



ARTIST'S IMPRESSION

Carron gets a £3.5m facelift



The Carron area is to get a major facelift as part of a £3.5million investment in the area.

The Association has been in negotiations with Scottish Gas who are operating a carbon reduction programme on behalf of the Government.

Now the energy giant will organise and deliver a programme of housing improvements that will lead to lower carbon emissions and reduced heating bills for tenants and owners alike.

The project includes:

- **New insulated overcladding**
- **New 'A' rated condensing boilers and new radiators to replace old or obsolete systems**
- **Replacement of electric heating in tenements with new efficient gas heating systems**

- **Free home energy advice**
- **Relocation of satellite dishes to roof masts**
- **New gutters and downpipes if required**

Work will start on 23rd April and will be complete by October 2012.

Tenants and owners were invited to an open day in February where they met with housing staff and representatives of Scottish Gas.

They were able to view images of how the houses in the area will look after the overcladding work.

North Glasgow HA Chief Executive Robert Tamburrini said: "This is another great project and a further demonstration of our commitment to maintain and improve the quality of housing in our area."

EXISTING



"Tenants and owners alike will benefit greatly from the improvements in the short and long term. "The changes in appearance will be almost instant and the subsequent savings in energy costs will prove very helpful in the years ahead."



Transformation for Gourlay Street Sheltered Housing complex

P6



Playing in North Glasgow - the old fashioned way!

P10

Focus on

our STAFF: CONCIERGE



Colin on the right, with Frank

North Glasgow's concierge team operate a 24 hour 365 days a year service that provides assistance and support to many of our tenants particularly the elderly and vulnerable.

To some people, they are the staff who remotely open the entrance door when visiting a block of flats.

But there is a lot more to the job than that. North Glasgow HA currently has 28 concierge staff. They work in a shift system to provide round the clock cover for

Wellfield and Balgrayhill Multis, Viewpoint Place, Balgrayhill and Lenzie Deck and Broadholm Street.

The concierge service provide out of hours emergency and support to the residents of the Associations sheltered housing complexes and are key holders for all the associations office premises.

The Hub or control centre for the concierge service is situated in a purpose built building in Balgrayhill.

Concierge staff provide a janitorial service including stair cleaning, waste management, glass cleaning and daily de-littering and lift washing.

They sort out blocked rubbish chutes and have security patrols during the day and night.

A rota system has been introduced so staff work in all of the properties they look after so they can get to know tenants and vice versa.

Colin Leverage is one of four team leaders and transferred to North Glasgow following the recent successful ballot.

Colin said: "It's now a different system. We were part of a much larger organisation and now we are more locally based. This means we can respond to local needs and make local changes to help tenants in our areas.

"We have contact with the chief executive

and others in the organisation and they are willing to listen to suggestions on how changes can be made to improve the service for both staff and tenants."

All staff know how to turn off the water in properties and that can minimise damage from leaks and mean quicker repairs.

Colin says: "We are very much a community based service. We are here to help tenants and having someone here 24-hours per day gives them peace of mind. They know help is at hand and so do their relatives."

Concierge staff also make mobile patrols and have a designated vehicle to get help to colleagues quickly.

Colin added: "People have noticed the changes and we trying to provide a full service. There are areas where we could do with more help from tenants, such as dog fouling, and dumping of unwanted goods."

Colin is pictured with Frank Bradley at Wellfield.

Frank, who has worked in the concierge service for 18 years, says: "We are here to help tenants and many look on you as a friend. Shift rotas mean I can be away for four days but you don't miss much. When you come back tenants say 'have you heard what's been happening' and bring you up to date."

Supporting Tenants

Meet the Tenancy Support Team. North Glasgow HA wants to make sure that all of our tenants enjoy living in their homes but some people find it difficult to manage their tenancy for a number of reasons.

That's why the Tenancy Support Team was established and has now been further developed. They can help new and existing tenants who are finding it hard to manage in their homes as well as help tenants gain new skills and become more independent.

Issues such as health problems, debt, drug and alcohol dependencies, mental health issues, or even difficulties in completing standard forms all affect how a person can manage a tenancy.

The Tenancy Support Team will give help and advice so tenants can meet the conditions of their tenancy agreement and live independently. They can also offer support in tenants' own homes to ensure they do not feel isolated and unable to cope with problems they may be facing.

We can help:

- Access other organisations and service providers
- Advise on how to furnish your home and provide Starter Packs
- Improve personal safety and security
- Contact utility services
- Check benefits
- Apply for adaptations

We can also access support services to help you to develop your life skills; manage your money, budgeting and shopping, menu planning, cooking, literacy and numeracy.

How tenancy support is delivered?

A Tenancy Support Officer will discuss what support you need to maintain your tenancy. A support plan will set goals for you to achieve.



