



TENANTS HANDBOOK

1. Introduction

Your Tenancy Agreement is the legal contract between you and the Association. This Handbook is a guide to your Tenancy Agreement.

The Association was registered in 1990 to improve sub-standard houses transferred from Glasgow District Council and to improve the general, physical environment of the area. Houses were improved between 1992 and 2002, including demolition and new build. In 2011, 101 houses were built on the former Depot Site on Blochairn Road, including 31 for sale. The Association owns 292 houses for rent and provides a factoring service for 33 owners.

Mission Statement

The Association will provide good quality accommodation and manage and maintain it to the highest possible standard. The Association will also help to regenerate Royston in partnership with other agencies.

Management Committee

The Association is run by a Committee, mainly local residents, who are volunteers committed to the improvement of the Blochairn area and who are elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The Committee has overall responsibility and sets strategy and policy.

Getting Involved

Involving local people is vital to making sure that the Association is responsible and accountable to people living in the Blochairn area. If you are over 18 years (16 years if a Tenant) you can become a member and shareholder by buying a £1 share. Members can attend and vote at the AGM and stand for election to the Management Committee.

STAFF

The Association employs four full time staff members and a temporary Finance Assistant. Additional services are provided by Support Staff.

Michael Carberry, Director – michael@blochairn.org – 553 0023
Angela MacDonald, Housing Services Officer – angela@blochairn.org – 553 0022
Bronwyn Thomson, Housing Services Assistant – bronwyn@blochairn.org – 553 0021
Patricia Davidson, Corporate Services Officer – patricia@blochairn.org – 553 0024
Lorna Leishman, Finance Assistant - lorna@blochairn.org 553 0020

Additional Support Staff:

Financial Capability Officer – Maureen McGowan - **Tuesday**
Tenancy Support Officer – Geraldine Burgess- **Thursday**
Welfare Rights Advisor – Stephen Brown- **Wednesday**

We can make an appointment for you – just call our office on 0141 553 1601

Things the support staff can help with:

- Assessment of benefits, Universal credit claims and benefit issues
- Fighting Sanctions
- Claiming Personal independence Payments
- Getting help from The Scottish Welfare Fund
- Getting help with Tax Credits
- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Reduction and issues
- Living with debt including- Managing money, Debt Management Plans, writing off debts, Negotiated settlements, Debt Arrangement Scheme, Trust deeds, Bankruptcy (sequestration), Temporary Payment Plans, Minimum Assets Process
- Budgeting and Financial Planning including Saving & Borrowing
- Insurance
- Opening Bank and credit union accounts
- Consumers' rights
- Help with keeping your accommodation/tenancy
- Company and/or advocacy when you need to visit or call a service
- Life skills, learning groups (e.g. Literacy, healthy eating)
- Dealing with energy suppliers and utility suppliers

2. MOVING IN TO YOUR NEW HOME

- **Keys.** You will receive at least 2 sets of keys. We recommend that you leave a spare set with someone you can trust. If keys are lost or you are locked out it is difficult to force access without causing damage to your door. You would be responsible for the cost of the damage and any call out charge
- **Meter Readings.** Take meter readings as soon as you get the keys to make sure that you are not charged for power or fuel used by the previous tenant
- **Technical Help.** Contact us if you are unsure about how things work
- **New Address.** Tell other organisations about your new address, particularly the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP), so that you do not lose any benefits
- **Insurance.** We insure the building but **not** your House Contents. We recommend that you have House Contents insurance. Don't wait until something happens. By then, it is too late. We can provide information about low cost home insurance providers
- **Settling in Visit.** We will visit a few months after you move in to find out whether you are settling in. This is also a chance for you to ask questions about your tenancy and our services

3. LIVING IN YOUR HOME

We want you to enjoy a reasonable quality of life in your home. Everyone should look after their property and have respect and consideration for their neighbours, particularly in a tenement building.

Being a Good Neighbour and Having Respect for Others

- You are responsible for the behaviour of your household and visitors. Make sure that you, your family and visitors do not cause nuisance or disturbance to others. Consider neighbours when playing music, having friends in, letting children play, etc. Persistent nuisance is a serious breach of the Tenancy Agreement
- If you have a dispute with a neighbour and can resolve this on friendly terms between yourselves that's fine but we recommend that you contact us for advice
- Contact the Police if there is a serious disturbance. Let us know as soon as possible after the incident. We will ask Police for an independent report. You can contact the CCTV station direct on 287 9999 to ask for cameras to record what is going on.
- Do not fly banners or flags on or near to your building or do anything that could be considered offensive or provocative to other residents
- Keep your garden tidy and litter free. Don't erect permanent play equipment, like swings and trampolines. Don't remove trees or bushes; erect or change walls or fences without our written permission. If you don't look after your garden we can arrange work to be done and charge the cost to you.

