

## New Chief Executive Appointed

**West of Scotland Housing Association (WSHA) has appointed Brian Gannon as Chief Executive.**



Currently Head of Housing & Community Regeneration at Thenue Housing Association, Brian brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to WSHA from his time working in the housing sector.

At Thenue Housing Association, Brian has overall responsibility for housing management and community regeneration services to 3000 tenancies in various communities in Glasgow. He has also led Thenue's Digital Transformation agenda.

About his appointment, Brian Gannon, said: "I am absolutely delighted to be appointed Chief Executive of West of Scotland Housing Association and build on the excellent work that Lynne Donnelly delivered during her time in the role. This appointment feels like the perfect fit for me in terms of the direction and priorities of WSHA in the coming years and continuing to put tenants at the heart of service delivery. I am very much looking forward to meeting all the Board and my new colleagues and can't wait to get started."

Ruth Simpson, Chair of West of Scotland Housing Association added: "It is clear Brian has an exceptional amount of experience and following a rigorous recruitment process, was a standout candidate for the role. WSHA staff and members of our Tenant Advisory Group were asked to give their views on what values and experience our new Chief Executive should possess and Brian embodies these perfectly."

Brian will take up the position of Chief Executive on 2nd September 2019.

# Welcome



I am delighted to share with you the news of Brian Gannon as our new Chief Executive Officer. He will be a great addition to the team and the Board and Staff at WSHA are looking forward to working with him to deliver the priorities of our Corporate Plan.

As always, it has been a busy few months with progress being made on our development programme and it was fantastic to be at the official launch of our Symington homes and meet John who is regaining his independence. It was also exciting to be at the sod-cutting of our new homes in Fielden Street, Glasgow and the 52 homes will be an excellent addition to the community. It is reassuring to hear that tenants are settling well into their new homes at our East Kilbride development and I look forward to being part of the formal launch later in the year.

We are currently recruiting for new tenant Board Members in Glasgow and Ayrshire and I would encourage you to get in touch if you are interested. Being a Board Member at WSHA gives you the opportunity to help shape the way services are delivered to tenants and communities. For more information please see the back of the newsletter.

Remember you can also hear our latest news and events on our Facebook page (WSHAScotland).

Best wishes,

*Ruth Simpson*

Ruth Simpson  
Chair

## Paying Your Rent

The most vital income source for WSHA is from rent paid by our tenants. It is therefore essential that this is paid on a regular monthly basis in line with the requirements of your tenancy agreement. We are very aware that many tenants experience financial pressures and may have difficulty in paying their rent. Please do not ignore your rent account going into arrears as with our help you can avoid further action which can ultimately result in you losing your home.

We strongly recommend that you contact us as soon as possible if you find yourself in this situation to allow us the chance to discuss this with you and provide you with support. You should contact your Housing officer, or you may be referred on to our Welfare Rights team for additional support.

## Key Highlights

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# Smiles all around in Symington

## A new sense of freedom

**Tenants have now moved into Symington's first affordable housing development which was created by WSHA in conjunction with MacTaggart & Mickel.**

For some of the new residents, including John Muir, the homes have been life-changing. John, who lives in a wheelchair adapted property, commented: "I am delighted with my new home and now smile in my home which I never did previously. I wasn't able to use my wheelchair in my old house which made life very difficult whereas my new home has been adapted to meet my needs. It is a great community and I now have the freedom to pop up to the shop which makes a big difference to my life."

The £4.5 million development, part funded by the Scottish Government in partnership with South Ayrshire Council, was completed at the end of 2018 and features 34 homes as part of a wider new-build development. It also includes a 3,000 sq. ft. Co-operative retail store for the benefit of the local community.



Andrew Kubski, Director of Development and Asset Management, WSHA, commented: "We are privileged to have delivered Symington's first affordable housing development in partnership with the Scottish Government and South Ayrshire Council. It has also been a very positive experience working alongside MacTaggart & Mickel's on-site team. More importantly it is so good to hear that our tenants, including John, are really looking forward to the future in their new homes. This development is a fantastic addition to the wider Symington community and offers high-quality homes for families and individuals that meet a range of needs."