Standing: Danielle Quinn, Susan Mellon
Seated: Gail Nicolson and Laura Sharkey

Sometimes we will need to contact other agencies or organisations on your behalf for which we will obtain your permission.

If you think you need help, please contact the Tenancy Support team on **0141 560 6000** or **0141 336 1300**.

NORTH GLASGOW WINS BEST COMPANY AWARD

North Glasgow Housing Association has been named as one of the best companies to work for in the Sunday Times 100 Best Companies list for 2012.

The Association was placed in the top half of the prestigious listings for not-for-profit organisations.

The Association's work has been recognised by a number of leading authorities in recent years, including Investors in People and Customer Service Excellence but this is the first occasion it has featured in the Sunday Times Awards.

The presentation was made in London at an event hosted by BBC Breakfast Show celebrity Kate Silverton.

Alison McCann, Director of Investment and Organisational Development, attended the ceremony with Vice Chair Frank Miller and Management Board member Mary Willis.

Alison said: "We were one of 247 organisations who entered this year so to be named in the top 100 is quite an achievement in itself and to be in the top half of that list is even more pleasing. It's also the first time we have entered so it's a great tribute to our hard working staff.

"The Award comes less than a year after a major Second Stage Transfer in which a lot of new staff joined the Association so this is a huge tribute to the talents of our team and our culture in North Glasgow. I'm very proud of everyone for making North Glasgow Housing Association a Best Company to Work For."

Vice Chairperson Frank Miller said: "The judging process involved staff taking part in surveys and an evaluation of our processes and policies as well as our key statistics.

"The survey answers demonstrated that our staff felt engaged and valued and that they are happy and proud to work for the Association."

Board Member Mary Willis added: "I firmly believe that staff who are happy working for North Glasgow will



On the left presenting the trophy is Best Companies Director Glenn Dimelow

help the Association to continue to deliver a great service for our customers."

reward for green commitments



Stephanie Clark (left), Chief Executive Robert Tamburrini, Regeneration Co-ordinator Margaret Layden and John Devine receiving the Grow Green Award

North Glasgow Housing Association won Sustainable Business of the Year in the Grow Green Awards.

The trophy presentation was made in a ceremony held in the Winter Gardens at the People's Palace.

The award recognises local businesses and other organisations that have taken significant and practical steps to make themselves more environmentally sustainable.

There was tough competition and North Glasgow Housing Association was joined in a final shortlist of three by Clyde Gateway and Clydesdale Bank.

The awards were organised by Playbusters as part of the Grow Green with Glasgow's North East project which is funded by the Scottish

Government through the Climate Challenge Fund.

Playbusters' Senior Climate Challenge Officer Jeremy Laycock, who hosted the event, said: "The Grow Green Awards celebrate all of the inspiring work that has taken place over the last year to help make the East End and North East of Glasgow more sustainable. We would like to thank all of our funders, supporters, partners and volunteers for their involvement in the project and congratulate North Glasgow on their Sustainable Business of the year award."

Chief Executive Robert Tamburrini joined Head of Regeneration for North Glasgow John Devine and Regeneration Co-ordinator Margaret Layden in accepting the award from Stephanie Clark, Development Officer.

John Devine said: "The Association has

taken significant steps towards becoming a more sustainable business to the benefit of the organisation, its residents and the wider community. We have projects promoting recycling and energy efficiency and we are also looking at innovative ideas, particularly at implementing recycling in high-rise flats. In all these projects we are working hard to involve our local community and it's fantastic recognition for the work we are doing in North Glasgow."

SILVER SERVICE AWARD

North Glasgow Housing Association has been awarded Silver status in the Investor In People accreditations.

The Association has had IIP status for over ten years, being among the first housing associations to undertake the initiative.

Alison McCann, Director of Investment and Organisational Development, said: "Continuous improvement is key to the development of the Association. This is equally important for customer satisfaction and staff engagement. We have consistently maintained our IIP accreditation for 10 years and in 2011 we were awarded Silver status."

Frank Miller, the Association's Board of Management's Deputy Chair: "It's not just about maintaining the accreditation it is about improving how we do things. When staff feel valued and included, then customers benefit from a higher level of service."

Focus
on

our MANAGEMENT BOARD



Pat Kenna has been a tenant volunteer for 24 years and chair of North Glasgow Housing Association for the past five years.

Under the Association's rules a new chair has to be appointed at the Annual General Meeting this year but Pat will continue serving her community as a member of the Board and her knowledge and experience will be vital.

Hats off to North Glasgow. The official opening of the 1,000th new home is Pat's best memory of her time as chair. Glasgow City Council Leader Gordon Matheson carried out the ceremony and is pictured with Chief Executive Robert Tamburrini and young apprentices from City Building.

There have been many significant achievements in the 35-year history of the housing association but there have been some wonderful landmark moments during the last five years.

One, however, stands out for Pat.

She said: "The completion of the 1,000th new home built by the Association is for me the most outstanding achievement in our history.