- Brush and wash landing/stairs at least once each week and keep close doors, windows and walls clean. Make arrangements with your neighbours or ask us for a rota. If stairs and common areas are not properly looked after we can arrange for work to be done and charge the cost to tenants
- Do not store bikes, prams, etc. on landings or any other common areas as this a fire risk. In Blochairn Place keep landing windows clear as they open in the event of a fire to let smoke out.
- Keep lifts in good, clean condition. Don't allow young children to use lifts without a responsible adult. Do not smoke in lifts. Do not take dogs into lifts
- The backcourt is an area for drying clothes. It's not a playground, so ball games, particularly football, are not allowed. Play equipment, such as, swings, slides and trampolines, should not be fitted. Don't use up all available space when hanging out washing and take it in when it's dry. Do not hang washing from windows or on verandas. The backcourt should be kept tidy and litter free. If it is not properly looked after we can arrange for work to be done and charge tenants for the cost
- You need our written permission to keep a pet. Pets must be controlled and supervised. They must not cause nuisance to neighbours; cause damage to the house or common property or foul any common area, including urinating. We can withdraw permission to keep a pet and you would have to remove your pet from the house. Dangerous dogs, snakes, spiders and rats are not allowed to be kept as pets
- Glasgow City Council are responsible for bins and refuse collection. If your property is required to present the bin for collection, put your wheelie bin out on collection day and return it to the bin store as soon as possible. Keep bin stores clean and tidy by picking up any overspill from the bins. Bags should be tied securely and placed into the bins
- Use the correct bins for Recycling
- We provide a bulk uplift collection service on a Wednesday morning. Put items out on pavement on Tuesday night. Make sure that bulk items remain neat and tidy until collected. In Blochairn Place – place bulk items neatly in the bin store. Boxes, cardboard, packaging etc. should be folded and placed into the bins
- Use Glasgow City Council's "MY GLASGOW" App on your mobile phone to report broken bins, failed bin collection, street lights out, dog fouling, etc.

Tenant Bonus Scheme

In 2001 we were the first in Glasgow to introduce a Bonus Scheme for tenants. You and your neighbours can make a real and lasting difference and create a pleasant living environment. The Christmas Bonus is £75 and there is a Monthly Prize Draw (2 x £50 prizes). The Bonus is not your legal right. We will assess whether you are keeping to the terms of your Tenancy Agreement and behaving reasonably. For the Xmas bonus we will send out a questionnaire asking you to let us know how you think you are doing as a good tenant.

1. **Rent Account** - Is it clear? Are you keeping to an arrangement and co-operating to deal with problems?
2. **Outstanding Debts** – Are debts outstanding, e.g. rechargeable repairs? Are you keeping to an arrangement?
3. **Front Gardens and Backcourts** – Is it tidy and free of litter?
4. **Bin Stores** - Clean and tidy? Refuse bagged and placed into the bins? Bulk refuse dealt with properly?
5. **Stairs/closes** - Clean, tidy and free of litter? Brushed and washed regularly? Walls, banisters and windows clean? Are bags of rubbish, boots, shoes, etc. outside the door? Smoke vent windows kept clear? Prams, bikes, scooters, etc. lying around?
6. **Repairs** – Are they reported? Is access made available? Is the Gas Safety Service done on time?
7. **Graffiti** - Is graffiti cleaned or reported?
8. **Children** - Are children causing a problem for other residents?
9. **Pets**. Are they causing a nuisance? Fouling common areas?
10. **General** - General issues? Are our staff treated reasonably? Are they threatened or abused?

Condition of Your Home. Internal decoration is your responsibility. But don't paint fixtures or fittings e.g. radiators, fans, light fittings or kitchen units. Make sure your home is kept in reasonable condition with a reasonable standard of hygiene and cleanliness. We will recharge you for repairs caused by deliberate damage, carelessness or neglect.

4. YOUR TENANCY – RIGHTS and RESPONSIBILITIES

The Tenancy Agreement is an **important legal document**. It is the legal contract between you and us. We agree to provide a house and to keep it in good repair. You agree to pay the rent and to use the house in a reasonable manner. You have a Scottish Secure Tenancy. This tenancy was introduced by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. New provisions were introduced in 2019 under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014.

