

Westworld



Official Newsletter of West of Scotland Housing Association

Winter 2025 edition

Here to support you this winter



Inside: festive period office closure, all the ways our teams can bring you extra help and support this winter, transforming abandoned houses into family homes; fire and asbestos safety, and events from around your communities this winter



West of
Scotland
Housing
Association

Welcome



Welcome to the winter issue of Westworld, and all the latest news and updates from across our organisation.

It's been a very busy year for us and I wanted to take the chance to thank everyone who joined us over the summer for our 60th

anniversary celebrations— we had a lovely time meeting so many of you and hearing your stories. Thankyou for making WSHA neighbourhoods fantastic places to live for the last six decades!

Even as we enjoy the festivities, we know that the winter can be a difficult time for many. Read more about help available to you from our team, including advice and support around money and energy, older people's services and help getting to grips with digital technology on page 12.

In this issue you can also find details of our upcoming rent consultation, which will take place in Jan 2026. This is a cornerstone our tenant engagement activities, so please do be in touch to let us know your thoughts once you receive your consultation letter.

As ever, our friendly Customer Service team are the first port of call for any enquiries, so if there's anything you would like help or advice about related to your home, please give them a phone on 0141 550 5600 or email customer.service@westscot.co.uk

Best Wishes,

Simon Fitzpatrick

Chief Executive

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Winter break office opening hours and emergency contact numbers

WSHA offices will be closed over the Christmas break between 2pm Wednesday 24th December 2025 and 9am Tuesday 6th January 2026.

If you need an emergency repair during this time you will be able to contact our emergency line on 0141 550 5600 and you will be transferred to our out-of-hours service.



News from around the Association

Strong results in our 2024/25 annual report, with 92% of our tenants feeling their rent is good value for money

Every year we produce our Annual Charter Report, which reports our performance against metrics set by the Scottish Housing Network. These numbers are reported on by all Housing Associations in Scotland, allowing easy comparison across social landlords to help you get a clear idea of who performs strongly in the areas that matter to you, like complaints response times, management of antisocial behaviour and housing quality.

We are pleased to report that our performance this year has been strong across all categories, reflecting our commitment to continually improving our homes and our services.

Standout results include:

96% of our homes met the Scottish Housing Quality Standard, against the SHN average of 87.2% and up on last year's figure of 91%

Our average time to complete non-emergency repairs was just **4.77 days** - nearly half the SHN average of 8.9 days

It took us on average only **9.3 days** to respond to second stage complaints - very strong performance against the SHN average of 21.4 days.

On average our homes stayed empty for only **29 days** between tenants against the SHN average of 63 days

92% of our tenants feel their rent is value for money, against the SHN average of 81.1%

You can read the full report, including our financial information, over on our website at www.Westscot.co.uk/performance.

If you require a copy of the Annual Charter Report in a different format, such as Large Print, please be in contact with us via telephone 0141 550 5600 or e-mail customer.service@westscot.co.uk.



We're on track to half our carbon emissions by 2030

We know that when we find greener, more energy-efficient ways of doing what to do, we're passing savings onto our tenants, and creating better homes and neighbourhoods for you to live in – for now and the future.

We've just released our 2024/25 Environmental, Social and Governance Report, which you can read in full over on our website at <https://westscot.co.uk/strategies-and-policies/>. But here are just a few of our green successes from the last year:

- Air Source Heat Pump, Solar Panels & Battery Storage installed in 31 properties at Hill Road, Cumbernauld as part of a major upgrade to the properties compete
- Full cavity wall insulation extraction and replacement with 'injected bead' insulation at a block of four properties at Crookston Road, Glasgow
- Installation of secure cycle storage at WSHA offices and in our communities, plus the purchase of two e-bikes for staff usage when travelling in our communities
- First residents' gardening courses at Cowlairston Molly Weir Garden, encouraging community growing and bringing the garden back into use as a community space
- Doubled the number of homes we were able to help claim Warm Home Discount payments, helping tackle fuel poverty for tenants



In all WSHA's carbon emissions dropped another 8% – down 36% from our baseline year of 2019 and putting us strongly on track to meet our target of halving our emissions by 2030.

Our Assurance Statement 2025

As part of the Scottish Housing Regulator's Requirements, the WSHA Board have submitted their Annual Assurance Statement. The statement provides assurance that West of Scotland Housing Association group are fully compliant with the Regulatory Standards and Requirements. In particular, we confirm that we are compliant with the requirements around tenant and resident safety areas including fire safety, electrical safety, damp & mould and Legionella. You can view our Assurance Statement here: <https://westscot.co.uk/regulatory-information/>.



