

CATHCART STANDARD



CDHA
Cathcart & District Housing Association



The Newsletter of Cathcart & District Housing Association

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Covid-19 Updates

Although the pandemic is still with us and arguably getting more severe again, we are pleased to announce that all our services are now operating normally.



Repairs

Our repairs service is fully operational now along with gas servicing. All our contractors are provided with full PPE and every effort is made to ensure the safety and comfort of all our customers.

Allocations

We are once more able to carry out allocations and again social distancing and PPE is in use to ensure tenants safety during viewings and sign ups.

Welfare Rights

Our welfare rights staff are able to hold face to face meetings by appointment only to ensure that everyone has access to the correct financial support to enable tenancies to be managed well.

Offices

Our offices remain closed to the public with all office staff working from home and only using the office on an ad hoc basis in small numbers to ensure we provide a full service.

Phones

Our normal number is still in use with the calls being diverted to the appropriate member of staff so please continue to call us as normal.

External services

Close cleaning, bin store maintenance and grass cutting have all been operating fully since June 2020 and our maintenance staff are carrying out regular checks in these areas.

Bulk Uplift

Glasgow City Council has not yet resumed bulk uplift which can present problems with large items being stored outside. If you are able to take items of bulk to the Polmadie Recycling Centre you will be able to dispose of bulk there without charge.

Going forward...

We continually keep up to date with the Scottish Government Guidelines and share information through our affiliated bodies such as Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations (GWSF) and Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA) to ensure that our services remain in line with the current guidelines.

It has been a difficult time for everyone and we appreciate your patience in relation to all our services. Please do ensure you contact our staff about anything that worries you about your tenancy and especially if you find you are struggling with your rent. Your Housing Officer will be sympathetic and only too happy to assist in any way they can in this respect.



Energy Performance Upgrades

CDHA have been working with Save Scotland Energy and Union Technical Services to upgrade energy efficiency within our stock to meet the Scottish Government Guidance.

The Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) aims to improve the energy efficiency of social housing in Scotland. It will help to reduce energy consumption, fuel poverty and the emission of greenhouse gases.

As part of this project we have been carrying out internal insulation and heating system upgrades to our qualifying properties.

This involves fixing ridged insulating board to the interior of the exterior facing walls to stop heat loss within the properties.

We have also been upgrading low performance storage heating with new gas fired energy efficient combi heating systems, allowing for a far more cost effective and energy efficient heating system.

The first phase of upgrades will benefit twenty-two qualifying properties. We are currently carrying out surveys of our properties to secure more funding for the next phase.

The feedback from our tenants has been great throughout the process and we look forward to moving this project forward.

Gas Servicing Update

We can advise that our gas servicing contractor City Building are now sending out appointment cards which you should receive 2 weeks prior to the date of your gas service visit. A staff member of the Association will then contact you to confirm the appointment and you must inform them if you are showing any symptoms of the coronavirus, or are classed as in the vulnerable category group. Even if any of these issues apply City Building will still be able to carry out your service however, additional safety measures will be put in place to ensure yours and the engineer's safety during the Coronavirus outbreak.

On the day of your service the engineer will also contact you before their arrival to confirm that your situation has not changed in any way which will affect how the level of service is provided.

The operating hours for City Building gas servicing department have now been extended to include 8am – 8pm 7 days a week working. These times should help you to schedule in a convenient time should the first appointment not be suitable.

Please be aware of the importance of your annual gas safety service/safety check which the Association is required by law to be carried out annually.

FIGHTING FOR A GAS SAFE NATION

Only a Gas Safe registered engineer has the superpower to fit, fix or service your gas appliances safely and legally.

GasSafetyWeek.co.uk

Keep your home safe

Gas Safe Register is the official list of gas engineers who are qualified to work safely and legally on gas appliances.

☒

Check your gas appliances every year.

Gas appliances should be safety checked once a year and serviced regularly by a Gas Safe registered engineer.

Tenants – make sure your landlord arranges this.

☒

Check if your engineer is Gas Safe registered.

You can find and check an engineer at GasSafeRegister.co.uk or call 0800 408 5500.