- **Security of Tenure.** You can have your tenancy for as long as you wish, as long as you pay rent and keep to the terms of the Tenancy Agreement. Couples will normally have a Joint Tenancy. In a relationship breakdown, both parties have a legal right to live in the house. If you are not a Joint Tenant and you are not married you may have to apply to the Sheriff Court for this right
- **Eviction.** A serious or persistent breach of tenancy, including non-payment of rent, can result in your eviction. A Notice will be served warning of Court action. If this happens you should get independent advice from a solicitor. A Sheriff will decide whether eviction is reasonable and within the law

- **Abandonment.** If you are not living in the house we can issue an Abandonment Notice. If we do not hear from you within 28 days your tenancy will end. To avoid misunderstanding you should tell us if you intend to be away for more than 28 days
- **Succession.** If you die your tenancy will pass to your surviving joint tenant or your spouse or co-habitee, a member of your family or your carer. That person must be at least 16 years old and must have lived in the house for at least 12 months immediately before your death. They must have lived in the house with our knowledge and written consent. There is no succession to tenancy for houses that have been adapted for specific medical needs
- **Assignment.** It may be possible to transfer all your rights and responsibilities to someone else. The person must have lived with you for at least 12 months with our knowledge and written permission. We will consider who will be living in the house and how the person applying for the tenancy would be dealt with under our Allocation Policy
- **Sub-Letting and Lodgers.** To take in lodgers or sublet part of or all of a house you must get our permission in writing in advance. Permission would not be granted if, for example, there would be overcrowding, rent was too high or there were unsatisfactory references. We would also consider our duty to Housing List applicants
- **Alterations and Improvements.** You can carry out alterations and improvements to your home, including external work, if you get our written permission in advance. It is your responsibility to make sure that everything is safe for your neighbours
- **Right to Buy.** The Right to Buy your home in Scotland ended on 1 August 2016
- **Aids and Adaptations.** If you have mobility problems your doctor can refer you to an Occupational Therapist (OT). The OT will assess your need for aids or adaptations, including ramps; walk in showers; etc. Or, contact the OT direct on 287 0555. We can apply for funding from Glasgow City Council to do the work

5. MOVING ON

- **Transfer.** You can apply if you have lived in your house for at least 2 years. It is 3 years in a second house and 5 years in a third house. We will consider applications earlier if there is a change of circumstances, for example, a medical problem or the number of people living in the house has changed
- **Relationship Breakdown.** You can contact us in complete confidence if your marriage or relationship has broken down. Contact the police and/or a crisis support group if there is a threat of intimidation or violence to you or anyone living in the house. A housing application can be accepted from either partner but we prefer that the person who will have the children the majority of the time continues to live in the house

- **Mutual Exchanges.** Once you have been in your house for a year you can negotiate an exchange with another Blochairn tenant or a tenant from another organisation. Exchanges need the written approval of both landlords
- **Equal Opportunities.** We try to ensure there is no discrimination against a tenant, resident or housing applicant on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. If you have any concerns contact us, in complete confidence
- **Moving Out.** If you are moving out you must give four weeks' notice, in writing, to end your tenancy. To avoid additional charges at the end of the tenancy you must:
 - Leave the house in a clean and tidy condition
 - Deal with repairs which are your responsibility
 - Remove paint from electrical fittings, i.e. sockets, switches, extractor fans etc.
 - Remove your possessions, including all furniture, floor coverings and refuse
 - Take final meter readings and tell your gas and electricity suppliers
 - Leave some electricity and gas in the meters if they are pre-paid
 - Return all of your keys to us as soon as possible

6. RENT

Rent is due monthly, in advance, on or before the 28th of each month.

1. Use your ALLPAY Payment Card at the Post Office or any Pay Point
2. Use the ALLPAY APP on your mobile phone
3. Go to the ALLPAY web site www.allpay.net
4. Pay by Direct Debit from your bank account
5. Have your Housing Benefit/Universal Credit sent direct to us
6. Bank Transfer

You can make several, individual payments as long as the rent is paid fully in advance. It is your responsibility to pay rent if you receive Housing Benefit/Universal Credit and to co-operate with the Housing Benefit/DWP to make sure that your application is properly dealt with.

- **Housing Benefit/Universal Credit.** You may receive Housing Benefit/Universal Credit to help pay your rent. Our staff can provide basic advice and assistance. More detailed advice can be provided by our support staff
- **Rent Arrears.** Rent arrears are most often due to a tenant being unable to pay rather than refusing to pay rent. If you receive welfare benefits or are on a low income you have many demands on your resources. But high or persistent rent arrears can lead to court action and eviction. It is vital that you contact us as soon as you realise there is a problem

- **Council Tax.** You must pay Council Tax direct to Glasgow City Council. You will find more information on [https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/council tax](https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/council%20tax) if you are having difficulty or are in arrears speak to us for advice
- **Rent Increases.** The new rent will be due from 28 March each year

7. REPAIRS and MAINTENANCE

Our Responsibilities. We will deal with repairs required through normal wear and tear and will maintain services within the house, including electricity, gas and plumbing. Services out with the house are the responsibility of public utilities.

