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Scotland



CIH SCOTLAND 2018

EXCELLENCE
AWARDS

Good Practice Compendium

Sharing the lessons learnt from
Scotland's Excellence Awards 2018

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CIH SCOTLAND 2018 EXCELLENCE IN THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR AWARD

Sponsored by:



This award recognises organisations who can demonstrate that they excel in developing excellent levels of customer service or tenant satisfaction and/or used innovative approaches to solve a particular problem or challenge.

Scotland's First Social Enterprise Letting Agency

Homes for Good (Scotland) CIC



Homes for Good is a dynamic and fast growing ethical business group. Established in 2013 as Scotland's social enterprise letting agency, the agency now manages around 420 properties across eight local authorities in Scotland. Since their establishment, Homes for Good have managed to secure almost £12 million investment to assist us in the purchase of over 200 homes, often purchased in a dilapidated condition, which have then been refurbished and dressed with a strong emphasis on interior design to ensure that we are providing stable, secure and beautiful homes for our tenants, all of whom were previously in housing need with at least 90% of tenants having additional support needs and receiving support from our tenancy support team.

In the private rented sector, Homes for Good is entirely unique in the tenancy support that we offer to their tenants. The person- centred support and contact that we offer to our tenants in their homes range from sign posting, benefit assistance, money management and generally having a single point of contact so that our tenants can speak to about anything in their lives. The tenancy support team will also support our tenants in writing welfare appeals and representing tenants at tribunals.

Homes for Good established a Tenancy Support Hub in January 2017 where tenants can come to meet one on one with our team or with Govan Law Centre and Epic 360 who hold regular drop- in sessions at our premises. In addition to this, they also hold tenant events such as cooking classes and afternoon teas, aimed at reducing the social isolation many of our tenants face, as well as helping people manage their limited incomes in a way that is beneficial for their health.

Homelessness prevention is one of our founding principles, working closely with a number of local authority rent deposit schemes and providing a high proportion of properties to Ypeople to allow them to meet the demands of the temporary accommodation contract they run on behalf of Glasgow City Council. We also provide accommodation to tenants supported by other agencies such as Soldiers off the Streets and Barlinnie Prison.

Over the last year, Homes for Good have been working in partnership with Glasgow City Mission, the Simon Community and the City Ambition Network as the key accommodation provider for the first innovative private rented sector Housing First Pilot.

With a strong focus on providing a stable home for people to be able to build their lives around, Homes for Good has also embarked on the 'Love Home' project. This is based on giving their tenants ownership over their home environments. Homes for Good's interior designer will spend time with our tenants helping them to come up with a plan for their home and will work with them to carry out this work in partnership, providing a sense of ownership and achievement.

Currently the company is talking to all of their tenants to find out how they can better shape their services to meet customers' needs. In January Homes for good will be launching a Tenant Talents project where they will be highlighting the achievements of their tenants.

Outcomes and Achievements

Four years after the company started purchasing their own properties, they have 91% of their own tenants with identifiable support needs (35% have two or more identified non-housing support needs) many of whom require intensive tenancy support from the Homes for Good team. 58% of our households receive support from housing benefit to pay their rent.

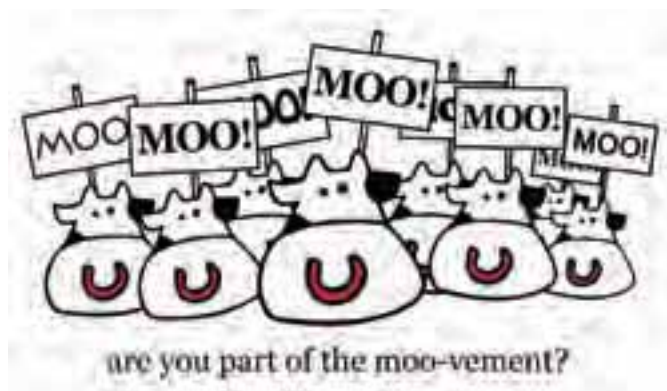
There are five properties occupied through the Housing First, all of whom had previously been rough sleepers with a plan to accommodate a further 20 tenants under this pilot in the coming months.