"We have received recognition and awards from the highest authorities – even the Prime Minister – but good housing for our tenants is the most important thing.

"A warm and dry home, a place of real quality to live in is for me the most important thing that you can provide.

"When I started taking an interest in housing most people lived in tenement properties and the aspiration was to have a house with a front and back door. "At that time you'd be looking at houses in places such as Parkhouse and you would wait 40 years to achieve your aspiration.

"We have dramatically changed that with our building programme and have given many of our tenants homes they could only dream of.

"You cannot give everyone a job but if you can give them a decent home to live in it changes their whole outlook."

Pat reflected on the old, now demolished tenement blocks which were not well maintained.

She says: "The back courts were opened up. They took away all the defensible space, removing all the railings and with it a responsibility to look after your own area."

Last year also saw North Glasgow double in size with the transfer of nearly 3,000 properties and 70 staff from Glasgow Housing Association.

The successful ballot of tenants was the climax of years of hard work by local tenant led committees.

Pat says: "We are bigger and also stronger and that will benefit the communities that we serve."

Other highlights from the past five years have been the focus on helping tenants to get training for work through initiatives such as computer

courses, the focus on helping to improve health and wellbeing and free insurance cover for tenants who are aged over 60 years or have a disability.

Mobility problems often make it difficult for Pat to attend some events, with building sites a particular challenge. But with the aid of her scooter and a dogged determination she has overcome many obstacles that would have put others off.

“We have received recognition and awards from the highest authorities – even the Prime Minister – but good housing for our tenants is the most important thing”

When the Association gained the Government's new Customer Service Excellence standard, Pat joined staff on a trip to Derby to collect the award and experienced the fastest taxi driver she had ever met.

Pat says: "The train had taken the strain to get us there but this guy was just a speeding pain. When he took corners the wheels on my chair were off the taxi floor."

She has also faced heartache during her term as chair when Dominic, her husband for 48 years, died three and a half years ago.

Pat credits much of the success of North Glasgow Housing Association to hard work by a dedicated workforce and tenant volunteers.

She said: "Our staff are fantastic and they deserve the best. Our new offices are first class and both tenants and staff benefit from the surroundings.



"We have achieved a great deal over the years and it has all been built on teamwork. It has been a real pleasure representing the Housing Association for the last five years.

"We have fabulous committee, a fabulous staff and a fabulous housing stock and we can go forward with confidence."



Pat, centre, with fellow management board member Ronnie Rodden, left, and Chief Executive Robert Tamburrini and other staff receiving the Customer Service Excellence Award

New Training Academy at Vulcan Street

At North Glasgow we know that local access to learning and employment training with flexible and family friendly hours is greatly valued by local residents.

We have converted offices in Vulcan Street into a new multi-purpose training centre, not far from the Association's HQ.

The accommodation previously available for training at Ned Donaldson House was substantially adapted to accommodate staff transfers from Glasgow Housing Association when the Association's employees more than doubled after the stock transfer in 2011.

The design of the new training academy has been influenced by a range of factors arising from the Association's experience in providing training on its premises: local and easy access; disability friendly; the aspirations, preferences and expectations of learners (including coffee breaks!); the changing nature of ICT use and support; the importance of wireless technology and web-based resources; the emphasis on team and group learning; a participative ambience and ecological considerations.

The contract managers were Morris & Spottiswood Ltd., the designers ARKA Design Studio and the furnishings were made

and supplied by Royal Strathclyde Blind Industries (RSBI).

The result is a very pleasing community, conference and learning space that provides direct pavement access and is open, flexible and adaptable. Low energy lighting and heating is used throughout. There is no cluttering of space with PCs or work stations and, for direct learner engagement and interaction, the atmosphere reflects the informality of a tutorial room rather than the formality of a classroom.

The academy can accommodate laptops, smartphone and tablet technology.

The designer involved in the conversion was formerly a resident in Springburn. In the mid-1990s, at 15 years of age, Artan Sherifi fled Kosovo as a war refugee and, on his arrival on the first bus load of Kosovan refugees to Glasgow, was given accommodation by Glasgow City Council in the Red Road multistorey complex in Springburn.

Sixteen years on, the Red Road flats are being prepared



for demolition and Artan, having trained at the Glasgow School of Art and set up the ARKA Design Studio in partnership with Karen Hamilton, has designed the new Training Academy.

It is now being used for the first time, pending its official opening, by participants in the 'Activate' Training Programme.

The Training Academy not only represents a fitting legacy to all those who have trained in the past under the auspices of the Association but a very visible and tangible commitment to the future, an assurance that local residents will continue to have the resources and opportunities to improve their personal potential, their circumstances and their neighbourhoods.

Are you active in the community or would like to be? Do you want to make a difference?

Then an Activate course could be for you.

A new course supported by North Glasgow HA and delivered by Glasgow University is starting soon. It is open to anyone over 16 years of age and there is no upper age limit.

