

# NORTH NEWS



North Glasgow Housing Association's newspaper for tenants and owners

Winter 2009 Issue No 26

## Praise from Housing Minister at the opening of £4.2m eco homes project



Mr Neil presents the ECO award to the Association's Chief Executive Robert Tamburrini

**SCOTTISH Government Minister Alex Neil says North Glasgow Housing Association deserves the highest praise for providing new housing that will change lives and benefit the entire community.**

The Minister for Housing and Communities was speaking at the official opening of our £4.2million 'Eco-Homes' development at Fernbank Street in Springburn.

The development is the first by a Glasgow based Registered Social Landlord to formally receive The Building Research Establishment's (BRE) Eco-Homes 2006 rating of Very Good.

Energy consumption, harmful carbon emissions, running and maintenance costs are all predicted to fall significantly while improving the quality of life and economic wellbeing for the residents.

The 32 flats in the four-storey site all have two bedrooms and eight of them have been designed to be suitable for people with specific needs. All properties have been built to Secure by Design Standard.

Minister for Housing and Communities, Alex Neil MSP, said: "Social landlords such as North Glasgow have a vital role to play

in the provision of good quality, affordable housing.

"It is fundamental to our wellbeing and success as individuals, communities and as a country.

"This project not only provides high quality affordable homes for the community in North Glasgow, it also acts as a shining example of environmentally friendly construction.

"It is good news for families, the environment and importantly, in these days of economic uncertainty, supports jobs in the

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### £100million investment mark reached

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### Transfer plans for homes

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### Tenants Conference

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**NORTH Glasgow Housing Association has moved a step closer in achieving our aspiration to become the local landlord for Glasgow Housing Association (GHA) tenants in Springburn, Balornock, Parkhouse and Possilpark.**

North Glasgow Housing Association is the designated Local Housing Organisation (LHO) for the management of these local GHA houses and we already work in close partnership with GHA tenants and owners through our LHO Committees for the Balmore, North Glasgow and Red Rd Balornock areas. They manage the local GHA homes, and the next step for North Glasgow Housing Association is to pursue the transfer of the ownership of the homes to local control.

GHA has given North Glasgow Housing Association the go ahead to develop plans for "Second Stage Transfer" – offering GHA tenants the opportunity to consider a change of landlord by transferring to North Glasgow Housing Association. A large number of housing stock transfers to locally-based community landlords have taken place in Glasgow in recent years.

In all, around 3,000 houses could transfer across the three LHO areas – North Glasgow LHO, Balmore LHO and Red Rd Balornock LHO. Transfer can only take place if tenants want this to happen and a majority of tenants who vote are in favour of stock transfer.

GHA has advised North Glasgow Housing Association that it intends to retain ownership of the Red Rd multi-storey flats, so these would not form part of the transfer proposal.

So what happens next? North Glasgow Housing Association is developing proposals to present to the GHA tenants in the three LHO areas in a ballot. We will clearly set out proposals so that local GHA tenants are given full information on what transferring ownership of their homes would mean for them in relation to the housing service, the rents, repairs and investment in their houses, and the protection of their existing tenancy

# Transfer plans for homes...



Closeburn Street, Possilpark



Barmulloch Road, Balornock

rights.

Robert Tamburrini, Chief Executive of North Glasgow Housing Association said:

"We want to get this right. We will be consulting with our LHO Committees and GHA tenants in the New Year to listen to their views and ideas and to hear what their local priorities are. We want to deliver enhanced local services for the GHA tenants in Springburn, Balornock, Parkhouse and Possilpark. That process can only begin with tenants voting "yes" to transfer from GHA to North Glasgow Housing Association"

Tenants can be assured that the

proposals will be sound. North Glasgow Housing Association's proposals and financial plans will need to be approved by GHA's Board and also assessed by the Scottish Housing Regulator before GHA tenants will be invited to vote on the proposal. The GHA housing stock in the three LHO areas can only transfer to North Glasgow Housing Association if a majority of the local GHA tenants who vote in a ballot vote "yes" to transfer.