Across the organisation Homes for Good has managed to maintain minimal rent arrears, currently sitting at 1.68%, despite the challenges of universal credit and welfare reform. This is singularly due to the relationship based model they have developed which is unique in the Private Rented Sector. Homes for Good has been asked to roll this out across the UK as a model of exemplary practice.

www.homesforgood.org.uk

moo-let.com

moo-let.com with Moo-Maintenance



In 2011 moo-let.com started a "moo-vement" to change the face of the letting industry and has been making constant strides to ensure that the company stays outstanding in their field ever since.

moo-let.com is the friendly side of letting and feel there is a nice balance to be found between the very serious side of letting out a property and creating a welcoming relaxing and even fun environment for this serious stuff to take place.

Excellent customer service is an easy thing to say, but the reality to keep those standards up are not always as easy to achieve. Although moo-let thinks that they are close, they hold themselves accountable and both moo-let customers and clients know that the company is very approachable and will resolve any and all issues inhouse.

Someone who has experienced moo-let.com first hand has a say in this year's application and who is now a past customer but will always be part of moo-let.com's little community.

Jean Grycuk says:

"Three years ago, I found a property to rent through moo-let. I found their personal, friendly approach very refreshing compared to larger local letting agencies. At the same time, Melanie, Michael and Sylvia employed an efficient professional approach.

"My first flat was perfect for my needs at the time and small repairs were quickly and successfully executed. At one point, our elderly family cat came to live with me which Melanie kindly negotiated with my landlord.

"After one year my first landlord unfortunately wanted to sell the property and moo-let were very sympathetic to my situation and made every effort to help me find new accommodation, which I am delighted to say they managed to do and I moved into a beautiful new apartment in the same area.

"My experience there was similar, and I enjoyed another year there until it was time for me to buy my own property. moo-let were very understanding when the purchase was delayed as it was through no fault of my own. The banking system for payment was effortless and all deposits were returned when I had to leave. My daughter now also rents a property from moo-let in Dunfermline and is extremely happy with it. Any time I had to visit moo-let's office, I was impressed with the friendly, informal atmosphere and yet everything was conducted in an efficient, business-like manner.

"I would have no hesitation in recommending moo-let to anyone looking for an effective, friendly and caring service."

Outcomes and Achievements

Last year was amazing and moo-let are very proud to have won the regional and Scottish awards for The Best Professional Service Provider for the Fife/Scottish Retail Business Awards.

moo-let was delighted to be asked along to speak on good practice within the industry at both at Tenants Information Service Annual Conference Workshops and at Holyrood's Private Renting in Scotland – Navigating the New Regulatory Framework event, both of which were very enjoyable events to attend.

After completing the CIH & Scottish Association of Landlords training course to gain the Certificate of Qualification for the letting agent licensing, Michael Annandale has continued as certified practitioner.

moo-let has invested very heavily over the last year on new software to improve processes and procedures,

one of which allows tenants to log maintenance issues directly through an app.

With the demand on the maintenance growing we have started our own maintenance company, moo-maintenance, to work alongside moo-let and linking in with the new software which has streamlined very efficiently.

From the start, moo-let has worked to a ratio of staff members to customers/clients and are delighted to be starting a new member of the herd which will again help in keeping the experience anyone has with moo-let as positive as it possibly can be.

Last bit of exciting news is that the company has just got the keys to a new office in Edinburgh.

www.moo-let.com

Unique Referencing App – A First for Scotland

Rettie & Co with Canopy



Rettie & Co (Rettie) is implementing several initiatives, which focus on helping and supporting renters (as well as benefiting landlords) regardless of tenure (market rent or mid-market rent). Rettie is investing heavily in new IT platforms / apps to support its ambitions in this regard. One such platform / app is Canopy.

Who or what is Canopy?

Canopy – www.findyourcanopy.com – is a relatively young business, but its platform is already being used by many well-respected companies south of the border including Get Living, Atlas Residential, Tipi (Quintain) and John Lewis (all of whom are reputed for putting the customer at the heart of what they do) as well as having the backing of many well-respected suppliers such as Hiscox, Direct Line, Experian and Money Supermarket.

Rettie has been working exclusively with Canopy in Scotland to develop its platform / app and ensure its suitability for the Scottish market and, because of this investment in time (opportunity costs) Rettie is their exclusive partner in Scotland.