Those taking part on the course will learn about community work and local/global issues through discussion and groupwork.

The introduction to community development course is being delivered by Glasgow University in the Community.

Those who have taken part in previous informal courses have found them to be interesting and thought provoking but at the same time fun.

If you are interested please contact Margaret Layden on 0141 560 6000 or email info@northglasgowha.com



Housing Services Staff
Yvonne Kinnear and Lesley McConnochie

Members of North Glasgow's housing staff took part in a local community event at Anniesland College in March to promote renewable products.

With the launch of the Green Deal in the Autumn of this year, local communities will need to have a better understanding of the options available to them that will help tackle climate change.

Reducing energy consumption in the home and improving insulation or even producing renewable energy were among the issues featured on the day.

The event was used to launch the National Science and Engineering Week in Scotland and featured a number of presentations including one from Alex Hill, Chief Advisor to the Met Office, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Alex was a familiar face on our television screens in the 80's and 90's as an ITV weatherman.

John Celebrates 90th Birthday



North Glasgow tenant John Daly got a welcome surprise when new Housing Officer for his area Marjorie Robertson popped in to wish him a Happy 90th Birthday.

John says: "It's just another birthday to me but everybody seems to be making a big fuss of it. I've had a nice time right enough".

Marjorie said: "It was interesting to hear Mr Daly's stories of his time in the Services as a young man and also when he worked in the Saracen Foundry. Like any Housing Officer I like to get to know my tenants and so it was good to have a chat with Mr Daly over a cup of tea".

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

transform

FRONT EXTERIOR BEFORE



AND AFTER



These before and after pictures clearly illustrate the amazing transformation of the Gourlay Street Sheltered Housing complex.

Tenants living there are delighted with the major changes made during the first phase of the planned improvements.

As you can see from the pictures, the front entrance of the building is now more accessible with a new ramp leading to a newly constructed porch entrance and reception area.

The backcourt is now more readily accessible from the common room following the construction of another new ramp and the double bi-folding patio access glazed doors means light floods into the room.



INTERIOR BEFORE



AND AFTER



REAR EXTERIOR BEFORE



AND AFTER



ation



The contrast between the old and new interiors is absolutely stunning.

During the improvements, a new Warden's Office was created and a new laundry area has also been introduced.

The CCTV system has been upgraded with additional cameras installed providing 24-hour coverage.

The next stage of the improvements has started and will see further upgrading of the backcourt area with new lighting, surface conditions and drainage.

New seating areas will be installed and improvements also made to the drying areas.

The smiles on the faces of tenants who had popped in to use the new community space for their weekly armchair aerobics class show just how delighted they are with the transformation.

Warden Jim Vernel said: "The residents think the transformation is absolutely fantastic and we now have direct and easy access to the backcourt. The patio windows are a wonderful addition and are a particular advantage when the weather is nice.

"The access to the front is also much more welcoming and user friendly. It is really quite amazing - a completely different place."



John Clay with Housing Support Officer Chris Quail

Keeping their independence

Hawthorn Street Sheltered Housing Complex was featured in Housing Scotland, the magazine of the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations.

The focus was on how the complex aims to help older people continue living independently.

Tenants live in their own apartments with any care and support they need coming directly to them.

There are 58 self-contained flats, arranged over two floors, of which 40 are mainstream sheltered housing and 18 are for Very Sheltered Housing.

The complex is managed by staff from North Glasgow Housing Association who look after the residents with Richmond Fellowship staff providing personal care for those in the Very Sheltered flats.

The flats form part of a larger complex with communal facilities including a residents' lounge, laundry, a conservatory and garden space. This provides many opportunities for residents to socialise.

North Glasgow Housing Association has plans to completely redecorate and refurbish both the residents' homes and the communal facilities at Hawthorn Street.

Within every Very Sheltered apartment there is an alarm linked to a 24 hour control centre, giving added peace of mind, that help is always at hand.

The article featured two residents - John Clay, a sprightly 92-year-old who has lived at Hawthorn Street since 2006, and Jessie Wallace who has lived in

the complex for seven years.

John, originally from Sierra Leone, has met the Queen, Prince Phillip and Pope John Paul II in a fascinating life.

Jessie is regarded as an unsung hero at Hawthorn Street, always busy helping others.

She says: "I really enjoy living here and there's always something going on, from singing breakfasts to fish supper nights, there's never a dull moment."

Jessie has noticed a big improvement in the grounds at Hawthorn Street since North Glasgow HA took charge just under a year ago. She says: "The grassed areas around the complex are kept neat and tidy thanks to ng2 who are here at least once a week and the conservatory and garden area also looks really good."



Jessie Wallace

Assistant Gemma Plommer, Manager Sharon Hazlett and Housing Support Officer Chris Quayle also featured.