This is a really exciting time for the Association and we will continue to keep all our existing tenants and our prospective new tenants up to date with all the progress via North News and other regular communications.

## Financial Awareness

**NEED advice on welfare benefits, debt, credit unions, banking, energy efficiency and household bills?**

David Birrell (pictured) works for North Glasgow Advice Centre offering a money advice service and is available to speak with tenants in our Springburn office every Thursday between 1.30pm and 4.30pm and in Possilpark on the last Thursday of every month.

It is hoped that the service will help reduce tenant debt by cutting

consumer credit, household bills and rent arrears.

Other key aims of the project are to reduce the use of 'loan sharks' by making tenants aware of the advantages of credit unions and bank accounts and to promote the benefits of various health insurance schemes.

The project complements the existing service provided by our Welfare Benefits Officer Agnes Cole.



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# Opening of 32 eco flats



Mr Neil is pictured with committee and staff from North Glasgow Housing Association and local councillors Phil Greene and Bailie Jim Todd



Housing Officer Gemma Lee, right, arranged for a tour of the home of tenant Janet Sproul, second left

## From Page One

hard pressed construction industry.

“Despite the tightest settlement from Westminster since devolution, this Government will pull out all the stops to ensure we increase the supply of affordable homes, backed by more than £1.5 billion over three years.”

The Eco-Homes assessment method balances the need for a high quality, safe, sustainable, built environment with a reduction in the harmful and wasteful effects of building, constructing and living in a home.

The new homes are being used to re-house tenants on North Glasgow Housing Association’s waiting list and tenants affected by Glasgow Housing Association’s re-provisioning programme.

Chief Executive of North Glasgow Housing Association, Robert Tamburrini, said: “We were delighted to have the Minister for Communities officially open our latest landmark development.

“The new homes not only meet and surpass tough Eco-Homes standards which directly benefit tenants but they will help address the housing needs of the city by providing new homes for a wide cross section of the community.”

During his visit, Mr Neil presented Mr Tamburrini with a certificate from the Building Research Establishment’s Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) recognising the environmental quality of the building.

## Credit check offer for tenants

GLASGOW Credit Union is offering tenants a financial fitness check in the New Year.

Staff will be in the Springburn office on February 9 from 9.30 until noon and in the Possilpark office from 1.30 until 4pm.

Glasgow Credit Union has been operating for 20 years and is committed to providing low cost, affordable finance to everyone who lives or works in the ‘G’ postcode.

It offers savings, loans, current accounts, junior accounts,

mortgages, ISAs, Child Trust Funds, family protection plans and has already opened its Christmas 2010 Savings Club.

If you want to get in touch before February, you can call 0141 274 9933 or visit their website on [www.glasgowcu.com](http://www.glasgowcu.com).



# Elmvale opening highlights £100million investment in homes

**SPRINGBURN MSP Paul Martin signalled another remarkable landmark in the Association's history when he officially opened our latest housing project.**

The £5.7million spent on the first phase of the Elmvale development means that North Glasgow Housing Association has now invested over £100million building and improving existing homes since its formation.

By any standard, that is a remarkable achievement and a real testament to the hard work of the management committee and staff over the years.

It was probably fitting that Paul Martin opened the

housing development that took the Association through the £100million.

Thirty-three years ago, his father – former Speaker of the House of Commons and local MP Michael Martin – helped to form the Association when he was a councillor in the area.

The turnaround in the area has been nothing short of stunning and the transformation at Elmvale is continuing at a fast pace with another 22 new homes under construction in Phase Two.

The poor quality tenements in Hawthorn Street, Blackthorn Street and Hickory Street were demolished to make way for these top quality properties

that have gained an Eco-Homes rating of "Very Good".

Forty-one families in the development – a mix of three and four apartment homes – are now enjoying their quality accommodation. Heating costs are expected to be significantly less than their previous homes thanks to energy efficient construction.