Benefits for Renters

Canopy's portable 'RentPassport™' means renters are pre-approved to rent up to a certain rent level which is deemed affordable to them, so they don't have to go through referencing for each property they apply for, speeding up the process for all concerned.

Canopy's enhanced income verification/affordability checks, mean that residents experiencing financial difficulty and finding themselves in arrears will be rare (prevention rather than cure).

It seems extraordinary that long-standing renters meeting rental payments reliably every month are not accorded any credit history for these payments. Canopy enables rent tracking so that, for the first time ever, anyone renting can add their rental payments to their credit history – providing a visible credit score (or 'trust score' as Canopy refer to it). Such visibility rewards renters and supports them in obtaining more affordable credit in the future, allowing them to be more in control of their financial future. Rettie has welcomed the opportunity to champion this change with Canopy, and advocate for renters in Scotland.

Through Canopy, Rettie also has the option to offer renters (subject to the applicant's credit score or 'trust score, and landlord approval) a 'DepositFree™' insurance policy (backed by Hiscox) as an alternative to a cash deposit. By giving renters the option of not having to find and lock away a cash security deposit for the duration of their tenancy, it can help their cashflow and they can choose to spend or save this cash on the things that matter to them.

Benefits for Landlords

Canopy provides more robust referencing checks for landlords, relative to traditional referencing, with enhanced income verification/affordability checks and added legal/regulatory warnings, politically exposed person checks and international sanctions checks. We are also able to build in bespoke eligibility criteria, which is particularly desirable for the mid-market rented sector.

The enhanced income verification/affordability checks, means that residents experiencing financial difficulty and finding themselves in arrears will be rare, thereby minimising rent arrears.

The visibility of the 'trust score' also means that renters are less likely to elect to default on their rent payments or cause damage to property, given the impact this may have on their credit score.

What's in it for Rettie?

This initiative demonstrates that Rettie wants to shift the whole tenant/landlord relationship in Scotland on to a more positive and trustworthy plane. (Neither Rettie or its landlords receive any financial benefit or incentive, if a renter chooses 'DepositFreeTM' insurance).

Outcomes and Achievements

Rettie is trialling Canopy (both referencing (RentPassportTM) and the deposit-free option (DepositFreeTM)) with the National Housing Trust (NHT) mid-market rent (MMR) development at Western Harbour – Harbour Gateway. This is a development of 138 homes being made available for MMR from this month. All residents are pre-approved and homes allocated ahead of handover from the developer, which means no void periods for the landlord. (Rettie had almost 4,000 interested parties registered for these homes).

Rettie will monitor the success of Canopy and demand / take-up of 'DepositFreeTM' at Harbour Gateway

and solicit feedback from prospective residents. We fully expect demand to be strong, and subject to landlord approval, Rettie will look to roll Canopy out to other MMR homes under its management, as well as consider extending it to homes in the wider private rented sector (PRS).

If an existing renter chooses the deposit-free option, their cash security deposit will be returned to them, and they can then choose to spend or save this cash on things that matter to them.

www.rettie.co.uk



CIH SCOTLAND 2018 EXCELLENCE IN SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AWARD

Sponsored by:



This award recognises outstanding programmes or projects which have developed skills in the housing sector. All shortlisted entries demonstrate developing a culture of learning or improvement and developing innovative approaches to learning and development.

Housing Leadership Academy

Eildon Housing Association with Hanover Scotland HA, Queens Cross HA and NG Homes



Housing issues are at the forefront of social change, and leaders in the housing sector increasingly need to have the skills and confidence to navigate these challenges. There is growing recognition that leadership is provided by a range of colleagues and not just the senior officer. It is also recognised that the housing sector is blessed with many highly knowledgeable and capable colleagues, but we need to do more to support and develop their leadership skills. Added to this, as part of our maturing approach to succession planning, a significant number of long serving colleagues are at or are approaching retirement age which provides both a risk and an opportunity for a new generation of leaders in our sector to emerge.

These are the reasons why four major Housing Associations from across Scotland have collaborated on a leadership development programme over the last year, with a commitment to ongoing partnership work in this area. We have developed a collective Housing Leadership Development Academy to respond to this challenge and to augment the training and development packages that we all already have in place.