Staff at Hawthorn Very Sheltered always embrace opportunities to involve the residents at the complex.

An example of this was when they helped bake scones and cakes with the residents to take part in the World's Biggest Coffee Morning in aid of Macmillan Cancer Care.

ng2 working for you...

ng2 is a wholly-owned subsidiary company that delivers a range of services for North Glasgow HA including close cleaning, bulk pull-through and de-littering of back courts. The company also employs an environmental 'Hit Squad' who carry out both planned and reactive work to ensure that the environment in and around the Association's properties is maintained in a safe condition.

The Hit Squad also operate the SWINGO machine which supports the work of the Council's Cleansing service in terms of street and pavement cleaning and addressing specific problems like dog fouling.

ng2 staff are also deployed in the Concierge service in all of the Association's multi-storey flats.

We also employ Joiners and an Electrician who carry out repairs to void properties and all of the Association's premises, and we have recently appointed a Painting Supervisor who will be overseeing the work requested by the Association and training ng2 staff in painting and decorating.

Pat Bradley, ng2's Facilities and Contracts Manager explains:

"ng2 is a Social Enterprise which exists to deliver high-quality services for the Association, its tenants and residents. Any surplus that may be generated by ng2 is gifted back to the Association for re-investment within the community for the benefit of all residents in North Glasgow.

"We work closely with Glasgow City Building who deliver training to ensure that ng2 trainees develop the skills, knowledge and experience required to achieve the SVQ Level 2 in Facilities Management."

More than 50 unemployed people have benefited from this training since ng2's inception in the summer of 2010 and the Company currently

employs over 40 people in full-time jobs in the north of Glasgow.

The Company anticipates continued growth in the years ahead in both the range of services and jobs.

ng2 facts:

- **The first 8 full-time employees were appointed in February 2011 and the company currently employs more than 40 people**
- **464 closes cleaned every week. That's over 24,000 closes a year, climbing over 1.2 million stairs!**
- **Between the SWINGO and the Green Machine they remove on average 4 cubic tonnes of refuse from the streets and pavements every week**

ng2 services include:

- Close Cleaning
- Bulk pull through (tenements)
- Bin area clean-ups
- Back courts de-littering
- Environmental Hit Squad
- Void property repairs & maintenance
- Stair Lighting contract
- Concierge recruitment

The main aims of the Social Enterprise Company are to deliver:

- High-quality effective and efficient services for the Association
- Training and create employment opportunities for local unemployed people
- Measurable community benefits in the North Glasgow area

ng2 review

ng2 held its first annual staff meeting in February to review the first full year of operation, look at service improvements and plan for future years.

We reviewed all services and all staff were given the opportunity to make suggestions on how we can do things differently and better in future.

The well attended meeting also provided an opportunity for ng2 staff to meet other colleagues.

Many good ideas were discussed and some will be implemented to grow and develop the business.

Thanks to the positive feedback regular quarterly staff meetings will now be held to involve staff more in business development.

Martin Baker, 25, who has worked with ng2 since its early days, said: "I was unemployed for

eight months and was so low in confidence I nearly didn't go for the interview.

"I'm glad I did because working here has really turned my life around. I like being part of something and getting to know people.

"In the really bad weather we helped to dig out cars, clear and grit paths and often went to the shops for people who couldn't get out. People remember that and we have built up good relationships with local people in the area."

Martin said of the staff event: "It was a great

idea as it gave all the staff the opportunity to put their ideas forward to the managers. Not every organisation provides an opportunity to have your say on how things are done and how they could be done better."



Focus on

HEALTH



discomfort now could mean a lot less pain later.” Catherine says women who feel a lump on their breast must go to the doctor. It could be nothing more than a cyst but it must be checked out.

A mammogram can result in different outcomes. It could be perfectly normal or there could be a recall because of a

technical problem or a patient may be referred for an ultrasound scan and maybe further investigation.

Catherine says: “Early detection is the key as there is a high success rate in the treatment of breast cancer.”

Catherine knows a number of staff and tenants of North Glasgow HA through her husband Robert and the close links formed before his retirement from Anniesland College.

Her commitment to the fight against cancer goes beyond work and this summer she plans to walk around 100 kilometres for Cancer Research.

North Glasgow HA's logo will be on her T-shirt along with Scvlptvr (Sculptur) Hair Design and possibly other sponsors.

She'll take part in Walk the Walk, an overnight marathon in Edinburgh, the Glasgow 5K Race for Life, two other all women walks in Falkirk and Stirling and Shine, a marathon distance walk in Glasgow.

Her friends and family not only promised support – some said they'd join the walks so they could have some fun as there's a great party atmosphere at the events. She would encourage others to join her at the Glasgow 5K Race for Life and hopes to see you there.

For more information about cancer research, including details of the Race for Life events, visit: www.cancerresearchuk.org

Six letters have the ability to strike fear – cancer. But early detection increases the chances of beating the disease.