Paul Martin said: "I am so pleased to see the opening of the first phase at Elmvale. It is a truly stunning transformation of the area.

"It doesn't seem that long ago that the tenements were demolished and the site cleared and now we have these superb homes."

After the opening, he toured the site and met with tenant Jessie Harvey, who lives in Blackthorn Street.

She said: "It is just a fabulous house and the setting is great too. We have a nice garden area where our grandchildren can play safely.

"I love the open plan kitchen and the extra space. The house is really warm but my energy bills are lower than they were in other houses we have stayed in."

Chief Executive Robert Tamburrini said: "We will continue to develop and improve the north of the city.

"These new homes are the latest to be delivered thanks to the Association's investment programme.

"They not only meet but surpass the tough Eco-Homes standards, which will directly benefit tenants through increased energy efficiency.

"In today's financial climate it is essential that we support the city's economy by building new homes that will help create and safeguard employment.

"We will continue to work with our partners to bring real and lasting benefits to the north Glasgow community."



Paul Martin and Depute Chief Executive Bobby Fleming at the Elmvale opening



Paul Martin chats to tenants in Ned Donaldson House following the Elmvale opening

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New local MP Willie Bain with Jessie Harvey, grandson TJ and Paul Martin



Paul Martin outside the home of tenant Jessie Harvey

# Award marks high level of tenant satisfaction

**NORTH Glasgow Housing Association has been awarded the new Customer Service Excellence Standard after obtaining 'exceptionally high levels of tenant satisfaction with services'.**

The new standard was developed to replace Charter Mark, which is being phased out in 2011.

The Association gained Charter Mark status more than five years ago but holders are not automatically moved to the new Customer Service Excellence.

It contains new concepts and the Association had to provide additional proof that it measured up to the new standard.

After a rigorous inspection, carried out over three days in September and November, Assessor John Thurgood produced a 15-page report that recommended the Association be recognised as meeting the new standard.

Mr Thurgood said: "North Glasgow Housing Association has exceptionally high levels of tenant satisfaction with services.

"Tenants spoke highly of the quality of homes provided and the proactive way North Glasgow Housing Association responded to their needs.

"The Management Committee members appointed to represent other

Local Housing Organisations spoke of their desire for a speedy stock transfer to NGHA ownership in order that they might also have their preferred housing provider in place not least because NGHA met its promises to tenants.

"The organisation is customer focused and members of staff frequently go beyond their statutory duty to provide solutions to tenant problems working proactively to improve local communities in the Springburn and Possilpark areas.

"Extensive and effective partnerships are in place that make a difference to local communities and the Association is actively engaged in regenerating deprived areas of North Glasgow.

"North Glasgow Housing Association complies with the requirement of the current version of the Customer Service Excellence. I have highlighted strengths, and also areas of partial compliance and areas for further development.

"There are no actions that require immediate attention and I am pleased to pass on my recommendation to EMQC's Certification Committee that North Glasgow Housing Association be recognised as meeting the Customer Service Excellence Standard."

The certificate is valid for three years but is subject to an annual review.

Mr Thurgood praised the Association's

partnerships.

He said: "Of particular note is the strength in partnerships that the Association has entered into and the involvement in the social, physical and economic life of the communities served.

"North Glasgow Housing Association at the last regulatory inspection was rated 'A' by the Scottish Government for their housing management and financial management performance."

The UK Government developed the new Customer Service Excellence because it wants public services for all that are efficient, effective, excellent, equitable and empowering – with the citizens always and everywhere at the heart of public service provision.

There is also an emphasis placed on developing customer insight, understanding the user's experience and robust measurement of service satisfaction.

Alison McCann, Corporate Services Manager, collated key evidence for the assessment.

She said: "We are all absolutely delighted to receive this further recognition of the quality of the housing service provided. It is another landmark achievement for North Glasgow Housing Association and one which all staff and committee take pride in."

