



Blochairn Bulletin



Intro

Welcome to our new style Newsletter the "Blochairn Bulletin". I hope you find it useful. We plan to issue one every two to three months to keep you up to date with what is happening within Blochairn, the local community and provide other useful information.

A bit about me. I joined the Management Committee in June 2024 and was elected Chair in September 2024. I work for another housing association so I know the challenges facing the housing sector and the ones Blochairn is facing too. I look forward to working with my fellow Committee Members and the staff team to deliver our key objectives for the coming year. You will find these inside.

Before I go on it is with great sadness, we report that our longest serving member of staff has moved on after a 34-year stint! I am sure all of you know Angela and we will sadly miss her. Angela says farewell below. We wish her well in her new role and know that wherever she is she will flourish.

Patricia Gallagher, Interim Director has also moved on and again we thank her for her contribution and wish her well for the future. Wendy McCracken replaces Patricia and Wendy brings with her a wealth of sector knowledge. A full update on the staff team is inside.

We have also said goodbye to a few Committee Members, and I would like to take the opportunity to thank them all for their dedication over a number of years. We also welcome new Members and we have a list of our current Management Committee inside too.

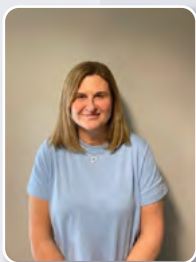
We hope you find the articles inside useful and would really welcome any feedback from you on the content of the Bulletin and anything you would like to see included in the future.

Kind Regards

Ady
Chair



Goodbye From Angela



"It is with mixed emotions that I must tell you all that after nearly 34 years working at Blochairn HA I have decided it is time to move on.

This has been more than just a job to me, I have built strong connections with so many people over the years and leaving here has brought back many great memories and also many sad ones.

It really has been great being part of the Blochairn community and it has been such a difficult decision for me to leave.

Blochairn has been transformed since I started here in 1991 and it is nice to think that I have played a part in that.

With best Wishes, Angela



Some pictures from Angela's farewell get together

Our Plans for 2025/26

Transfer of Engagements

The last update you received in the Winter 2024 Newsletter advised you that discussions with a possible partner had ceased until ongoing issues had been resolved.

These issues still remain and will do until we can confirm funding requirements for the cladding remediation works and address the connected health & safety issues.

However, at the same time we are doing this we are looking at our long-term financial plans to see how best to move forward. We need to establish all the assets and the liabilities of Blochairn. Once we know the expected income and the costs, particularly the cladding remediation works and how this can be funded, we will know the financial position of Blochairn and can then make plans in consultation with residents about how we move forward.



Our Key Objectives for 2025/26

The management committee at a recent meeting took stock and agreed that the following are the key objectives we will be concentrating on in the coming year.

Strategic Objective 1

Provide safe, high-quality homes



Strategic Objective 2

Enhance customer service and performance



Strategic Objective 3

Financial security, affordability and value for money



Underpinned by:

Strategic Objective 4

Regulatory & Statutory Compliance



We are working on our delivery plan for the year and how we will measure progress against it by setting timescales and key performance indicators.

Useful Information

The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) is about to publish our engagement Plan. The Plan sets out how it will engage with Blochairn and why.

We are assessed as being “Non-compliant – working towards compliance”. The main issues are about cladding and fire safety within the Blochairn Place buildings.

See section on “Our Properties” for more details on this.

Once published we will place the Engagement Plan on our website. Management Committee and the staff team are working hard to address the issues and return Blochairn to being fully compliant.

Our Properties



Cladding Update: Blochairn Place

As you may be aware, the method used to fit the Cladding to the buildings in Blochairn Place does not meet the required fire safety standard, which was issued following the Grenfell Tragedy.

We are currently identifying what works need to be done to rectify this. Once we know we can then look to obtain some further funding from the Scottish Government's Cladding Remediation Programme Fund.

We have already secured up to £200,000 grant funding towards the cost of carrying out what are known as Single Building Assessments (SBAs). These surveys provide the information needed by us to confirm what works must be done to rectify the cladding issues. The SBAs were out to tender and a contractor is currently being appointed. Residents in the buildings impacted will be notified when the surveyors will be on site. Some of the cladding has to be removed to allow the surveys to take place. It is expected that we will have the results of the surveys by the end of May. From the surveys we can establish the works required and the costs. We are keeping the Scottish Government's Cladding Remediation team up to date with what we are doing.

Investment in Properties

As you know planned works to the properties was put on hold. We are revisiting this at the moment as we need to carry out essential cyclical works such as painting and gutter cleaning. We will have more on this in the next Bulletin.

Our People

Management Committee - Update

Name	Position
Ady Tester	Chair
Martin Forrest	Vice Chair
Colin Turnbull	Secretary
Leanne McGowan	Committee Member
Aleksandra Lis	Committee Member
Kim Stuyck	Committee Member
Anthony Carroll	Committee Member
Gordon Laurie	Committee Member
Lawrie West	Committee Member

A special thanks to Manal Eshelli, Frances Tierney and Julie-Ann Cloherty who have stood down from the Management Committee over the last few months. Their contribution over the years is much appreciated.