Many organisations are involved in impressive leadership development programmes, either across cohorts of staff or for identified talented individuals who show promise. What Hanover, Queens Cross, NG Homes and Eildon decided to do in order to add value to these interventions was to pool their efforts to get a bigger 'bang for our buck'. In addition to the efficiency of getting better value for money in securing high impact and high-profile speakers to inspire them, they were also explicitly pursuing the benefit that their colleagues got from interacting with their peers as part of this process. The networking aspect of this programme was always a key feature of its design. In a busy world and working in demanding roles, the opportunity to take stock and engage with likeminded individuals is often constrained. This programme gives permission and a safe space to share some of the common themes and challenges with others doing similar jobs.

The programme, currently in progress, is designed to both inspire (through the use of knowledgeable and high impact speakers) and challenge participants. The delivery is focussed on mixing colleagues from across the participating organisations in order to develop contacts, trust and future networks. Integral to this work is the principle of action learning, whereby representatives from each organisation collectively commit to action between events, which they will then report back on (warts and all) to the next session in the programme.

The programme itself is themed around the principle of what leaders in our sector need to do to develop and support high performing teams in a changing world. In order to tackle this, we have committed to 'pairs' of workshops spread throughout the year. The first workshop exposes participants to be challenged and inspired and is where the external speaker is

deployed. We have committed ourselves to learning from best practice in leadership from across sectors of industry and not simply be restricted to housing, or wider public sector leadership.

It is recognised that many leadership development programmes fail to have a lasting impact because the outputs from the learning are not then put into practice once colleagues return to the 'day job'. The housing associations have addressed this by explicitly designing the second session as an action learning opportunity.

Feedback from staff to this programme has been universally positive and there is a real appetite to share best practice more widely in the sector. This programme is undoubtedly developing the leadership capacity with the participating organisations and the sector as a whole.

Outcomes and Achievements

The Housing Leadership Academy has so far delivered five successful sessions, with a further five sessions planned.

An initial pilot was run (with a wider group of eight housing associations) to help develop the concept.

This initial stage involved working with one speaker on two separate occasions to help get the organisations receptive to the programme that followed. This proved very successful with positive feedback received and one registered social landlord choosing to do further detailed work with the speaker involved.

Following these initial pilot sessions, the on-going participants in the programme reviewed and revised our approach and homed in on a clear set of objectives for the ongoing programme.

The purpose of the programme was settled to be focused on the following three objectives:

- Networking
- Supporting innovative thinking
- Providing access to new tools to address challenges

And the outcomes we are seeking were confirmed as:

- Evidence of support between organisations
- Implementation of changes/actions/solutions
- Better leaders within organisations
- Shared best practice
- Improved effectiveness

Although the programme is on-going, we have emerging evidence of progress across all of these outcomes and an increase in the confidence and skills of a wide range of leaders across all participating organisations.

www.eildon.org.uk

Well Played Maryhill!

Maryhill Housing



Maryhill is all about developing a reputation for excellence and helping people thrive. This is all about helping their staff and customers to develop their skills and reach their potential. Here are some of the new things that the organisation has been up to this year:

Introduced a managers' skills matrix to target training where it will have the biggest impact. This asked all managers to self-assess against a range of managers' knowledge areas and leadership competencies, and

a training programme was produced around these needs. Training will be provided by a range of in-house and external providers. Maryhill is delivering more bespoke training inhouse – from budget management to organisational skills - building on the fantastic skills of their existing staff.

Made the commitment that everyone in their housing management team will complete their CIH level 3 and everyone in our customer contact team and all apprentices will complete their CIH level 2. This will see a further cohort of 10 people (on top of the eight last year) undertaking formal CIH qualifications.

Introduced a new appraisal system based on feedback from staff and customers that gives equal emphasis to the way things are done and the skills needed to develop, rather than just what is done. This has helped their staff to reflect and own their own development journeys and has made skills such as building rapport with customers a key competency.

Created a new Development Hub in partnership with Queens Cross Housing Association which has meant our joint development programmes have sufficient scale to attract highly skilled staff in what is a

pressurised labour market. We are also now providing development services to other associations – meaning smaller associations also have access to highly skilled development experts at an affordable cost.

Partnered with PATH to provide equality and diversity training with a difference to all managers – where no taboos are allowed!