# New Homes Update

## Fielden Street, Barrowfield

Work has started on creating 52 new affordable homes in Barrowfield, Glasgow. The completion of this development is the culmination of our physical regeneration of the East Glasgow community where we have invested nearly £60million to create around 600 high-quality, affordable homes since 1996.

This latest £9 million development focuses on great design and high quality landscaped areas and it will be a mix of flats and townhouses meeting the needs of a range of tenants. The homes, funded by Glasgow City Council and WSHA, are expected to be completed in Autumn 2020.



Andrew Kubski, Director of Development and Asset Management, WSHA highlighted: “We are delighted to be creating new high-quality affordable housing in Barrowfield where we already have an established community. This latest development will have a strong focus on design and providing outdoor space for tenants. It will be an excellent addition to the community and we look forward to welcoming our new tenants.”

Councillor Kenny McLean, City Convener for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Public Realm at Glasgow City Council, said: “It is great to see work beginning on these 52 affordable homes in Barrowfield, which when complete will provide high-quality accommodation for a wide range of people and families. We are glad to support this development through the record funding we are allocating throughout Glasgow to our partners to build over 3,500 homes over the next two years. These Barrowfield homes reflect the improvement in housing across the city taking place right now.”



## Tenants move in to East Kilbride Homes

Over the last few weeks, tenants have moved in to our new homes in East Kilbride. The 31 new homes were developed in partnership with Barratt Homes on the former Rolls Royce Site and feature a mix of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom properties. We would like to give a warm welcome to our new tenants and wish them the very best.

If you would like to find out more about our new developments then please visit our website [www.westscot.uk](http://www.westscot.uk)

# Annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey

**We are committed to listening to our customers, and using your views to improve our services. To assist us with this, we have commissioned an independent market research company, Research Resource, to undertake a customer satisfaction survey on our behalf.**

This survey will play a very important part in helping us develop our services. The survey, which will be done on your doorstep or in your home, asks about your views on the services that we provide, how we communicate with you, your priorities and how happy you are with your home and neighbourhood. Research Resource interviewers are aiming to interview 800 of our tenants spread across all the areas where we provide housing. All interviews will be carried out by Research Resource's fully trained interviewers who will carry photographic ID and a copy of this article. The surveys will take place throughout August and September.

If you have contacted by Research Resource, we hope you will be able to take the time to take part in the survey. Your feedback is important, and it really does make a difference. Research Resource will only share your details with us if you give them permission to do so. If you have made a comment or given an answer that you would like someone from WSHA to investigate further, then the surveyor will ask for your permission to share your details with us. To allow us to investigate your issue please do give permission.

The results of the survey will be used to improve how we currently deliver services, and to shape our future services. Once all the surveys have been completed, Research Resource will provide an independent report on the findings and we will share the results with all tenants. If you have any questions about the survey, please call William Easton at Research Resource on 0141 641 6410.

**All tenants who take part in the survey will be entered into a prize draw to win a Tablet. The winner will be drawn by Research Resource, so to be in with a chance of winning, please take part in our survey!**

If you would like to speak to someone at WSHA about any aspect of the survey process, please contact Alistair Reid on 0141 550 5060 who will be happy to help.



# Getting Involved

## Readers Panel – we need you!

We are keen to provide opportunities for all of our tenants to get involved with us, and to do so in a way that suits each individual tenant. To support this we are looking to develop a **Readers Panel**.

This Panel would, from the comfort of their own home, read any publications or policies that we were due to share with tenants and customers, and advise us if it was clear and understandable. Your views would be taken into account to create a document that meets the needs of our tenants and customers.

**If you are interested in finding out more about this, then please do get in touch.**



## Allocations Policy Consultation

As reported in the Spring Edition of Westworld, we were undertaking a review of our Allocations Policy. The majority of the planned changes were in response to Government legislation, but we also wanted feedback from tenants about the size of property that could be offered to families. Our existing policy is that children of the opposite sex should have their own bedroom. We were proposing to change this so that children of the opposite sex could share a bedroom until the age of ten.