Your Responsibilities. You are responsible for repairs required because of deliberate damage, carelessness or neglect.

- **Reporting Repairs.** You should report repairs as soon as possible, including vandalism or graffiti
- **Access.** You must give reasonable access. Repairs appointments can be made for morning or afternoon, between 09.00 and 16.00, Monday to Thursday and between 09.00 and 15.00 on a Friday.
- **Gas Safety.** A Gas Safety Service must be carried out every year by law. You must give reasonable access to the Heating Engineer. If you do not allow access we have the right to force entry as a last resort and recharge you for the repair to the door.
- **Response Times.** Target times for a tradesman to call out are:
Emergency - within 4 hours; Urgent - within 24 hours; Standard - within 5 working days;
Q1 - within 1 day

In an emergency, if the repair cannot wait until the office reopens, call:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| ✓ For Heating & Plumbing | - James Frew Ltd | 01294 468 113 |
| ✓ For All Other Repairs | - City Building | 0800 595 595 |
| ✓ Member of staff | - | 07976 569 939 |

An emergency is when there is a risk to health, safety or security or where delay will cause damage to property, for example, if there is a burst pipe. Having no heating or hot water is not an emergency. However, the contractor will attend if this is possible.

- **Burst Pipes.** Find out where the stop cock is in your house so that you can turn the water off in an emergency. Keep heating on during very cold weather. Ask our staff if you need advice

- **Power Cuts.** Check to see if the power cut affects your neighbours/the area. If so call SP Energy on 0800 09 29 290 or dial 105. If it is just your property, unplug all electrical appliances and reset the trip switch at your fuse box then plug in each appliance one at a time. If the switch trips, you have found the faulty appliance. If this doesn't work call us.
- **Planned Maintenance.** Our properties are constantly monitored. We have a programme of works to deal with things like kitchens, bathrooms and decoration of property
- **Smoke Detectors.** It is your responsibility to make sure that your smoke detector is working. Test it every few weeks. A regular high-pitched chirping indicates that the battery should be replaced. Modern units generally need completely replaced. Call us
- **Floor Coverings.** If a repair requires that your floor covering must be lifted you may be responsible for lifting it and refitting it. We may not be responsible for any damage. You may be able to make a claim through your house contents insurance
- **Baths.** Baths should be cleaned with mild detergents, not abrasive cleaners or bleach
- **Kitchen Worktops.** Spilled liquid, including water, can damage kitchen fittings and should be quickly dried up. Worktops should be cleaned with water and mild detergent. Hot dishes should not be placed directly onto worktops. A chopping board should be used. The worktop should never be used as a cutting or chopping surface
- **TV Aerials and Satellite Systems.** You must not fit individual aerials or satellite dishes. The TV signal is through a common aerial from the Black Hill transmitter, halfway between Glasgow and Edinburgh. We are not responsible for making sure that every possible channel is available from every supplier. Some channels may not be available in your property. You should take this into account when buying a TV package from, for example, SKY or Virgin
- **Rechargeable Repairs.** You might be recharged for repairs to put the property back to its original condition; because of an accident; because of carelessness, negligence, misuse or abuse or because of forced entry to the house
- **Condensation.** When moist air comes into contact with a cool surface it becomes liquid. On a window, drops of water run down. A wall soaks up the moisture and becomes damp, causing **mould**. You must make sure that your house is properly ventilated and aired, especially when drying clothes or cooking. Don't dry clothes on your radiators or over doors. Wipe and dry condensation quickly, especially at windows and around the toilet cistern. We have a detailed advice leaflet available
- **Satisfaction.** A questionnaire is issued after every repair. Returns are entered into a monthly Prize Draw
- **Right to Repair.** The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 introduced a Right to Repair. If we do not carry out a repair on time you may have the right to arrange for the repair to be done yourself. Contact us for further information

- **Right to Compensation for Improvements.** Under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, compensation for improvements may be available after a tenancy has ended, provided that written permission had been given in advance. Contact us for further information
- **Lofts.** Lofts are normally common to the property and contain technical equipment, such as, TV aerial wiring. Lofts are not designed for storage. You do not have the right to access loft spaces