☒

Check your engineer's Gas Safe Register ID card.

Make sure they are qualified for the work you need doing.

You can find this information on the back of the card.

Unsafe gas appliances can put you at risk from carbon monoxide poisoning, gas leaks, fires and explosions. Stay safe and help your loved ones stay safe in their homes too. For more information visit GasSafetyWeek.co.uk

Competition Winners



Rose McQuarry

Rose received two nominations and was described by one of her neighbours as a “god send in these awful times”. Rose’s neighbours appreciate all the time and effort she puts into the garden to keep it beautiful, and residents can sit out and take pleasure in the garden with the variety of flowers, shrubs and plants, and even fruit which Rose has planted for all to enjoy. We were also informed that Rose does not think twice about offering help and asks for nothing in return.

Thank you Rose!

In the last issue of our newsletter, we asked for nominations for our “Good Neighbour Competition”. This competition gave the opportunity to reward those who went out of their way to help their neighbours and community during the lockdown period.

We received many nominations and have chosen three competition winners.

Robert Hughes

Robert received two nominations from his neighbours and we were notified that Robert has gone above and beyond to help out all of his neighbours in any way he possibly could. Robert has been washing elderly residents’ windows, cleaning the bins, scrubbing balconies, cleaning the back close, going out and getting medication for vulnerable residents, and also arranging to get food parcels delivered.

Thank you Robert!

Lesley Dunan

Lesley received a nomination for being a good neighbour as she offered to go out to the shops and collect anything anyone in the close needed if they were unable to get out themselves. In the first week of lockdown, Lesley put a note on the close door letting everyone know that she was there to assist in any way she could.

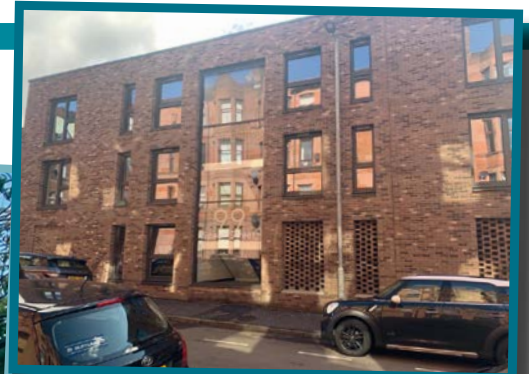
Thank you Lesley!

Garden Maintenance

Our contractor Nurture started the garden maintenance contract in April 2020 and have been carrying out general garden tidy ups, cutting grass and also trimming hedges and bushes.



Development



Former Holmlea Primary School 91 and 99 Spean Street, Cathcart, G44 4FA

Cathcart and District Housing Association is pleased to announce that on 5th August 2020 the Association took possession of 10 two bedroom flats within the grounds of the former Holmlea Primary School overlooking Tulloch Street and Spean Street. Although the new flats look over Tulloch Street, the new address will be 91 and 99 Spean Street. This is based on the address of the former school building as the main entrance to the development is located on Spean Street.

Works have been ongoing to the grounds which are now starting to come together and proving to be a very nice centre piece to our local area. The workmen involved have worked hard under difficult lockdown restrictions to ensure that there has been as little disruption to the project and that the timescales were met as quick as possible and for that we thank you.

The flats have been let quickly and all those who viewed the flat were very impressed with the finishes and space inside. We hope that not only our residents but also those out with the Association enjoy their lovely new homes and we wish you all the best in the new development.



Newlands Road/Holmhead Place

We are continuing our talks with Glasgow City Council following feasibility studies having been carried out at these two locations, in respect of funding. The contract will entail making the common areas good and addressing issues of settlement at 206 Newlands Road. Glasgow City Council are currently assessing our proposal with a view to agreeing grant funding. This will be dependent on the Council's allocation of funding from the Scottish Government.

Delvin Road

We have entered a further bid for the ground on Delvin Road being marketed by City Property LLP. We await the outcome of that marketing process. If successful we anticipate being able to provide a further 8 or 12 flats at a future date.

Feasibility Studies – a brief overview

Feasibility studies are carried out in order to inform the Association as to whether it is possible to carry out works that we would like to do.