## Benefit changes

**ON 2 November some benefit changes were introduced that affect Housing/Council Tax Benefit awards.**

**Child benefit is no longer counted as income when calculating whether people qualify for Housing or Council Tax Benefit and the capital threshold for tenants of pension age in receipt of Pension Credit and/or Housing/Council Tax Benefit increased from £6,000 to £10,000.**

**New Housing/Council Tax Benefit award letters have been sent to tenants who are affected by these changes.**

**However if you do not receive Housing/Council Tax Benefit or Pension Credit at present and wish to see if you would now qualify then please contact Agnes Cole your Welfare Benefits Officer for a benefit check.**



# Tenants turn out for special info day



Paul Rytel from GCU



Peter Copeland from Lifelink



Tenants Archie and Catherine Gilmour



Ann Marie Devlin with tenant Monica McCarroll

**TENANTS were provided with information about housing, health, education, homelessness, finance, wellbeing and the community at a special Tenants Day.**

Chief Executive Robert Tamburrini welcomed everyone to the event held in the Glasgow North Conference Centre.

In addition to housing staff, there were representatives from a number of non-housing organisations.

They included two senior staff from local secondary schools – Gerry Lyons, headteacher of All Saints, and Frank Delury, acting depute head of St. Roch's.

During workshops which they hosted, both gave insights into their schools, the projects they are involved with and the impact they can have in shaping the future of our youth.

Along with

Springburn Academy, pupils at these schools are tackling issues such as bullying, drugs, peer pressure and anti-social behaviour through a year-long course.

North Glasgow Housing Association has helped by supporting The Children's Safety Education Foundation and funding the supply of the course book, Respect – Your Life, your Choice.

Depute Chief Executive Bobby Fleming hosted a workshop on housing repairs. The Association is carrying out a repairs review and was interested to hear the views of tenants on the type of repairs they thought were most important.

Peter Copeland, from Lifelink, provided tenants with information on a range of free services to help improve emotional, mental and physical wellbeing.

Lifelink adult provides support programmes and therapeutic stress



All smiles ... some of the delegates and staff who took part in Tenants Day 2009

management treatments designed to assist people make positive changes to their lives and manage stress and emotional problems.

Lifelink youth is an outreach service for 10-18 years old and Lifelink crisis provides assistance for those at risk or in crisis.

Paul Rytel, from the Glasgow Credit Union, also attended and provided tenants with information about their various savings and loans schemes.

After the workshops, Naomi Breeze, of Breeze Productions, gave a performance of her thought provoking play 'H is 4'. It examines the plight of a young person experiencing homelessness and inspired an interesting discussion.

A camper van was parked outside the conference centre which provided a mobile recording

studio where tenants were able to chat on film about their homes, community and issues.

Staff from the production company also filmed other parts of Tenants Day and they have been commissioned to produce a video.

The mobile unit is likely to be seen at other North Glasgow events, providing more tenants with the opportunity to air their views.

Association Chief Executive Robert Tamburrini said: "It was a very successful day and well supported by our tenants and a number of other local organisations.

"We are entering an important and exciting period in the Association's development and it is vital that we maintain our good communication links with tenants."



Staff with the specially branded North Glasgow Comments Camper Van



FILMED... Gerry McCluskey from the Childrens Safety Education



WORKSHOP... chaired by Gerry Lyons, headteacher of All Saints, on the right



STAGED... Naomi Breeze performs her H is 4 play

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# Access to £70m loan facility

**NORTH Glasgow is one of eight Scottish housing associations to have access to a new £70 million lending facility.**

The money will be offered by the European Investment Bank and the Housing Finance Corporation.

It is an alternative private lending source to support new affordable home developments and help jobs in the house building sector.

Housing Minister Alex Neil said: "The Scottish Government has been working hard behind the scenes to broker this deal.

"The facility was expected to be £50 million pounds and I am delighted to announce that the final figure is £70 million, a testament to the quality of proposals put forward by Scottish associations.