When creating our Assurance Statement process, we also consider what we can do to improve and feed this into our Annual Governance Improvement Plan. You can find this on the same webpage as above.

Meet the new Chair of our Board of Directors

WSHA has appointed Michael Sozansky as the new Chair of our board, taking the place of Kelly Adams, who has served her maximum term in the role.

Michael brings with him considerable experience in leadership and governance. Head of Compliance with Ofgem prior to his retirement, he joined the board of WSHA in 2021 and has also served as Chair of the Association's Development & Asset and Audit sub-committees, cultivating a deep understanding of WSHA's ethos and output.

Of his appointment, Michael said: 'It is a genuine privilege to be nominated and then elected as Chair of West of Scotland Housing Association, one of Scotland's leading RSLs, as much as it's been seeing the organisation go from strength to strength under the guidance of my predecessor, Kelly Adams. Having just celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Association, I'm honoured to be part of this incredibly hardworking team moving forward into the next 60.'



We've raised over £3000 for Alzheimer Scotland (so far!)

This year, WSHA selected Alzheimer Scotland as our Corporate charity.

We've had a busy year of fundraising, with the intrepid team WSHA abseiling, ziplining, walking, running, raffling and donating to raise a (current) total of £3535 for the charity. And we're not done yet! With a number of festive fundraisers coming up to make the most of the Christmas spirit, we're hoping to smash the £5000 mark before the end of the year.

If you'd like to support Alzheimer Scotland you can visit our GoFundMe page at:
<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/wsha-alzheimerscotland>

Thankyou



Your priorities for your homes – annual rent consultation

As part of our annual Tenant Satisfaction surveys, we asked tenants what your priorities are for your homes in terms of rental costs, services provided and ongoing investment. The feedback from this survey has been taken into consideration as part of our annual rent consultation process. Feedback from the surveys indicated that, while affordable rents are important, it is important to tenants that we maintain current service and investment levels by not having lower than planned rent increases.



Proposals for 2026/27

Taking this into account, WSHA is seeking your views on the proposal to increase our rents from 1 April next year (unless you have a rent guarantee in which case this will be explained in your rent increase consultation letter if you are due an increase next year). Our proposed increase will be detailed in a letter which will be sent **mid-January 2026** as part of a wider consultation exercise, and you can respond to the survey contained in it to give us your views on the proposed increase. The results of the survey will be taken into consideration when the Board decide the final increase towards the end of February. Tenants will then be advised of the agreed increase at the end of February.

Please note, if you are one of our mid-market rent tenants, this does not apply to you as your rent changes in June 2026 and we have already contacted you about your increase for next year.

Working in partnership to bring abandoned homes back to life in Sandyhills

When we acquired 35 Strowen Crescent in 2024, the abandoned house was in a state of disrepair. However, fast forward a year and a half and we're proud that through partnership working with GCC's Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability team and Sureserve Energy Services, we will soon be welcoming a new family to this fully repaired and refurbished two bedroom home.

WSHA's Head of Housing, Robert Campbell, said: 'This project demonstrates what can be achieved through collaboration and a strong, shared commitment to tackling the housing crisis. We thank all partners involved for their hard work and dedication and we remain committed to playing our part in delivering high-quality, affordable homes for those who need them most.'



Double funding success for Willowacre Trust

WSHA's charitable subsidiary Willowacre Trust have been selected as one of only 13 organisations across the UK to receive funding from Independent Age's Boosting Advice Fund.

The 3-year grant, totalling £135,000, will go directly towards supporting older people facing financial hardship. It will help expand Willowacre Trust's services with new one-to-one advice and support initiative Age Well - Live Well, which will provide individualised, holistic support for older people across the Glasgow area.

Willowacre Trust hope to reach 750 new individuals over the course of the initiative, with around 90% of these not previously known to the organisation.



Continuing the exciting funding news, Willowacre were also delighted to be one of seven recipients of the Scottish Government's £1m Upstream Homelessness Prevention Fund, with the grant supporting the 'Ready, Steady, Roots' project across WSHA neighbourhoods.

The 'Ready, Steady, Roots' project aims to identify individuals within a 6-month danger of homelessness, work with them to better understand their needs and support them to access the assistance they need with dignity and autonomy, encouraging them to put down long-term roots in their community.