For their customers Maryhill Housing has continued to offer a range of initiatives to develop their skills and support them into work, including:

- Job clubs twice a week
- IT classes twice a week
- English as a Second Language class programme twice a year
- Healthy eating and cooking workshops
- Gardening demonstrations

This year Maryhill Housing has also successfully secured Scottish Government grant funding to offer free fibre broadband to all 360 customers in their high rises for a year. As part of this programme they

will be providing on site digital inclusion support to get people online in practical ways. They will be running sessions including how to keep children safe online and how to shop safely on the internet. Maryhill Housing wants to ensure this project has a lasting impact so they will also be training digital champions in the community to act as peer support. Maryhill Housing is really pleased to be partnering with Glasgow City Council and Serco in the delivery of this project to ensure homeless households and asylum seekers, two digitally excluded groups, can access the Internet.

Maryhill Housing has also secured Scottish Government funding to deliver a Participatory Budgeting event in partnership with local schools. This will see their partners supporting local school children to form a steering group to deliver the project. The children will be designing the event, deciding how the funding will be allocated, and even setting up the online voting. It will develop their event management skills, understanding of democratic processes and their digital skills.

Outcomes and Achievements

For staff:

- This year: five new apprentices recruited into the business; one PATH trainee and two Community Jobs Fund Trainees. Trainees and apprentices are now more than 10% of the workforce.
- New appraisal guidance and appraisal training provided to all staff. Positive feedback received and new process tested through internal audit.
- Successfully recruited talent into difficult to recruit to positions in development through the Development Hub brand and scale
- 10 members of the team undertaking formal CIH qualifications
- Three members of staff enrolled on masters level CIH qualifications

For tenants:

- £8k awarded last year and £4k this year so far in bursaries to support education and career development.
- 360 customers able to access fibre broadband free for a year
- Digital champions training provided to ten customers
- Enhanced induction delivered for new tenant board members and intensive training plan for existing board members ranging from Equality and Diversity to Development Finance.

www.maryhill.org.uk



CIH SCOTLAND 2018 EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNICATIONS AWARD

Sponsored by: **resource**
making it happen™

This new award recognises housing teams (not just dedicated comms teams) who have delivered outstanding communications in the last year. Shortlisted entries address any or all of the following credentials: planning, strategy and campaign tactics; evidence of impact of communications; evidence of outcomes.

50 Faces of Hillcrest

Hillcrest Housing Association



How do you communicate 50 years success as a housing organisation, include a diverse range of stakeholders, create material to be used for years to come, deliver the campaign in an innovative and engaging way and make an impact on your audiences? This was the challenge set for Hillcrest's communications team and after months of planning and developing ideas, boy did they deliver!

An anniversary book, articles and features in housing magazines and photographic displays were all considered but the team were keen to deliver something that captured the imagination of their audience, told the Hillcrest story in an interesting way and incorporated new technology to support the organisation's commitment to digital transformation.

50 faces of Hillcrest is a unique, innovative and ambitious communications campaign that encapsulates the heart of Hillcrest – people. The film project celebrates the 50th anniversary of Hillcrest by communicating the story of the organisation through their main stakeholders. Careful consideration went in to selecting 50 faces who then in turn told the Hillcrest story in their own words. This included their tenants,

service users, architects, the Housing Minister, staff and many more. The end result is 50 short films giving a snapshot of the diverse organisation and all of the services provided. Hearing the story in people's own words heightens the impact of the communication.

The team did not stop there and were determined to deliver the films in an innovative and exciting way. Making use of an augmented reality (AR) app, Hillcrest's team ensured the experience of the communications campaign was truly an interactive one. Audiences can download the app free of charge and follow simple step by step instructions to load the campaign. Large, portable banner stands containing striking portrait images of the faces were produced and allow audiences to scan a face using the camera on their smart phone/tablet to view the films on their mobile device.

The technology is transferable to printed materials and Hillcrest's annual report this year ensured that 50 faces reached a wide audience. The annual report, with full instructions on how to use the app, can be viewed here <https://tinyurl.com/ydx2g3tc> The ten banner stands have been designed to be used for years to come at a range of events to promote the work of Hillcrest and the housing sector in general.

To launch the campaign the videos were released on our social media channels over a two week period and the results were fantastic. The campaign increased the audiences on all platforms and the engagement with each of the films was overwhelming. The Hillcrest message has definitely been spread and the understanding of the work of housing associations has increased.