"We have already had initial conversations with the EIB about future funding opportunities and access to more funds.

"This investment will provide a much-needed boost to house building in Scotland, creating and sustaining skilled jobs, an important part of our economic recovery plan."

The EIB is owned by the 27 EU Member States. Their funding will be provided through The Housing Finance Corporation (THFC), an independent specialist, non-profit finance company that has made loans to over 120 regulated housing associations throughout the UK.

Piers Williams, Chief Executive of THFC, said: "There has been considerable interest from many associations and the quality of the projects

brought forward for funding has been really good.

"We've been able to respond to this by increasing the amount for Scotland by £20 million to £70 million. I know there is further untapped demand for long term funding like this from Scotland which THFC is ready to help with."

Bob Hartness, North Glasgow Housing Association's Director of Finance, said: "This is really good news for us and the other seven Scottish housing associations.

"Everyone knows that loans are difficult to find in the current market and the EIB are offering very attractive terms which will assist us to continue to develop and improve our housing stock."



The Young Possil Futures group outside the Falkirk FC stadium

## Soccer day out for Young Possil Futures

**MEMBERS of Young Possil Futures enjoyed a great day out as guests of Falkirk Football Club, with help from the Association.**

John Devine, Head of Business Development, arranged with the Scottish Premier League team for a group of 40 youngsters and their parents to travel to their stadium.

The youngsters were given a football coaching session on the training ground while adults went inside for a talk on what Falkirk can offer rising starlets.

John Devine said: "The club has a youth development programme that encourages education alongside football. The adults were also told about the importance of diet in the growth of young boys and girls."

The youngsters were given goody bags from Falkirk and then the entire group were

admitted to the stadium to watch the game with St. Mirren. Despite taking a goal lead, Falkirk lost 2-1.

But as far as the YPF is concerned, Falkirk were the real champions on the day.

YPF Project Manager Ann Lawrance said: "We are very grateful to Falkirk and to North Glasgow Housing Association for arranging it and providing our transport.

"It was a fantastic day and those who went are still talking about it. It was an experience most would not have been able to fulfil for themselves and has had a huge impact on all who attended.

"Our football coach says the attitude of the boys and girls has really changed and become more focussed.

"We hope to develop the partnership because, to use that well known football phrase, there is a real buzz about the place."

## Facts about factoring...

NORTH Glasgow Management Services is a registered subsidiary of North Glasgow HA and provides a range of factoring services to owner occupiers and sharing owners where the Association has a common title or property interest.

Its role as Factor is different from its role as landlord. While North Glasgow Management Services will manage the upkeep of the common property and common spaces, homeowners remain responsible for managing the repair and maintenance of their own individual homes.

These roles and responsibilities are generally recorded in a binding Deed of Conditions empowering the Factor to arrange work, make payments and recover costs on behalf of all owners.

From time to time, we also provide owners with information on initiatives and grants which might be available.

This month we have teamed up with Scottish Gas to bring you information on the Scottish Government Energy Assistance Package which provides owners with practical help and advice regarding central heating, enhanced insulation and energy savings.

Further information is available from the Scottish Gas Helpline on **0800 316 1651** by quoting reference NC1109 or from **[www.energyassistancepackage.com](http://www.energyassistancepackage.com)**

In the meantime, please watch out for further information on North Glasgow Management Services in future editions of North News.

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## Smurfs power into second place



**DRAGON Boat racing along the Kelvin Aqueduct has become a big attraction of the Bigman Festival, staged earlier this year for the second time.**

Stevie Nugent, John Campbell and Tom Kelly (inset, above) from North Glasgow Housing Association joined colleagues from the city council's Development and Regeneration

Services.

They really entered into the spirit of the event by sporting smurf outfits. And they powered their way to second place overall.

They did win for their outfits claiming the title of Best Themed Team.

But the real winner was The Beatson Institute for Cancer

Research which received over £3,500 from the team's sponsorship.