8. SAFETY in the HOME

- **Gas.** If you smell gas put out all cigarettes. Do not use a match or a naked flame to find the leak. Do not use electrical switches. Open doors and windows. Check to see if a tap is left on or a pilot light is blown out. If you still think there's a leak turn off the gas at the meter and phone 0800 111 999
- **Fire.** Do not store prams, bikes, etc. on the landing or in any other common area. Do not wedge open fire doors. Never store inflammable liquids in your home or in the property. Contact Scottish Fire & Rescue to arrange a free FIRE SAFETY visit. If you discover a fire, close the door to the room where the fire is. Make sure everyone leaves the house. Then phone 999
- **Security.** When you go out never hide your key. Thieves always know where to look. Leave a spare key with someone you can trust. Check the identity of callers before letting them in (officials carry an identity card). Don't let strangers into the property if they press your buzzer for access. Cancel deliveries of newspapers, milk, etc. before going on holiday. Keep close doors locked

9. GENERAL INFORMATION

- **Policies.** Copies of our policies are available on our website and on request, free of charge
- **Data Protection.** Information held by us is governed by GDPR Data Protection Law and may be shared with other agencies, such as, Glasgow City Council, the Scottish Housing Regulator, DWP, the UK Border Agency and the Police if this is required by law
- **Appeals and Complaints.** We try to provide a first-class service but there may be times when you may be unhappy about something. If this is the case it is important that you let us know. A problem may be resolved through discussions with us. Otherwise, the Complaints Procedure can be followed
- **Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO).** The SPSO is an independent authority who can investigate a complaint when the Complaints Procedure has been followed and the problem has not been resolved. The SPSO is at Bridgeside House, 99 McDonald Road, Edinburgh, EH7 4NS. Telephone: 0800 377 7330. Email: ask@spsso.org.uk. Website: www.spsso.org.uk
- **Tenant Satisfaction.** We try to provide a first-class service. We carry out a Tenant Satisfaction Survey every 3 - 5 years. We welcome comments and suggestions on how we operate

10: USEFUL CONTACTS

EMERGENCIES

Police/ Fire/ Ambulance		999
Social Work Services Emergencies	400 Petershill Rd	0300 343 1505
Gas Emergencies	Gas Escapes	0800 111 999
Blochairn Emergency Repairs	Gas Central Heating	01294 468 113
	All Other Repairs	0800 595 595
	Staff	07976 569 939

GLASGOW CITY COUNCIL

CCTV		287 9999
Housing Benefit & Council Tax		287 5050
Environmental Protection	Pest Control	287 9700
Recycling	Enquiries	287 9700
Social Work Services	Children & Families	276 4710
	Occupational Therapist	287 0555
	Mental Health	287 5555
	Learning Disabilities	287 5555
	Criminal Justice	276 4710
Close Lighting		0800 595 595
Road Repairs & Street Lighting		0800 373 635
Environmental Task force		0300 343 7027

PUBLIC UTILITIES

Gas Emergencies	Gas Escapes	0800 111 999
Scottish Water	Customer Helpline	08000 778 778
SP Energy Networks	Power Cuts	08000 92 92 90 105

HELP AND ADVICE

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman	4 Melville St	0800 377 7330
Citizens Advice Bureau	Mitchell Library	552 5556
Jobs & Business Glasgow		0300 123 2898
Glasgow Women's Aid	30 Bell St	553 2022
Samaritans	210 W George St	248 4488
RELATE:	27 Sandyford Pl	248 5249
Relationship Counselling		
Family Support Groups (families of alcohol and drug users)	123 West Street	420 2050

LOCAL

Royston Library	67 Royston Road	276 0890
Townhead Health Centre	16 Alexandra Parade	531 8970
St Roch's RC Church	311 Roystonhill	552 2945
Glasgow Foundry Boys Rel Soc	15 Tharsis St	552 2931
St Roch's Secondary School	40 Royston Road	582 0270
St Roch's Primary School	267 Royston Road	552 0010
Royston Primary School	102 Royston Road	552 2872
Royston LIFELINK		552 4434
Rosemount Development Trust	141 Charles Street	552 9046
Royston Youth Action	325 Royston Road	572 0984

Blochairn Housing Association Ltd
1 Blochairn Road, Glasgow G21 2ED
Tel: 0141-553-1601

Email: admin@blochairn.org

Web: www.blochairn.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/blochairnha/

Office Opening Hours:

Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday: 9.00 am - 1.00 pm & 1.45 pm - 5.00 pm
Thursday: 9.00 am - 1.00 pm
Friday: 9.00 am - 1.00 pm & 1.45 pm - 3.30 pm

Notes:

Location of Stop cock: _____