Statistics for all types of cancer show that, on average, one in three people will have cancer at some stage in their lives.

Some forms can be treated much better than others but early detection is a vital ingredient.

Catherine Maguire, lead sonographer at Monklands General Hospital, says:

“In general terms, the earlier something is diagnosed, the earlier treatment can start and the better the potential outcome.

“There may be an easier path to go along the earlier it is detected and the treatment may be less intensive. For example, a small lump could be removed and that will be it.

“Not all cancers will kill you. Things have moved on over the years. Thanks to research there is better treatment, better support and we are better at dealing with things.”

Within three years of reaching the age of 50, women should become part of the National Breast Screening programme and receive a letter to visit a mobile van. That is an appointment every woman should keep.

Catherine says there can be a level of discomfort but different people have different pain thresholds and not everyone reacts in the same way.

But she adds: “A little

welfare benefits...

TAX CREDITS

Changes to both working tax credit and child tax credit were made on 6th April.

The income limit for child tax credit went down for **most** people. Find out by checking your award notice.

The rules for couples with at least one child also changed.

In **most** cases to qualify your joint working hours will need to be at least 24 hours a week.

This will mean:

- If you both work, your joint weekly hours must be at least 24 with one of you working at least 16 hours a week
- If only one of you works that person must be working at least 24 hours a week
- If neither of these apply your working tax credit will have stopped from 6th April

There are some exceptions to these new rules - for further information contact your Welfare Benefit Officer.

BACKDATING

Previously, tax credit payments could be backdated for up to three months before the date a claim is received. This has now been reduced to one month.

50 OR OVER

If you are getting the extra amount of working tax credit called the **50 plus element** this also stopped from 6 April which could mean your payments have gone down.

To continue to receive payments you will need to be working the following hours. If you are **not** responsible for at least one child you or your partner will need to work at least:

- 30 hours a week
- 16 hours a week if you are aged 60 or over or entitled to the disability element of working tax credit

If you **are** responsible for at least one child you will still likely qualify for working tax credit if:

You are single and working at least 16 hours per week

You are in a couple and meet the new rules for couples.



Rent Team - here to help

NON-DEPENDANT CHARGES

If you qualify for housing benefit/ council tax benefit and have someone over the age of 18 living with you then your award **may** be reduced, depending on you and your non-dependants circumstances. This is called a non-dependant charge.

From 1 April 2012 non-dependant charges increased from:

- £9.40 to £11.45
- £21.55 to £26.25
- £29.60 to £36.10
- £48.45 to £59.05
- £55.20 to £67.25
- £60.60 to £73.85

If you currently have a non-dependant charge and wish to discuss the increases then please contact your Welfare Benefit Officer.

DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS

Discretionary housing payments are extra payments that can be made by Glasgow City Council to help meet your rent and council tax costs. You need to be in receipt of partial housing/council tax benefit and must show that you require some financial assistance to meet your housing costs.

Application are available at your local North Glasgow HA office; if you wish to apply please contact a member of the rent team.

Glasgow City Council now provide a one stop shop for access to all Council Tax and Housing Benefit online services.

The Self Service facility allows you to view information about your individual Council Tax and Housing Benefit account online.

Once you have registered you can:

COUNCIL TAX

- View your council tax details online
- Pay your council tax
- Report a change of address
- Sign up for a direct debit
- Search for a council tax band
- Apply for a council tax exemption and discount

HOUSING BENEFIT

- View your housing benefit and council tax benefit online
- LHA room calculator
- Benefits calculator
- Apply for housing and council tax benefit online

To register log onto Glasgow City Council website and follow the link to online services.

HONORARY MEMBERSHIP FOR ALISON



During her time as a Finance Officer with North Glasgow HA, Alison Hood has taken part in some amazing fund raising activities for Scottish Autism.

Now the charity has recognised her efforts by awarding her Honorary Membership of Scottish Autism.

Alison was also presented with a gift made by Art Opportunities.

Since 2002, she had taken part in five overseas events to raise funds including trips to Peru, Malawi, China and Everest Base camp in Nepal.

Alison also regularly does collections at supermarkets, shopping centres and venues such as Hampden, Ibrox and Celtic Park. Over the last nine years Alison has raised many thousands of pounds and encouraged and inspired many other colleagues and friends to get involved.

Alison said: "I started fundraising for Scottish Autism because my friend's

two children were diagnosed as being on the spectrum. I saw first-hand how the charity helps her and her family and also how desperately Scottish Autism needs funds."

Last year she went to Vietnam where she completed a 400km bike ride from Ho Chi Minh City to Cambodia.

This year she has already committed to a husky trail in Lapland and a cycle challenge in Cuba.

Alison added: "The challenges have allowed me to experience cultures in some of the remotest parts of the world, and the challenging physical and mental aspects combined with the satisfaction of raising money for such a worthwhile cause make the experiences second to none.