The reason behind the proposed change was that we found that in some instances the policy worked against families looking for homes with us as they could not apply for a two bedroom property.

We asked for feedback via Facebook, and asked tenants to complete a short survey. We also spoke to our Tenant Advisory Group about the proposal.

We were pleased to receive a number of responses, with the majority of those who responded supporting the proposal. There were some tenants who did not agree with the change, and some who felt that this would just create more issues when children reached the age of ten. Our Tenant Advisory Group were also supportive of the change.

The results of the consultation were presented to our Board meeting in June, and the revised policy was approved. This policy will come into force in September and be available on our website. Thank you to all who took their time to respond.

## Tenant Advisory Group (TAG)

TAG continues to meet every two months to support us in developing and improving our approach to tenant engagement and deliver services which meet our customer's needs. You will have received a copy of their annual report recently, which sets out the work they have undertaken, and the work they have planned for the year ahead. If you want to know more or get involved, please get in touch.

## Tenant Scrutiny

Our Tenant Scrutiny Group continues to work with us to deliver improved services to all tenants. This year, as mentioned in the last Westworld, they are looking at our Void Process, and our Complaints Procedures.

To date, members of the Group have visited a number of void properties to allow them to understand the process. Members of staff from both the Housing and Property teams have attended meetings with the Group to talk through the role that each team has in the process.

The next step for the Group will be to undertake a survey of both staff and tenants to find out more about how the service is currently working, and what improvements could be identified.



The Group have also been reading about our Complaints Policy, and will shortly be undertaking a Mystery Shopping exercise to assess how different staff respond to similar complaints.

The Scrutiny Group meets on the last Wednesday of each month, if you are interested in joining please get in touch.

### Noticeboard

**Rent consultation** – in the coming months we will be starting discussion with tenants about rent levels for 2020/2021. Keep your eyes on our social media channels and our website!

**Youth group** – we are still keen to provide opportunities for our younger tenants to tell us how we can improve services to meet their needs. If you, or any of your household, are interested then please get in touch.

If you are interested in getting involved in our Tenant Advisory Group, or want to speak to our Tenant Engagement officer about other ways you can get involved, then please get in touch on 0141 550 5060, or at [haveyoursay@westscot.co.uk](mailto:haveyoursay@westscot.co.uk)

# Older People Activities

## Glasgow Science Centre Trip for WSHA Older Tenants



A recent visit to the Science Centre was a roaring success for tenants of Glasgow Sheltered Housing. 25 older tenants met with neighbours to learn about what's new in the world of science and to reminisce over the moon landings which happened 50 years ago. The group was supported by our Retirement Assistants and carers from Community Lifestyles and the Carers Centre.

One tenant, Mary Dougherty, 85, from Yoker, set herself the challenge of beating the athlete – looks like she nearly did it!

## A Brew, A Blether and a Course of 2

A Brew, A Blether and a Course of 2 (BBC2) was established in January 2019. BBC2 consists of a hot two course meal served within the communal dining room. It was recognised that malnutrition and loneliness occurs frequently within our older population and was something that Willowacre Trust and WSHA were in a position to help to alleviate for our sheltered housing tenants. We developed the BBC2 which is offered once a week for tenants, carers and family members.

Attendance numbers at the BBC2 is on average 13 people per week. Tenants are consulted each week on the menu for the following week, ensuring that they getting food that they will like. As a result of the weekly lunch, tenants have developed new friendships with their neighbours. Two ladies who have live close by each other for three years, didn't know each other at all and now regularly spend time together, sharing meals on a Sunday.

A positive consequence of the BBC2 is the tenants moving from the dining room into the residents lounge, spending time chatting, sharing experiences and ideas. There is generally a lot of laughter resonating from the lounge when all the tenants are there.



**If you would like to find out more about what activities are available in your area then please contact Clare Bird on 0141 550 5664.**



# Safety in the Home

## Legionella Assessments in your home

WWSA are in the process of appointing a contractor to carry out legionella risk assessments over the next five years. The programme will see 700 homes a year being accessed, requiring an assessment of the water system within the property. This should take no longer than 45 minutes to complete and we will inform you nearer the time of who the contractor is and when your assessment will take place.