Other events at the Maryhill Locks, which attracted a record crowd of around 4,000 people, included water polo, free taster canoe sessions and mountain bike rides and there was a chance to see a scaled-down version of the 30-metre high Bigman sculpture by artist Andy Scott.

## Bill dropped from a great height



**ASSOCIATION Secretary Bill Rossine has received a certificate of appreciation from Sense Scotland.**

The veteran of fun runs and other sporting challenges took part in a sponsored abseil from the 165-foot Finnieston Crane.

His efforts realised a wonderful donation of £475 which the charity will use to help them in their work with deafblind children and adults.

Bill previously abseiled down the Bell Tower from Glasgow University.

He said: "The Finnieston Crane was completely different. In the Bell Tower you come down commando style but once you leave the crane at the top there is only the rope between you and the ground.

Bill is 85-years-old and started fitness and fund raising after suffering a heart attack almost four years ago.

He said: "I was determined that my heart attack wasn't going to floor me. I attend a cardiac aerobics class every week and when I told the instructor I planned to run in my first 5k, she became my personal fitness coach and helped me to eat the right foods to prepare properly."

He's already got another high flying challenge lined up so watch this space for a report on his next adventure.

## FESTIVE SEASON ADVICE

**NORTH Glasgow Housing Association will close for the festive season at 4pm on Wednesday, December 23 and will reopen after the holiday period at 9am on Wednesday, January 6.**

The Management Committee and Staff would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Tenants can still report any emergency repairs during the holidays by calling the emergency contact number at **0141 336 1300** (Possilpark) and **0141 560 6000** (Springburn).

During periods of extreme cold weather there is a risk of pipes freezing and bursting. At such times it may be useful to follow these suggestions:

- Keep heat circulating in all rooms
- Report any dripping taps and pipes to office for repair
- Find your main stopcock in case of leaks. If unsure of location call office.
- Leave sink unit doors open to allow heat to circulate

If you have a burst pipe please carry out the following:

- Turn off water at stopcock or tap
- Switch off your immersion heater or boiler
- Turn on taps in sinks and baths
- Turn on as much heating as you can
- If water comes in contact with any electrical fittings turn off electricity at the mains

If your pipes do freeze or burst contact the emergency office number

**0141 336 1300**

or

**0141 560 6000**

Problems with gas central heating should be reported direct to the Association's gas maintenance contractor City Technical Services on **0141 587 3629**.



# LEARNINGZONE

## Course covers engineering and public art

A NEW course in engineering and public art has been launched in a joint initiative involving the Association, Anniesland College and Glasgow North Regeneration Agency.

Funded by the Scottish Government Wider Role Programme, the course is run at Anniesland College and the Association's Possilpark offices.

It is designed to prepare participants who want to go for an apprenticeship and includes the design and production of a piece of public art.

The course also covers health and safety, fabrication and welding, 3D art processes, research skills, working with others and meeting public artists.

**For more info, contact Brian Davey on 0141 560 6000.**

**KEYS To Learn offers tenants skills and helps to ensure they make the most of their homes and the area they live in.**

It is aimed at helping people manage their new home or work towards getting one.

The part-time 12-week course doesn't affect any benefit participants may be entitled to and although provided by Anniesland College, it is held in the North Glasgow Housing Association Learning Centres in Possilpark and Springburn.

New courses are planned in 2010, with the first starting in January.

No previous learning experience is needed – you just need to be interested and available Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday each week from 10 am until 2.45pm.

Topics include healthy cooking and eating advice, arts and crafts, digital photography and computer skills – from absolute

## Keys To Learn course offers skills to manage new homes

beginners to more advanced. There is help with using or improving reading, writing and number skills, confidence building and a personal project on a subject chosen by participants.

Help with childcare is given if needed plus travel expenses, lunch and refreshments, advice on further learning, training or work.

As well as meeting new people in the area, one to one support from a peer mentor is also provided to help plan the next goals and there is a certificate and qualification too.