Congratulations Tia!

This summer, Tia Coutts joined WSHA as our inaugural Irene Robertson fund intern, taking her first steps into a career in housing by undertaking a 16-week work placement with WSHA alongside completing a fully-funded Intro to Housing qualification with the Chartered Institute of Housing. We're pleased to report Tia passed her qualification with flying colours and recently applied for and secured the role of Retirement Assistant with Willowacre Trust! Congratulations Tia, great to welcome you to the team full time!



Do you know a young person who wants to step into a career in Housing?

The Irene Robertson fund was set up in 2025 in memory of a much-loved WSHA colleague who was passionate about lifelong learning. Every year we give one young person from our neighbourhoods, age 16-25, the opportunity to gain valuable practical and academic experience to help them take their first steps into a career in the Housing sector.

The Irene Robertson fund internship will be available again in 2026. If you know someone who might be interested, keep your eye on our website and our social media channels for more application information.

Thank you for joining us for our 60th celebrations

After a packed summer of local events, our 60th anniversary celebrations came to a close with Building the Future - our packed, all-day event at the Emirates Arena in the east end of Glasgow. Over a hundred tenants, colleagues and customers came along - it was fantastic to meet every one of you!

It was a busy day, with our teams from WSHA and our subsidiaries Willowacre Trust and Westscot Living on hand to answer your questions and chat with you about our services. There was also the chance to learn more about our innovative plans around AI and Net Zero technology and our upcoming development projects as we continue to build new homes around the country.

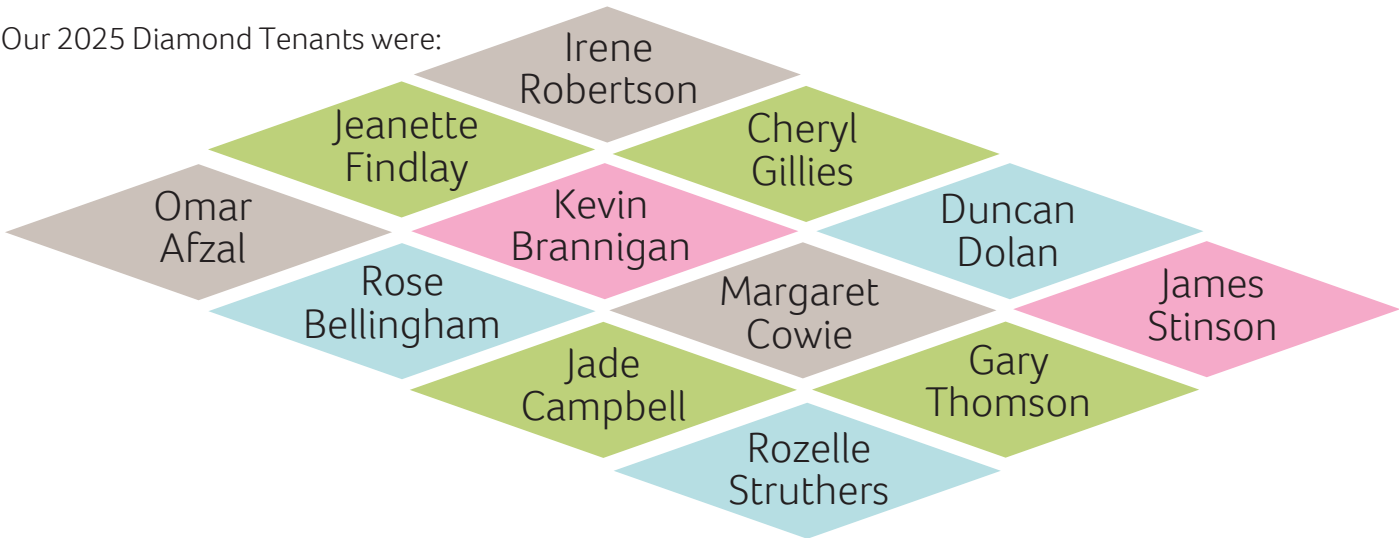
In amongst this, we were honoured to recognise a number of our tenants in our 60th anniversary competitions.



Our 2025 Diamond Tenants

Nominated by their own neighbours, our Diamond Tenants were recognised as tenants who consistently go above and beyond to be a real gem in their neighbourhoods. The kind of neighbours we all love to have!