"If anyone would like to join me on any of the up and coming adventures just visit Scottish Autism's fundraising page at www.scottishautism.com."

Playing in North Glasgow – THE OLD FASHIONED WAY!

Do you remember 1950, 1960, 1970 and even 1980 bc (before computers) when children would be out playing all day in the streets, backcourts and school playgrounds?

Yes, there were skint knees, tumbles and scrapes and coming back home with dirty hands and faces - but with big smiles. You could hear the laughter from the children as they looked at their streets as 'one big adventure playground'. When building dens, playing skipping ropes, rounders, kick the can, marbles, riding their bikes and playing football kept them occupied for hours. Where have those days gone where children have lost the opportunity to 'just play'?

Research has shown that play is very important to a child's development from the very early years and this helps them in their journey through life. It helps their brain development, communication with other children, problem solving, health and happiness.

Over the past year North Glasgow Housing Association has been supporting 'traditional play activities' through funding from Inspiring Scotland. The Playbusters 'play rangers' have been bringing back traditional play to Keppoch

campus during lunch breaks.

Housing Services staff Liz McMillan and Debbie McNally went along to Keppoch Campus during the recent spell of good weather to join in the fun. Debbie said: "It was brilliant to see the children having such a great time, playing peever, walking on stilts and playing ropes. It's a pity we had to go back to the office, it was such great fun." Liz added: "It reminded us of the games we used to play when we were at school"

Free Play Worker Gillian Quail said: "The children have been really enthusiastic about trying out all the equipment we take along, they really enjoy getting to draw with the chalk. We have a line of children all wanting to take part in the skipping."

Head teacher Evelyn Gibson is delighted with the traditional play at Keppoch Campus, she said: "The children are really excited about Playbusters and the Go Play team coming in to the school and they look forward to it every week."



Focus on

our YOUTH

Two Possil youngsters had a day out to remember when they were chosen as mascots for the Scottish Communities League Cup semi-final between Celtic and Falkirk.

Billie Urquhart came out as one of eleven mascots with the Falkirk team while Daniel Duffy came out with his favourite team, Celtic.

Young Peoples Futures were given the chance to nominate mascots for the game through the Winning Scotland Foundation.

Ann Lawrance, Project Manager of Young Peoples Futures, said: "Our staff were asked to put forward nominations.

"There were a number of factors that had to be taken into account including attendance, commitment to the project, the work they did on the programme and their behaviour in the project and also in

the wider community.

"There were a number of nominations but Billie and Daniel topped the list."

Billie, pictured second left in the front row, actually supports Celtic too and was accompanied to the match by her uncle.

Daniel, bottom left in the green shirts, went with his dad.

The youngsters thoroughly enjoyed their experience and after leading the teams onto the field took up their seats near the dugouts to watch the game which Celtic won 3-1.



Litter Heroes...



Youngsters from Keppoch Campus have been getting lessons on the environment as well as other green issues.

A 'bug hotel' has been established in the grounds and some of the pupils have also been involved in a clean up campaign.

Some of them are pictured with North Glasgow Housing Officer Terri McChesney.

Saplings to mark Jubilee

Youngsters at Keppoch Campus have planted saplings to commemorate the Queens Jubilee.

The school was given 60 free saplings, including 4 from the Royal Estate to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Queen's reign.

The school decided to buy another 800 saplings so that all of the children in the school, the nursery and stepping stones could take part.

Over 300 children and parents helped with the tree planting over two days. Children and parents planted a sapling and each of them had a dedication on it to a special person in their lives.

Help was on hand including staff from Greenspace, teachers and local volunteers.

Also assisting were volunteers from ng2, the subsidiary of North Glasgow Housing Association, who gave up their lunchtime to come along. Housing officers also gave up their time to work alongside the children.

Head teacher Evelyn Gibson said: "The children had a great time planting their saplings and it was great to see so many parents joining in. Many thanks too for all those who gave up their time to volunteer."

Moving on...

Some familiar faces have decided to retire this year from North Glasgow HA.

Robert McKinnon, Silvana Jannetta, Jack Bennett and Sandra Buchanan have all moved on to begin new chapters in their lives.

The Board, Area Committees and staff all got together recently to thank them for their service to North Glasgow and wish them good luck for the future.



Robert McKinnon, Silvana Jannetta and Jack Bennett.

New Regen staff Margaret Layden and Jenie Lamont help Arlene Rush and Agnes Phillips out on the North Glasgow stand at International Women's Day...



SCOTCASH SAVES RESIDENTS OVER £3,000 IN INTEREST

Since the launch last October of the new Scotcash service in the offices of North Glasgow Housing Association, many tenants and residents have benefited from affordable loans and access to financial advice.

The Association and Scotcash have been working together on an innovative six-month pilot to bring financial services closer to tenants and help reduce the cost of borrowing. The service also helps provide access to money advice and credit union savings accounts.