Meet the Staff

Wendy McCracken

Interim Director

I have worked in the housing sector for almost 40 years and have joined Blochairn to assist moving the association forward in the best interest of tenants.



Angela Wood

Operations Manager

I am excited to join the team as Operations Manager. I bring over 20 years experience of working within community-based housing associations in Glasgow.



Jim Chalmers

Housing Services Assistant

I have worked in the Social Housing Sector in various roles over 24 years including as a Regeneration Officer and Housing Officer. I obtained my Diploma in Housing Studies in 2010 and always look to improve my skills and knowledge within housing.

I am responsible for assisting with rent management, anti-social behaviour, estate management, repairs and the maintenance of properties and I am committed to providing excellent customer service.



Tracy McLaughlin

Housing Services Manager

I have worked in housing for over 30 years in various roles including Housing Benefits Officer, Housing Services Officer and Senior Housing Officer. I obtained my Diploma in Housing Studies at Glasgow University in 2000. I am responsible for allocations, rent management, anti-social behavior, estate management, repairs and maintenance and I am committed to excellent customer service delivery.



Lorna Leishman

Finance Officer

I have been working here since June 2022, and I enjoy my job very much. I have worked in the sector 20 years now, all of which has been in the finance roles.

I am responsible for the day-to-day processing of invoices, payments, and payroll as well as any other financial transactions and compare these to budgets which are reported quarterly to the management committee allowing them to see how we are performing financially.



Andy McDonald

Admin Assistant

I will have been at Blochairn for almost two years and am responsible for dealing with correspondence and providing an effective reception service for enquiries. I also ensure that records, both manually and electronically, are held, maintained and updated in a clear, concise way. I process repairs and other maintenance requests and provide support to the other members of the team in their daily duties.



Rent Consultation Response

We wrote to you in February 2025 to ask you what you thought about the 4.5% rent increase proposal. We only received 11 responses. Of those responses 8 agreed with the increase and 3 disagreed.

Our rents are low compared to other similar organisation which you can see from the table below.

Type	Our Weekly Rent	Others Average	Difference £	Difference %
2 Apt	£71.00	£84.31	£13.31pw less	18.74% less
3 Apt	£84.96	£91.69	£6.73pw less	7.92% less
4 Apt	£95.50	£104.00	£8.51pw less	8.91% less
5 Apt	£127.28	£115.30	£11.98pw less	9.41% more

***Comparative RSLs: Copperworks, Craigdale, Drumchapel, Gardeen, Hawthorn, Kingsridge Cleddans, Lochfield, Molendinar, Provanhall, Ruchazie, Yorkhill and Cadder.**

However, other associations are providing full repairs and maintenance services whereas Blochairn is not. We discuss this in more detail under “our properties”.

Remember... if you are having problems paying your rent or other bills please contact the office

Remember... if you are on Universal Credit to update your diary with your new rent from 1 April 2025

Remember... to let us know if you have any household or personal circumstance changes as we want to make sure you don't miss out on any service or entitlement you may be due

Our Area

As residents we know you want to see your area looking neat and tidy. We can all help with this. Below you will find some useful information and contacts.

Landscaping

Spring is just around the corner and hopefully we will get a little bit more sunshine this year. Last year GM Landscaping made the place look great and they will be the maintenance contractor again this year. The operatives have done a great job to date, and we hope that you are enjoying the improvement in the service provided by them. If you have any comments good or bad regarding grounds maintenance then please let us know so we can provide the best service possible to keep the area looking at its best.

Bulk Uplift Update

You will have received a text to advise you not to place bulk items out until further notice. This is due to issues at the collection depot and is being experienced by all residents. We will update you by text as the situation is resolved.

Early Closure of Blochairn Materials Recycling Facility

As part of the Council's budget cuts, the above facility is being closed earlier than anticipated.

This should help reduce the flies problem and the smells which originate from the facility.

Pest Control

Introduction

Pests such as rats are always present in urban areas, and we know that it can be distressing seeing rats in your neighbourhood.

Rats seek out food, water and shelter. Sewers and drains are common rat dwellings, as well as hidey holes in sheds and outbuildings. We need to treat the source, which may include structures or holes that rats can live and shelter in.

Prevention is the best long term solution to get rid of rats. Everyone must work together to help control rats. It is easier to prevent infestations than to remove them. Killing them is not a long term solution as other rats will simply move into the newly available spaces if the food sources and shelter remain.

Treatment

We strongly recommend that residents and businesses get treatment conducted on their property if they have any concerns. The more people who have treatment conducted, the sooner the problem will be resolved.

Please note that Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability (NRS) Pest Control **CANNOT** put poison and traps in open spaces such as back lanes and spare ground as this poses a risk to pets and wildlife, and people.

Prevention

Incorrect storage of business and household waste, fly tipping and littering can make pest problems worse by encouraging rats. Waste should be bagged, and placed in a suitable bin and bin lids should be kept closed at all times. Bagged waste should **never** be placed outside the bin.