Our 2025 Diamond Tenants were:



All of our Diamond Tenants received a trophy and a prize voucher. Thank you to everyone who took the time to nominate their neighbours, and thanks to our Diamond Tenants for helping to make their WSHA neighbourhoods fantastic places to live.

Gardening competition

The Gardening Competition has been a highly-anticipated event in the WSHA calendar since 1965!

We had some lovely entries for our 60th anniversary competition, and in August our judges went out to inspect the gardens in their full glory. Including reps from our tenant advisory group and our estates contractor Ideverde. In the end, we picked two exceptional gardens for prizes:

Liz Miller, Barrowfield - Winner



Marion Sneddon, Irvine - 2nd place



Well done Liz and Marion! You can see some photos from the winning gardens above.

I ♥ My Home children's art competition

We also enjoyed seeing the entries for our children's art competition come in from our younger household members! We were pleased to announce Garnethill resident Kayla, age 11, as the winner of our I ♥ My Home art competition. Kayla won £20 worth of Smiggle vouchers.

Well done Kayla!



Home advice

We have regular programmes of improvements and inspections that help keep our homes in a safe, risk-free condition so that you can live in comfort and peace-of-mind. But there are also some everyday actions you can take to make sure your home and your building remain as safe and secure as possible.

Find some information below on two of the more common safety issues tenants worry about: fire door and asbestos safety. If you have any worries or questions please contact our customer service team on 0141 550 5600 or customer.service@Westscot.co.uk and they will be happy to help.

Asbestos safety

What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring fibre that was widely used in UK buildings between the 1950s and the late 1990s. It may still be present in some home today. Asbestoscontaining materials (ACMs) may be found in areas such as:

- Ceiling or wall panels
- Floor tiles and the adhesive beneath them
- Pipe or boiler insulation
- Textured coatings (for example, Artex)



Asbestos cannot be identified by sight alone – only a lab test can confirm whether a material contains asbestos.

What you should do

If you plan to carry out any work that may affect your home, you must submit an alteration request before starting. This allows us to review the proposed work and ensure any necessary safety measures or inspections.

If you have any concerns about asbestos in your property, please give us a call on 0141 550 5600 or email customer.service@Westscot.co.uk.

Fire door safety

Why fire doors matter

Usually found in hallways, stairwells and at the flat entrance doors, fire doors help slow the spread of fire and smoke, keeping escape routes clear and giving everyone more time to get out of the building.

What fire doors do

- Protect your homes and communal areas
- Hold back fire and smoke
- Support safe evacuation

Your responsibilities

- Keep fire doors closed at all times
- Do not alter, replace or interfere with fire doors or door closers
- Keep communal areas and escape routes clear



If you see a problem

If a fire door is damaged or not closing properly please report it to us immediately via WSHA Customer Service by calling 0141 550 5600 or emailing customer.service@Westscot.co.uk.

Supporting you

Money worries? Our teams in income maximisation and welfare rights are here to help

With the holidays approaching, and the twin pressures of challenging living costs and expected festive celebrations, we know some in our communities are experiencing tough decisions in prioritising payments to essential household bills.

With the pressures on household incomes, we know that prioritising and maintaining rent payments can be difficult. If you're worried about being able to afford your rent or pay your rent on time, please be in contact with our friendly Income Maximization and Welfare Rights teams as soon as possible. We are here to help and will always do our best to find a solution that works for you.

Your rent is due on the 28th day of each month, in advance, and WSHA have procedures in place to monitor this. Please do not stop or reduce payments as this will result in debt which will need to be repaid. With the ongoing cost of living crisis affecting us all, please remember that any debt you find yourself in at this time of year may be more difficult to overcome in the new year than you expect.

Who are the Income Maximisation and Welfare Rights teams?

These two teams work together to help make sure WSHA tenants are receiving all the benefits they're entitled to, and that their rent accounts remain clear.

The role of the **Income Maximisation team** is to help tenants keep their rent accounts clear by providing advice, referring tenants for assistance and working out manageable, individualised repayment plans. You can contact our Income Maximisation team via IncomeMax@westscot.co.uk, or by direct dial on 0141 550 5059.

Our **Welfare Rights team** offer tenants advice and information relating to welfare benefits administered by Social Security Scotland, HMRC, DWP and local authorities and help make sure you are receiving the benefits you're entitled to. You can contact our Welfare Rights team by email at welfare.rights@westscot.co.uk or by direct dial on 0141 550 5662.