If you're over 16 and live in the North area of Glasgow, you can apply through your local housing association or call the Glasgow Homelessness Network on **0141 276 4825** for an application form.

Or if you need more information call GHN and speak to Martina or Aileen.

Keys To Learn is a partnership between North Glasgow Housing Association, Anniesland College, GHN and Glasgow North Regeneration Agency and is funded by The Big Lottery.

## Visitors to North Glasgow...



**Antonia Swinson, Chief Executive of the Scottish Social Enterprise Coalition, and members of her team met with the Association's Chief Executive Robert Tamburrini, Senior Depute CEO Ann Marie Devlin and Business Development Head John Devine on a visit to Ned Donaldson House.**



**Bob McGuire from Anniesland College included a stop at our offices during a tour of the area with a group of officials from Italy.**

**CRAIG McLaren and Paul Ballantyne from the Scottish Centre for Regeneration visited the Association's head office and met with Chief Executive Robert Tamburrini and John Devine, Head of Business Development.**

They were particularly impressed with the Learning Centre and the impact it has had on the community.



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Councillor McDougall gives a thumbs up approval to the new development

## New homes will breathe life into the community

**GLASGOW City Council's Executive Member for Housing, Councillor Elaine McDougall, met some of the apprentices working on the first phase of the £27.8M Broomfield Road development.**

Councillor McDougall met with Chief Executive Robert Tamburrini, Investment and Regeneration Manager Stevie Nugent from North Glasgow HA, City Building boss Willie Docherty and project manager Steven Gallagher.

She was given a guided tour of the first twelve homes under construction and was photographed with some of the apprentices on the site.

The project, which will create 198 family homes, involves a unique partnership between North Glasgow Housing Association, Alexander Morton Homes and City Building (Glasgow) LLP.

The first phase includes 30 family homes for strategic re-provisioning linked to GHA clearance, 22 linked to Glasgow's community and social care priorities and 20 for shared equity with first time buyers.

Councillor McDougall said: "The site is coming on well and when completed the development will breathe new life into the community. It also shows the council's commitment to provide new houses for people."

Mr Tamburrini said: "This project brings significant benefits for local tenants. It provides a boost to the area through improvement to the landscape and much needed employment too."

Mr Docherty said: "Work is well underway and we are pleased with the progress being made and the quality of service being delivered. We're on schedule and driving ahead to complete within the given timescale

"We will have over 60 apprentices working on this development, carrying out a range of skills and gaining on the ground experience under the guidance of our fully trained workmen."

# Soccer chance for youngsters

**YOUNGSTERS from Galloway Street and the surrounding area of Springburn have been given a chance to show off their football skills.**

North Glasgow AFC was started this season under the guidance of local tenant Wullie McCool.

They play in the Glasgow Sunday Amateur Football League, which recently celebrated its 30th anniversary.

It means that the youngsters who currently make up the team often

face much more experienced players. But you can't fault their enthusiasm or commitment.

Wullie says: "The team is for over 16 years and we train for a couple of hours on Tuesday – sometimes running round the streets to work on our fitness because parks are expensive to hire. We then do another two hours of ball work on Thursday.

"The guys have all signed up to a code of conduct which includes a strict ban on alcohol on a Saturday night. I regularly walk my dogs late at

night and if I see any of the team with a drink they don't play on a Sunday.

"We are still learning but recently won our first league game 4-1 and in a Cup match gave a much more experienced side a fright by taking the lead.

"We ended up losing and the boys were angry with themselves but I think they deserve some recognition for the efforts they are making."

Like all amateur football teams, Wullie could do with some support.



Wullie McCool with the team members of the new North Glasgow AFC



# New MP praises vast housing improvements

**WILLIE BAIN** used his maiden speech in the House of Commons to praise his predecessor, Lord Martin of Springburn, particularly for his work in housing.

The new MP for Glasgow North East was sworn in before the Queen's Speech that opened the current session of Parliament, meaning a packed house for the occasion.