A team of professional consultants are appointed – Architect, Engineer, Quantity Surveyor and our Development Consultant. The Development Consultant in conjunction with the Association writes a brief for the team. They visit the sites, the Architect measures the areas and designs (in the case of new build) what would fit on the site and make the best use of the space, in conjunction the Engineer checks the land and informs the group what measures need to

be taken in order to allow the design to be built, looking at ground structure and levels etc.

Once that is known the Quantity Surveyor provides an estimate of what the scheme would cost to build. He bases his costs on recent real cases to be as accurate as possible prior to the scheme being tendered on the open market. We call this a Cost Plan and that allows us to seek approval from Glasgow City Council for funding and the permission to take the project forward.

We are currently considering the possibility of two further feasibility studies and will bring you news of these in the next newsletter.



Welfare Rights



Do you need advice about Benefits or Debt?

CDHA's Welfare Rights and Money Advice Team can provide assistance over the phone, by email or via What's App.

Where tenants have difficulty accessing our services via phone or internet, we can provide appointments in our Cathcart office at 3/5 Rhannan Road, Cathcart, G44 3AZ. Staff and Tenants must follow the strict protocols in place to ensure safety. These will be explained in detail when an appointment is made.

Contact Us:

Telephone: 0141 422 1112 option 4
Email: advice@southside-ha.co.uk

Welfare Rights can help you to:

- Choose the right benefit or grant
- Check you get the maximum correct award
- Fill in benefit claim forms
- Deal with letters about benefits
- Appeal against benefit decisions, and represent you at hearings

We give assistance with all benefits including; Universal Credit; Employment and Support Allowance; PIP; DLA; Attendance Allowance; Tax Credits; Housing Benefit; Council Tax Reduction and discounts; Best Start Grants; Funeral Payments; Carer's Allowance and many more.

Are you worried about debt?

Our Money Advice Service offers free confidential, impartial and independent debt advice.

We can review your Finances, prioritise your debts and complete a Financial statement which includes details of your income and expenditure. We will then give you advice on what options are suitable for you and provide you with necessary information to help you make a decision. We will contact your creditors and negotiate with them on your behalf.

We can also assist with accessing cheaper fuel tariffs, and can liaise with your utility provider to resolve disputes about your bills.



Example Case Study:

A Housing Association tenant was referred to us by his Housing Officer, he had been furloughed in April due to the Covid-19 lockdown, he underwent major surgery in June. His employer asked him to return to work at the beginning of August, but he was not fit to do so, his condition will be long term. As his job is physical, his employer asked him to resign. He had submitted a Personal Independence Payments claim 3 months ago, but has not been assessed. He had also submitted a Universal Credit Claim in March, but due to his furlough income, no payments had been made for several months. His last pay was taken by direct debits, and he had no income for food or utilities, and would not receive a Universal Credit payment for another 4 weeks.

We applied to the Scottish Welfare Fund for a crisis grant, he was awarded £197, we applied for a fuel voucher for his pre-payment meter, and he was awarded £25 top up, we also arranged for a food

parcel to be delivered to his home, as he is currently unable to go out independently.

We advised him to retract his resignation, as he had an entitlement to Statutory Sick Pay, he did this successfully. We also advised he report the change of circumstances on his Universal Credit claim. We completed applications for council tax reduction and for a discretionary housing payment to mitigate the bedroom tax, as he has an extra bedroom. We submitted a complaint to the DWP regarding the delay in processing his Personal Independence Payments claim highlighting the hardship caused, this put pressure on the DWP to process the claim as a matter of urgency. He was assessed the following week and given an award.

Our Money Adviser assisted by negotiating with his creditors for a payment break until his benefits were in place.

Warm Home Discount

The Warm Home Discount is a one-off payment of £140 that goes towards your heating costs. It is usually paid directly to your energy supplier which will then apply the discount to your bill. If you have a pre-payment meter, you'll be sent a £140 voucher that you can use to top up your account.

The discount applies between September and March and can also be used towards a gas bill if you have the same supplier for both gas and electricity.

