneration.

The plans for the Maryhill Locks area are part of a wider regeneration project across the city which will, over a number of years, see hundreds of homes built in eight different communities. Over time, the aim is to build a range of homes, both to rent and to buy, which are the kind of properties people want to live in - and to provide the kind of amenities and facilities which help create a real and lasting sense of community. What do the plans for Maryhill involve? The site earmarked for the

plans is bounded by the Forth and Clyde Canal, Collina Street and Gairbraid Avenue, and includes the areas known locally as The Botany and The Valley.

The regeneration of the site will be in a number of phases. Work is already under way by Maryhill Housing Association on Phase 1, which comprises 35 new homes on the Botany part of the site. Later this year work will start on a

further 125 homes in the Valley - 106 of which will be for social rent, with Maryhill Housing Association and the GHA owning 53 each, and 19 will be homes to buy.

It's hoped that further phases of regeneration on the site will create a mixed community offering people a choice of housing - including homes to buy, homes for social and mid-market rent and shared ownership - as well as a range of local amenities.

A spokesperson for Maryhill Housing Association said: "This is an exciting and significant project which will bring about a number of visual and social improvements to the area. The quality of the housing, combined with the latest environmental technology and the fantastic canal side setting, will make this a desirable new destination within the city".

Rats



Maryhill Housing Association works closely with Glasgow City Council's Land and Environmental Services Pest Control Officers to eradicate rats. The Pest Control offered by the Council is a free service for the investigation and treatment of rat infestations. Maryhill Housing Association follows recommendations from the Pest Control Officers and the following advice has been provided by Pest Control to help prevent a Rat or Rodent Infestation.

Breeding Habits

Rats are found worldwide and are considered a pest because they can cause structural damage, spread disease and compete with us for food.

Rat populations can develop very quickly in suitable conditions. If sufficient food and shelter are available, they can breed throughout the year with a female producing 7 litters of 8 to 10 offspring.

Their normal lifespan, in the wild, is about 18 months

Signs

Rats are very much creatures of habit and tend to follow routes with which they are comfortable. This means that, if the activity is outdoors, you may find distinct trails where their activities wear away vegetation. Also look out for droppings which are dark coloured and about the size and shape of a sultana. As the rat is a burrowing animal you may find signs of this outdoors. Burrow entrances will be between 70 - 120 mm in diameter

The rat exudes an oily film, to protect its fur, and this can leave distinctive smear marks along surfaces, with which they come into contact and footprints may be found in mud or dust.

Rats are very destructive creatures and you may also find damaged foodstuffs and packaging, cables, pipes and woodwork. Rats need to gnaw on hard materials to control the size of their front teeth so you may find signs of this. It does not mean that they are feeding on these materials.

Prevention

To prevent re-infestation and to assist with any treatment that is being carried out, it is important that you carry out hygiene work which the Pest Control Officer recommends. Hygiene controls are essentially depriving the rat of any food source, other than the poison bait.

As well as making these recommendations, the Pest Control Officer will be able to offer you practical advice on how to resolve any proofing or hygiene issues.

Things To Consider

- Remove all food sources - clear food away
- Store refuse securely - secure bin lids
- Rats are very resourceful creatures and will exploit any feeding opportunity which comes their way. From a pest control point of view, it is preferred that you did not feed birds whilst the Pest Control treatment is in progress.
- Make sure any pet food is stored securely and that any spillages are cleaned
- Clear up any dog mess (rats really will eat almost anything)
- Remove any source of water (turn any container, that might collect rain water, upside down)
- Clear any blocked drains
- Do not let gardens become overgrown - cut back vegetation especially near buildings
- Remove any piles of material, which may have accumulated in your garden
- Order bulk refuse disposal as soon as possible to prevent rats in backcourt and garden areas

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Name: Angela Cameron,
Housing Manager

Direct line: 0141-948-1110

Email address: acameron@maryhill.org.uk



EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBER

IF YOU NEED TO CONTACT MARYHILL HOUSING ASSOCIATION IN AN EMERGENCY OUTWITH NORMAL HOURS THIS IS THE TELEPHONE NUMBER TO USE IS 0800-328-2931 REMEMBER THIS NUMBER IS FOR OUT OF HOURS EMERGENCIES ONLY!