Some ways Willowacre Trust can support you this winter

Willowacre Trust provide community and support services to all of WSHA's tenants and their wider neighbourhoods. They make sure everyone has the support they need - from energy advice and starter packs to education courses and community facilities. All WSHA tenants can access support from Willowacre Trust free of charge, and they're always keen to work closer with our neighbourhoods to provide services that make a real difference to their lives.

Find out more about Willowacre's core services over at www.westscot.co.uk/willowacre/willowacre-home.



Are you eligible for the Warm Home Discount?

If you are the energy bill payer and in receipt of selected income-based benefits, you might be eligible for the Warm Home Discount - a small one-off payment from the government that goes towards your energy bills. But figuring out eligibility can be difficult, so we've created this short questionnaire to help: <https://shorturl.at/dZLbF>

Remember, Willowacre Trust's energy advice team are here for you if you need any help or advice around your energy bills including: managing debt, switching suppliers, and upgrading to a Smart Meter. Be in contact by calling 0141 550 5600 (option 3) or email kevin.bonaccorsi@westscot.co.uk.

Meet the new members of the Willowacre Trust team

Find out more about our new colleagues and how they can support you below:



Tracy | Community Worker & Community Connector

Hi there, my name's Tracy, Community Worker and Community Connector. I've been working with Willowacre Trust since July. I'm passionate about building strong relationships with our customers and connecting individuals with organisations in their neighbourhood, making sure local voices are heard and supported.



Wilma | Community Worker

Hi there, my name's Wilma, and I'm the new Wellbeing Information and Advice Officer at Willowacre Trust. In my role I work with tenants to understand the support they really need to help them thrive, whether that's financial, emotional or practical, and together we work out the best way for them to receive this. I can refer to Willowacre Trust services, the wider WSHA team or put tenants in touch with other groups and services in their community - and I'll be there as a listening ear and a dependable support every step of the way.



Romy | Community Worker

Hello my name is Romy and I am the new Community Worker with Willowacre Trust. My role is to support the wellbeing and development of tenants and their local communities. I work with people to identify their needs and connect them with services and resources, I also organise engagement programmes and social groups, so you may have seen me at the Community Flat in Springburn or the Community Hub in Charing Cross. The best part of the job so far has been getting to meet and spend time with lots of incredible tenants.



Vittoria | Support Services Officer

Hello, my name is Vittoria, and I'm the new Support Services Officer with Willowacre Trust. I work across our retirement sites to help make sure we're offering our tenants the best service, including activities that help everyone feel connected and supported. I also link in closely with our fantastic Retirement Assistants, who always go above and beyond for tenants. One of my favourite parts of the role so far has been getting to know tenants across our sites (often over a cup of tea!) I'm keen to listen and make sure our services reflect what matters to them most.



John | Community Worker

Hi there, I'm John. You'll find me at the Barrowfield Community Centre most days of the week where I am based as the new Community Worker. I've gained loads of experience working in and supporting communities over the last few years and I'm looking forward to getting to know the Barrowfield Community better and helping deliver events, groups and services that you'll love to be part of.

Coming up in your neighbourhood

Barrowfield

Barrowfield Sporting Memories Club

Relive your favourite sporting moments, meet new people and take part in some fun activities at the new weekly club, every Tuesday 12.30-2.30pm at the Barrowfield Community Centre.



FREE 1:1 employability support with Jobs & Business Glasgow

Every Monday Jobs & Business Glasgow are at the Barrowfield Community Centre from 10am-2pm, offering free, one-to-one drop-in support sessions to help you get the job you want.

Whether you're looking for a job, thinking about a new career, or need help with your CV or interview prep — the JBG team can help you take your first steps in a new direction. Drop-in or book in advance by calling JBG on 0300 123 2898.

Cowlairs

Earlier this year we opened a new community space: our Cowlairs Community Flat + Garden at 250 Keppochill Road, running a buzzy programme of weekly activities and special events – see just some of our groups below.

Cowlairs Wednesday social club

Free afternoon social club for older community members at the Cowlairs Community Flat, taking place every Wednesday 1-3pm. Tea, coffee, laughter and snacks provided! If you'd like to know more email Janice. howat15@gmail.com.