Some of the feedback on Twitter included:

"Loving 50 faces of Hillcrest – a film project celebrating the people of @Hillcrest_Group #Hillcrest50 Check it out at the YouTube link below" – Cyrenians

"Great 50 Faces launch 19/7/ Thank you and well done all at @Hillcrest_Group Celebrating 50 years of Hillcrest activities: social housing, support and wider development. Every credit + watch out for videos!" – Wendy Johnston, SSSC

On receiving the interactive annual report featuring 50 faces of Hillcrest, Misia Jack from Scotland's Housing Network commented "This is just to say that I absolutely love your annual report. I think that it is just excellent – all about people. Just wonderful, imaginative and so modern. Congratulations."

To view all of the films see <https://www.hillcrest.org.uk/about-us/50-faces-of-hillcrest/>

Outcomes and Achievements

One of the tenants involved in the 50 faces campaign summed up how it felt to be involved and the impact it had on her;

"Thank you so much for an amazing launch. It made me feel very proud to be a part of the 50 Faces of Hillcrest. If I can ever do anything to help promote Hillcrest, please let me know."

In the planning stages of 50 faces, social media was the main platform chosen for spreading the word of the campaign and the outcomes achieved on that

platform were fantastic. Some of the headline figures are:

- Overall the films were viewed 18,781 times on Facebook
- The total reach of people engaged with was 87,257 people on Facebook
- In total the films were viewed for 6,263 minutes

www.hillcrestha.org.uk

Ambitious Towns

North Lanarkshire Council



Des Murray, Assistant Chief Executive, North Lanarkshire Council says: "Our Ambitious Towns plan affects people's lives in a very real way, so it's essential that we engage fully if we are to ensure support from our residents. There's no doubt at all that great communications and engagement were crucial and the results delivered by the communications team speak for themselves."

Summary:

Ambitious plans to demolish all 48 high-rise tower blocks in North Lanarkshire over the next 20 years are one part of the council's long-term economic regeneration delivery plan. These objectives were smashed by winning over the majority of 1,600 households identified in the first phase of demolition, who provided us with vital, informed views before approval was granted.

Campaign brief and objectives: 11% of our housing stock is within multi-storey tower blocks. What were once the future of housing are now out-dated, in low demand, with their construction constraining improvements. We have inspirational plans to regenerate town centres by creating modern, vibrant communities.

With over 4,000 households in 48 multi-storey blocks, many tenants were reluctant to support the council's plans for such a life-changing decision. North Lanarkshire Council's brief was to ensure that all audiences were aware of the plans, engage with the council over the consultation period and reassure residents about the safety of their homes and build support before a final decision.

Measurable objectives were to:

- Communicate the proposals to all tower residents and drive resident engagement.
- Engage specifically with 1,600 households in 24 blocks of flats identified in the first phase through a range of communication channels including driving attendance at nine information days.
- Generate 50% uptake in the resident survey by raising awareness of the consultation exercise in the four local media titles and through council digital communication channels.

Rationale (including research and planning): Identifying, engaging and listening to the 1,600 residents affected by the first phase of development and taking on board their views were vital.

Ensuring residents had the right facts to hand to help them express informed views was crucial, while providing reassurance about safety and addressing any concerns. A six-month plan using a range of communication channels was devised.

Strategy, tactics and innovation:

Target influencers: secure buy-in from elected members and residents.

Explain benefits: Initial feedback from tenant groups indicated resistance and our material needed to demonstrate the positives for future housing and the local economy, assistance with moving home and the continued investment in homes.

North Lanarkshire Council researched the wide-ranging demographic of their residents and devised channels to reflect this, including direct engagement, newsletters and traditional and digital media. Content needed to be concise and factual, addressing different concerns, so residents could quickly grasp what was required from them.

Implementation of Tactics:

North Lanarkshire Council produced a brand 'Building You a Better Future' to 'bind' those affected, created social media content to drive online engagement among residents and staged nine local open days, hosted by the council's fully-briefed inhouse tenant participation team.

The council has been carrying out structural reviews of all their towers since 2016 but the fire at Grenfell meant messaging around safety was central to their activity. To reassure residents, information was provided about the integrity of the external cladding and a decision to install sprinkler systems in all towers was announced mid-campaign.