There are two ways you can be eligible for the payment:

- If you get the guarantee credit element of pension credit you'll be in what's called the core group.
- If you're on a low income and meet your supplier's criteria you'll be in what's referred to as the broader group.

All of the big six energy suppliers have recently opened their applications for winter 2020/2021. You can apply online using the following web addresses.

British Gas	www.britishgaswarmhomediscount.com
Scottish Power	www.scottishpower.co.uk/whd
Npower	www.npower.com/help-and-support/extra-support/warm-home-discount/
E-on	www.eonenergy.com/warm-home-discount
EDF	www.edfenergy.com/for-home/help-support/warm-home-discount
SSE	www.sse.co.uk/whdonline

Scottish Government announce help to support tenants



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

New measures to help with housing costs during the pandemic.

A new £10 million fund will be part of a package to support people struggling to pay their rent due to financial difficulty associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Tenant Hardship Loan Fund will open later in the Autumn and offer interest-free loans to those unable to access other forms of support for their housing costs.

The Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) fund which

helps tenants in receipt of benefits will increase by £3 million, bringing the total to £19 million. This is in addition to the £60 million DHP budget already being used to fully mitigate the bedroom tax.

If you require help to apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment please contact our Advice Team on 0141 422 1112 option 4.

Further information can be found at <https://www.gov.scot/news/supporting-tenants/>

TPAS Scotland's Scrutiny Week

On 16th, 17th and 18th November 2020, TPAS Scotland will be holding free online sessions on Microsoft Teams which are open to everyone – tenants, residents, staff and governing body members. Between 10.15am and 12.30pm, TPAS Scotland's Scrutiny Week will cover:



tenant
participation
advisory service

Monday 16th November – Introducing scrutiny

- Discovering why the Scottish Government and the Scottish Housing Regulator promote Scrutiny
- Investigating with TPAS Scotland, making scrutiny work in your organisation.

Tuesday 17th November – Using & reporting performance

- Exploring with Housemark Scotland, how performance information can aid tenants and staff to work together to deliver the services tenants want
- Examining how NG Homes, Fife Council and Fyne Homes' share and use performance information with tenants.

- Wednesday 18th November – Scrutiny in action
- Identifying how Scrutiny Networks can help tenants support each other's scrutiny activities
- Discovering the benefits scrutiny has given from:
- Link Housing Association's Scrutiny Panel
- Kingdom Housing Association's Scrutiny Panel
- Aberdeen City Council's Housing Service Review Group

If you are interested in attending any of the above sessions please contact Emma on emma@cathcartha.co.uk.

More information can be found at <https://www.tpasscotland.org.uk/default-events/>

AGM

Our AGM was held on 21st September 2020 by Zoom. We are especially grateful to members being able to join us through this medium and are pleased to report that it was well attended and all the business was able to be accommodated.

As a tenant or owner in our area of operation you are able to take out a share membership which will then allow you to attend the AGM in future years. If you are interested in becoming a Shareholder (price £1.00) and would like to find out more about what that means please contact the office and our Director will be happy to chat to you about this. Alternatively, please complete the form contained within this newsletter and return it to the office.

Super Volunteer

One of our Committee Members Bobby Pollock was described as a "super volunteer" in the Glasgow Times and has been volunteering since 1984.

Bobby has volunteered at many organisations such as the Glasgow Children's Panel, Victim Support Scotland, Childline, Citizens Advice and Glasgow Children's Hospital. In addition, Bobby has been on two school boards, his local crime prevention panel, his local areas Neighbourhood Watch scheme and has also been on CDHA's Management Committee for the past few years.

Bobby has helped out at numerous events, including the Davis Cup, the 2018 European Championships and the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, where he was a Queen's Baton bearer in the city.

Notably, when the coronavirus hit, Bobby signed up to be a delivery driver for Glasgow South West Food Bank to make sure that families in need where receiving vital supplies during lockdown.



How to contact us: Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd, 3/5 Rhannan Road, Cathcart, Glasgow G44 3AZ. Tel: 0141 633 2779 or e-mail info@cathcartha.co.uk

www.cathcartha.co.uk



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