Fellow Glasgow MPs Mohammad Sarwar and John Robertson introduced their Labour colleague and he has been appointed to the Public Bill Committee for the Financial Services Bill.

In his first Commons speech, Mr Bain said Lord Martin had been returned in seven consecutive general elections.

"Key to his politics was his passion for better housing. His own experiences growing up, together with his vision to improve his community, led him to champion the development of new social housing.

"He was a founder-member of what is now North Glasgow Housing Association and the investment of more than £100 million in homes in the constituency is an achievement of which Lord Martin and this Government can justly be proud."

Mr Bain said it was an honour for anyone to represent a constituency but "it is an even more special privilege to be able to serve the community in which I was



MP Willie Bain meets Chief Executive, Robert Tamburrini

born, brought up and educated, and in which I have lived throughout my life."

He welcomed the £5 billion additional investment in jobs for 18 to 24 year olds but told MPs there are 1,275 jobless young people in his constituency and only 617 employment vacancies. He plans to bring together employers, the city council and voluntary groups in his area to develop bids to

bring more of the investment available to North Glasgow.

Mr Bain said his constituency was full of people of great humour, hard working people, people of intelligence, talent and aspiration.

Prior to his election, Mr Bain spent two days a week lecturing in public law at London South Bank University, which has helped him settle to his new life.

He now spends four

days a week in London before returning to Eccles Street, in Carron, where he lives with his parents in a high-rise flat.

Mr Bain recently met with North Glasgow Housing Association Chief Executive Robert Tamburrini and his senior officials.

Mr Bain said: "Living all of my life in the constituency means I have watched the major changes and the vast improvements in housing in Springburn and Possilpark.

"The housing is much better than it was before and the biggest improvements have been in Blackthorn Street.

"Housing is one of the most important issues that people raise with you. I support the target of the SFHA to have 10,000 new homes for rent built.

"We also need Second Stage Transfer as soon as we can so that local people can make better decisions for their community and that is the purpose behind SST."

## Success of Operation Cleansweep

**A POLICE initiative in North Glasgow aimed at tackling crime and improving the community has been hailed a success.**

Operation Cleansweep was aimed at tackling and reducing levels of violence, antisocial behaviour, serious and organised crime, drugs, domestic violence and road traffic offences.

During the week-long operation, 99 arrests were made in Milton, Possil and Wyndford.

There were 26 arrests for possession of drugs and 63 for antisocial behaviour offences.

Police stopped and searched more than 400 people for weapons, drugs and alcohol and 65 licensed premises were checked for offences including drug dealing and the sale of alcohol to under-18s.

Known crime hot-spots were subject to high visibility patrols including Saracen Street and individuals involved in gang activity, drugs and violent crime were targeted, 10 of whom were arrested on warrant. Curfew checks and domestic bail visits were also made to ensure offenders were complying with the restrictive terms and conditions and support offered to victims.

Traffic police were also out in force, checking vehicles, enforcing speed limits and targeting other driving offences, resulting in 73 people being reported for road traffic offences.

Strathclyde Police Superintendent Iain Findlay, sub-divisional officer for Glasgow North East, said: "Operation Cleansweep was a huge success and I am extremely grateful for the continued support of our partner agencies.

"Public reassurance is at the heart of our approach and throughout the week we worked closely together to make communities feel safer by proactively addressing issues identified as priorities by local residents.

"I think the results speak volumes and show that together we can disrupt those responsible for committing crime, pursue known offenders and enforce the law to hold criminals responsible for their actions. Positive feedback I have received from local people and local businesses is testament to this."

## Ballot box first

**THE Carron Community Lounge is more used to bingo than a ballot box but that all changed on 12th November 2009.**

**The lounge was used as a polling station for the first time in the Glasgow North East By-Election.**

**We just had to have a picture to record that historic day and warden Helen Watson and local tenant John McFarlane suitably obliged by posing for the cameras.**



## How to get in touch with us

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formed for the benefit of the community