Emma Paterson from Scotcash is now a familiar face in the Association's Springburn office and she has seen over 400 people.

Many clients are single parents dependent on benefits and may have previously had to rely on very expensive forms of credit, paying up to 272% APR or even more in some cases.

Since opening on 24th October 2012, Scotcash has made over 100 loans worth almost £55,000.

On a like for like loan with an expensive door step lender this has meant a saving of £3,282 for tenants and residents, which is more money in their pockets at a time when incomes are being squeezed.

Many have also been able to get advice on debt and help with their finances as a result of the new service, which can make a big difference in addressing financial worries.

Emma explained: "Many people think they have no option but to pay huge amounts of interest to borrow. We are hopefully beginning



to raise awareness in North Glasgow that there is an alternative and that the more affordable choice is Scotcash." Emma is available to see clients Monday – Friday 10am till 4pm and you can book an appointment by calling the Scotcash office on **0141 276 0525**.

Clean Glasgow Campaign...

A crack down on irresponsible owners who refuse to clean up after their pets has been launched by Clean Glasgow.

As well as continuing to issue fixed penalty notices to those caught in the act, teams from Glasgow City Council and Glasgow Community and Safety Services will, for the first time, use CCTV and witness statements to issue them retrospectively.

Dog wardens will uplift animals that are stray or not under proper control.

And Clean Glasgow will work with landlords, where possible - and use antisocial behaviour legislation where it is not - to tackle persistent offenders.

Ultimately, this may mean going to court to

remove an animal permanently, if offenders do not respond to other sanctions.

Teams will tackle hotspots identified by communities.

People are being encouraged to identify and report owners who do not clean up after their dogs. The hotline number is **0800 027 7027**.

Leader of Glasgow City Council, Councillor Gordon Matheson said: "People hate dog fouling because it has a really negative impact on how they view their city, their street or even their own close.

"It is dirty, dangerous and antisocial. It is also completely unnecessary and, through the Clean Glasgow campaign, we need to take it seriously.

"For some reason, a minority of people think

this behaviour is perfectly acceptable. Even worse, they think they'll never be caught.

"I want to turn that on its head. We are going to target dog fouling with a much heavier hand - using intense resources; enforcement officers, CCTV and direct communication with local residents.

"We will chase payment from people who are fined; we will impound dogs if they are not under proper care and control, and we will use every tool in the box to confront persistent offenders.

"Ultimately, that will mean going to court to argue that some people are just not fit to look after an animal - and to put their dog into a better home where it will be properly cared for."

Cheaper Contents Insurance

A special home contents insurance service is being offered to Scotland's tenants.

The initiative has been introduced by THIS Tenant Contents, a trading style of Thistle Insurance Services.

Like most housing providers, North Glasgow HA includes buildings insurance as part of the housing service.

But the cover does not extend to contents which is the responsibility of tenants.

The Association has introduced a free insurance deal for those aged over 60 years or who have a disability. This is still available to tenants who qualify and anyone not already taking advantage should contact their housing officer or visit the Association's offices.

Other tenants may be interested in the

new service from THIS Tenants Contents.

They offer flexible regular pay-as-you-go payment options, fortnightly or monthly cash, monthly by direct debit or annually.

Their package includes no excess - their clients don't pay the first part of the claim - and cover for theft, water damage, fire and much more.

There is no minimum home security requirement and additional cover is available for extended accidental damage, wheelchairs and mobility scooters, hearing aids and buildings cover for sheds, greenhouses and garages.

For more information or a free information pack contact:

North Glasgow HA

or email: tenantscontents@jltgroup.com

or for immediate cover call THIS Tenants Contents on lo-call 0845 601 7007.

EMERGENCY REPAIRS SERVICE

North Glasgow Housing Association has changed the way it delivers the Emergency Repairs Service. All emergency repairs (except heating) will be delivered by City Building (Glasgow) LLP during the hours of:

WEEK DAYS MON - FRI 5:00PM - 09:00 AM

WEEKENDS FROM 5:00PM on FRI through TO 9:00AM on MON

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 24 HOURS PER DAY

To report an Emergency Repair during the above times simply dial the 24hr Call Centre

FREEPHONE 0800 595 595

Please note that some mobile service providers may charge their standard call rate

EMERGENCY GAS REPAIRS

To report a Gas Central Heating Emergency Repair at any time, including weekends and public holidays simply call City Technical:

0141 646 5091

All Gas Central Heating repairs should be reported on this number.



How to get in touch with us:

SPRINGBURN OFFICE

Ned Donaldson House, 50 Reidhouse Street, Springburn, Glasgow G21 4LS
Tel: **0141 560 6000**

POSSILPARK OFFICE

252 Saracen Street, Possilpark, Glasgow G22 5LF
Tel: **0141 336 1300**

email: info@northglasgowha.com

www.northglasgowha.com