Conversation Café

Every Tuesday 1.30-3pm, pop along to the Community Flat for a friendly place to practice your English language speaking with Rosemount Lifelong Learning. For ESOL learners over 16 years. Register by emailing community.development@westscot.co.uk or call/text 07985 759 804.

Looking after your Wellbeing course – Jan 2026

This 10-week free course is a great way to kick-start your new year! Learn more about:

- Dealing with stress and anxiety.
- Considering how the brain can either keep us either stuck or set us free
- Practicing self-care.
- Getting motivated and out of your comfort zone
- Goal setting and action planning

Dates have not been set yet, but if you'd like to know more or sign up, email community.development@westscot.co.uk.

Conversation Café at Cowlairs Community Flat

Practice your English language speaking with
a tea or coffee in a friendly environment!



Charing Cross, Woodlands and Garnethill

Woodlands & Garnethill Festive Community Fair

Sat 6th Dec, noon–3pm at Al-furqan Mosque, 19 Carrington Street.



Our family-friendly festive event returns first Saturday in December at the Al-furqan Mosque (formerly the Fred Paton Centre). There's something for everyone with Santa's grotto, seasonal arts and crafts, henna, hair braiding, ballon modelling, smoothie bike, raffle, hot drinks and snacks – and loads more! No tickets required, please just pop along and bring your friends! A big thanks to our team of local community volunteers who have been helping us plan and run the event.

Digital Photography Class. Ashley Street Hub

A new block of our very popular 12-week Digital Photography Course, starts 7th Jan 2026. Open to all abilities, previous participants have had so much fun getting creative on this course. Places are limited so please contact us on community.development@westscot.co.uk if you are interested. Delivered in partnership with Glasgow Kelvin College.

We know Christmas isn't always easy

There's a lot of pressure for Christmas to be magical, but the reality is that for many people it can be a very difficult or lonely time of year. If you find yourself struggling – even if you're not in crisis—having someone to share your thoughts and worries with can make them easier to manage at a stressful time of the year.

Some organisations that can help:

Samaritans: 116 123 / www.samaritans.org





Breathing Space: 0800 83 85 87 / www.breathingspace.scot

Childline: 0800 1111 / www.childline.org.uk

The Silver Line: 0800 4 70 80 90 / www.thesilverline.org.uk

Who is my Housing Officer?

Together our Housing Officers support over 5000 tenants across the West of Scotland. Find your Housing Officer in the table below. If you are unsure who your Housing Officer is, please call Customer Service on 0141 550 5600 and they will be able to direct you.

| Glasgow | Glasgow | South Lanarkshire/ Glasgow | South Lanarkshire | North Lanarkshire |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| Charing Cross: Woodlands | Springburn (excl. Keppochhill Road), Royston, The Point/ Possil, Auchentoshan Terrace, Anniesland, Hillhead, Glasgow West dispersed, Glasgow N/E dispersed, Dundashll, (MMR) | East Kilbride, Hamilton, Westcraigs, Fernhill, Halfway, Yoker | Blackwood, Blantyre, Lanark, Uddingston, Law, Kirkfieldbank, Stonehouse, Kirkmuirhill, Strathaven | Cumbernauld, Kilsyth, Moodiesburn, Queenzieburn, Airdrie, Bellshill, Motherwell, Coatbridge |
| Heather Mackenzie | Katie Caldwell | Yaw Frempong | Karen Wright | Jennifer Milligan |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 0141 550 5075 | 0141 333 6324 | 0141 550 5626 | 0141 550 5624 | 0141 550 5069 |
| Glasgow | Glasgow | | Ayrshire/Glasgow | South Ayrshire/ Glasgow |
| Camlachie, Easterhouse, Broomhouse | Dalmarnock (MMR) (Inc. Springfield Cross), Barrachnie, Tollcross, Gallowgate, Dennistoun, Haghill, Keppochhill Road (Excl 630) | | Ayrshire: Ardrossan, Troon, Irvine, Kilmarnock, Monkton, Symington Glasgow: Pollokshields, Govan, Elderpark, Crookston, Turriff Street | South Ayrshire: Ayr, Mossblown, Prestwick Glasgow: Charing Cross, Garnethill |
| Lynette Baillie | Nadine Di Rienzo & Susan Greenan | | Sharon Cowan | Stuart Cole |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 07786 263764 | 0141 550 5610 | 0141 550 5600 | 07880 711039 | 07764969452 |

 For more information please contact:

t: 0141 550 5600

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e. customer.service@westscot.co.uk

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