To reduce the risk of rats affecting your area take the following steps:

- Keep your garden free of waste and rubbish
- Place all rubbish in your bins and keep the lids closed, particularly the food and garden waste (brown) bin and residual waste (green) bin
- If you have waste, you cannot fit in your bin you can take this to one of our Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) free of charge. However, if you use your recycling bins to sort your rubbish, you should have enough space in your residual waste (green) bin
- If you put out seeds or nuts for birds and other wildlife, clear any leftover food away at the end of the day. Rats will leave their nest at night to look for food and will eat any food that falls from wildlife feeders or tables. If you do not clear food away before night fall you will be **feeding the rats rather than the birds**
- Keep bins away from a fence or wall where possible as rats can climb then jump onto a bin to reach food
- Rats only need a gap of 15 mm to get through to gain access, so to prevent any access to your house seal up any gaps in walls or around pipes with cement mortar. **N.B Foam sealant is not rodent proof**

Who to Contact

If you need to report a pest issue within a residential property, complete the Report a Pest Form on the Glasgow City Council website www.glasgow.gov.uk/pestcontrol or call 0141 287 1059 option 4.

If your bin collection is missed, please report this as soon as possible on the Glasgow City Council website using the online form at www.glasgow.gov.uk/missedbincollection

NRS Public Health may be able to assist in cases where there is a significant amount of waste, rubbish or other food sources at a location that may encourage rats. This might be a backcourt filled with black bags or a large fly tip area. They may also be able to assist if you suspect that a business or shop is encouraging pests/rats by poor waste management. If you have the property address you can email NRS Public Health at LES-PublicHealth@glasgow.gov.uk or by calling 0141 287 1059.

MyGlasgow App

You can use our app for a whole range of services, from requesting a bulky waste collection to reporting fly tipping or graffiti. Our "More Services" section also has handy links to useful information.

You can download MyGlasgow App from the App store and Google Play



Scan QR Code to download the document in

- Arabic
- Urdu
- Kurdish
- Mandarin
- Slovakian
- Punjabi
- Farsi
- Polish



The common stair is your only means of escape in the event of a fire.



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

- 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
- 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



Glasgow City Council Services

You can report the following problems via 0141 287 1058 or on line at www.glasgow.gov.uk/environmentalissues

- Litter
- Dog Fouling
- Graffiti
- Fly Posting
- Fly Tipping (illegally dumping waste)



Did you know... GMAP debt advice and welfare rights service is open to both tenants and owners

Our Services

You may already be aware that GEMAP is a money advice charity working in partnership with Blochairn Housing Association providing benefits, debt, and financial capability advice to tenants. We wanted to give you some information to let you know how easy it is to get help.

GEMAP Scotland

How we can help:

At GEMAP Scotland we see first-hand the challenges that people are facing with the rising cost of living, difficulty paying bills and struggles to afford essentials.

We understand that this can cause worry and stress, but we want you to know that you're not alone and that we can help.

GEMAP can help by:

- Communicating with creditors on your behalf
- Applying breathing space to accounts for you to get advice
- Negotiating reduced repayments to creditors
- Asking creditors to freeze interest and recovery action on debts
- Supporting you with your budget
- Advising on debt options specific to your circumstances and supporting you to put these in place
- Supporting you to open credit union and bank accounts
- Applying for grant assistance
- Claiming and appealing benefit decisions
- Supporting parents to claim Free School Meals and clothing grant entitlements
- Helping with energy costs
- Providing benefit checks
- Assist with claiming any benefits

We provide appointments to deal with a wide range of money issues through our partnership with Blochairn Housing Association. With the difficult times people are facing at the moment please don't suffer in silence. Reach out for free, confidential advice from our experienced advisers.

Contacting Us:

Please call the housing office on **0141 553 1601** and ask for an appointment with GEMAP.

Our Blochairn Results

Between **1 April** and **31 December 2024** **73 household engaged** resulting in **94 successful claims** for various assistance resulting in income totalling **£450,669 being awarded**.

Please contact the office to make an appointment with GEMAP.

We Need You

Membership

We are keen for our tenants and residents to become Members. It is only £1 to become a Shareholder and means you can come along to the Annual General Meeting and hear first hand about what is happening at Blochairn. Being a member also means that you can also apply to join the management committee to have your say and help shape the future of Blochairn.

Residents Group

We would like to set up a resident's group to consult with you on our policies, procedures and future plans. We know everyone has busy lives, but we really want you to shape Blochairn's services. Please contact the office if you would be interested in getting involved.

Other Services

We can signpost you to other services such as financial capability assistance and a tenancy sustainment. Contact the office for more information.

Useful Contacts

Gas

SGN – **0800 111 999**

Electricity

0800 092 9290 (landline)

03301 012222 (mobile)

Emergency Contact Numbers for out of hours and public holidays

Central Heating Faults

James Frew – **01294 468 113** or
0870 242 5037

All other repairs

City Building – **0800 595 595**

Useful Information

Opening hours

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday: **9-1pm, 1.45-5pm**

Thursday: **9-1pm (closed for staff training)**

Friday: **9-3:30pm**

Upcoming Public Holidays

Easter: **Friday 18 April** and **Monday 21 April**

May Bank holidays: **Monday 5 May, Monday 23 May** and **Friday 26 May**