## Why do I need a Legionella Risk Assessment?

Legionnaires' disease is a potentially fatal form of pneumonia caused by the inhalation of small droplets of contaminated water containing Legionella. Where conditions are favourable, bacteria may form and multiply which could increase the risk of exposure to legionella.

The risks from hot and cold water systems in most residential settings are generally considered to be low owing to regular water usage and turnover, however all homes will be assessed to ensure the health and safety of our tenants by keeping the property safe and free from health hazards.

## Controlling Legionella

Tenants can help to control the risk of exposure to Legionella by implementing simple control measures, including:

- Regularly cleaning and disinfecting showerheads;
- Running all water outlets for a few minutes including outside taps at least once a week; and
- Informing us if the hot water is not heating properly or there are any other problems with the system so that appropriate action can be taken.



## Cold Water Storage Tanks

Stagnation and storage of cold water in tanks may be considered a high risk and would require WWSA to implement additional control measures or convert your home to mains water. Most modern houses with a combination boiler are fed directly from the water main and will be confirmed during the assessments.

# Welfare Rights Update



## A Warm Welcome to Rachael

We have a new addition to our Welfare Rights Team – Rachael Durkin. Rachael works on Mondays & Tuesdays as a Welfare Rights Assistant, providing support to tenants to make benefit claims and to assist her colleagues with case work. With the freeze to benefits and the introduction of Universal Credit, Rachael will provide a much needed boost to our Welfare Rights Team to ensure we reach more people who are struggling to understand the very complex world of welfare benefits.

## School Age Payment

Low income families are now able to apply this new benefit if they have a child old enough to be starting school in August. The payment is £250 per child, paid in the year the child starts school. There is no requirement to take up a place at school and the application process will be open until 29th February 2020, so that those parents who have deferred school entry until next year, can also apply.

The payment is part of the Best Start Grant, a package of three payments for families in receipt of eligible benefits – including Universal Credit, Income Support, Housing Benefit and Tax Credits – to help at key stages in a child’s life.

The Best Start Grant package also includes the Pregnancy and Baby Payment (December 2018) and the Early Learning Payment (April 19).

## Scottish Child Payment

At the end of June, the Scottish Government announced a new benefit that will provide £10 a week for every eligible child under 16. For children under six, payments will be starting early 2021.

The Scottish Child Payment will give more immediate support to eligible families who need it most, as almost 60% of all children in poverty live in a family with a child under the age of six.

It will be delivered to all remaining eligible families with children under 16 by the end of 2022, with no cap on the number of children in families.

When delivered in full, 410,000 children could be eligible for the income supplement – over a third of all children.

For a family with two children under the age of 16 this new payment would mean additional support of more than £1,000 a year.

## Citizens Advice Scotland – ‘Help to Claim’:

In our last Westworld we advised of the above scheme, funded by DWP, to offer digital support to those who need to make a claim for Universal Credit. At that time, we did not know the Helpline phone number but can now advise of this – 0800 023 2581.

On phoning the Helpline, an advisor will make an appointment at the CAB Office nearest to the customer. Remember, our in-house Welfare Rights Team can also assist you with this.

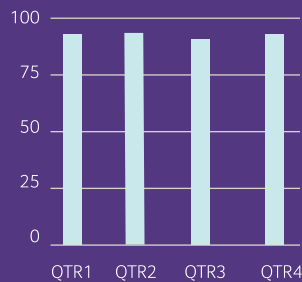
# Performance and Complaints

## Complaints and Customer Satisfaction

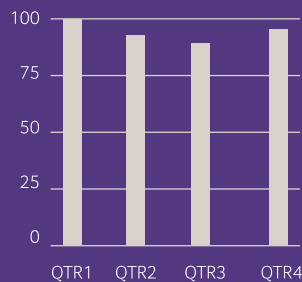
We are committed to listening to your views so we can deliver services more effectively, or where we can do more things that you want us to do. To support us to do this we regularly monitor the complaints we receive, and also have an independent company Research Resource undertake monthly satisfaction surveys. Where an issue comes up as part of a complaint, or is fed back to us by Research Resource we will look to make changes to how we work. Below is an example of a change we are making as a result of tenant feedback. If you think we could do something differently that would be better for tenants please speak to any member of staff.

### WSHA Customer Satisfaction 2018/19

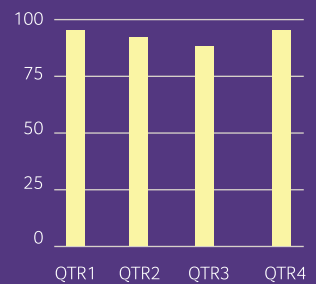
Overall, how satisfied were you with the repairs and maintenance service received?



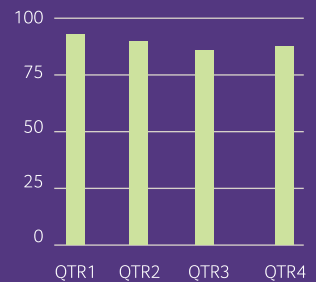
% of tenants satisfied with planned maintenance



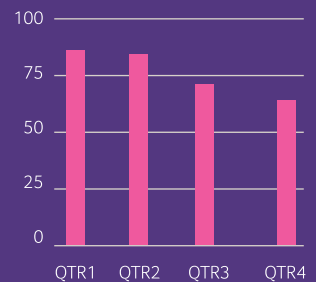
Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall service provided by West of Scotland Housing Association?



Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the landlords's management of the neighbourhood you live in?



Taking into account the accommodation and services your landlord provides, do you think your rent for this property represents good value for money?



In April – June 2019 we received 56 complaints from tenants and other customers. The main service areas that we received complaints about included our grounds maintenance (20 complaints) and our day to day repairs service (12 complaints). We will work hard in the coming months with our contractors to improve these services.

# Board Member Recruitment

## We are looking for new tenant Board members

Are you passionate about your community?

Do you want to play a key role in shaping our services and strategic direction?

## We need you!

### About Us

At West of Scotland Housing Association (WSHA) we strive to be more than a landlord. With over 50 years of history what sets us apart is the way in which we go further to improve the lives of our tenants, innovatively responding to their needs as their lives change. We provide around 3,500 homes across the West of Scotland, and go further to provide housing that you can call home.

This is an exciting time for us as we have just finalised our five year Corporate Plan which sets out our key priorities and aims for the future. We have also recently published our Asset Management Strategy which sets out our plans for investing in our homes, and the continuation of our ambitious development programme.

### The Role of a Board Member

Our Board Members play a key role in shaping our policy and strategic direction. Board Members are also involved in setting standards for service delivery and performance, and ensuring we comply with our Regulatory Framework.

Following a change in our rules, we are looking for tenants who live within Glasgow and Ayrshire to join our Board, and help us achieve our plans for the future.



Your role as a Board member will involve attendance at meetings, attending training sessions, and contributing to decision making.

### What makes a good Board Member

We are looking for Board members with the following skills and experience:

- A genuine passion for social housing and commitment to helping tenants and communities.
- Ability to participate and contribute your views on Board matters.
- Experience and knowledge of community development
- Ability to represent tenants and communities on the Board in relation to strategic issues
- Ability to participate in the overall direction of WSHA and contribute their views at this level

### How to apply

For an informal chat, please contact Kari Archibald on 0141 550 5637 or at [kari.archibald@westscot.co.uk](mailto:kari.archibald@westscot.co.uk)

Closing date for applications is 12th August 2019.

Please let us know if you need help to read or understand this information. If you require this information in large print, audio or any other language, please contact Sabrina Allan on 0141 550 5630 or email [sabrina.allan@westscot.co.uk](mailto:sabrina.allan@westscot.co.uk)

This newsletter is also available on our website [www.westscot.co.uk](http://www.westscot.co.uk)

### For more information please contact:

t: 0141 550 5600

w. [westscot.co.uk](http://westscot.co.uk)

e: [info@westscot.co.uk](mailto:info@westscot.co.uk)

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