Addressing people's fears about moving out of their current home and providing helpful advice was essential. A robust, personalised Q&A newsletter was sent to all 1,600 homes, along with a print out of the survey and pre-paid reply envelopes to avoid expense to the tenant. Others were signposted to an online version. Housing advisors were briefed before visiting every affected household to clarify the plans and to answer questions.

Outcomes and Achievements

Media coverage:

- Extensive coverage of 32 articles in press including front page of The Herald, lead features national TV, major radio stations and key trade press. 97% positive coverage.
- Special features produced on BBC Radio 4's Westminster Hour and ITN News at Ten.
- 30% of direct emails to residents were uniquely opened.
- Our initial social media post reached 50,312 people (eight times the December average) 28,534 video views, 926 reactions and over 1,000 click-throughs to our webpage.
- Our final post reached 27,832 people and generated 2,999 unique page views on our website.

Direct engagement:

- A quarter of the target audience (350 households) attended open days, 80% supported the proposals, 50 residents participated in a detailed workshop.
- Briefings to all stakeholders including tenants federation, local businesses, fire and police services.
- All 1,600 households provided with a newsletter/survey and a personal visit from a housing officer within the consultation period.

Survey outcomes:

- 1,023 surveys were completed (61% return vs 50% objective) with 81% giving support.

Cost effectiveness:

- All artwork produced in-house, council premises and staff provided open days/briefings. This campaign was particularly cost effective with a budget of £1,000 for the production of direct mail materials.

www.northlan.gov.uk

'Moving In': Co-Producing a tenants handbook and DVD

South Ayrshire Council



All new South Ayrshire Council tenants receive a tenants' handbook that provides information on housing management issues, rights and responsibilities as a tenant as well as information about wider services available locally. The previous handbook had not been updated in some time, and as such there was an urgent need to review this. Feedback from tenants suggested that the handbook in its previous form was not fit for purpose as it was felt to be both out-of-date and difficult to read. Furthermore, our involved tenants highlighted the Tenants' Handbook as being an area where they wanted to see real improvement.

Tenants and officers worked together to take forward the review of the handbook with a focus on making it as accessible as possible for tenants. A co-production approach was taken to the development of the document, with tenants being fully involved in every stage of the process, from initial content through to editing and working with designers to produce the final version. Tenant involvement allowed us to develop a final product that is accessible and meets the needs of the council's tenant-base. The breadth of information presented in the handbook also meant that the working group needed to frequently refer to other services within the council, while the amount of content in the handbook also had the consequence of increasing design costs. Thanks to tenants' and officers' experience of developing the tenants newsletter and performance edition, however, the team was able to demonstrate that presenting information in an accessible and visually appealing way can lead to greater engagement with the material presented.

On reviewing the handbook, officers and tenants agreed that any written document – no matter how accessible – would still present difficulties for some tenants, particularly those with literacy issues. As such, tenants and officers agreed to work together to develop an online video and DVD that would put across some of the key messages from the handbook while simultaneously establishing the handbook as a first point of reference for tenants. Again a co-production approach was taken, with tenants working together with officers, the production company and the writers/actors to make decisions at every stage of development, from initial concept through to the final edit.

The working group were keen to think of ways to encourage tenants to watch. After considering a number of alternative options, tenants and officers agreed to commission Jane McCarry and Mark Cox from TV's 'Still Game' to write and star in the production. These individuals brought with them name recognition and are familiar faces to fans of the TV show. A local production company was chosen, and together this team worked with tenants to develop a script that would be engaging and entertaining while getting across the most important messages from the handbook. Because of these choices, development of the online video/DVD had cost implications that more limited productions would not have. Officers (with input from tenants) were able to argue in favour of this investment, clearly setting out the identified benefits.

The collaborative approach taken to these projects did not happen in isolation, and are the product of a five year journey the Housing Service has been taking towards increased co-production and greater tenant involvement. During this time the council's tenants have played an integral role in changing South Ayrshire Council's approach to communication, scrutinising their performance and improving services through involvement in regular, meaningful working groups that have made demonstrable changes to the way the council does things. Tenants have told South Ayrshire Council what they want to achieve with tenant participation and the council has helped them achieve this.

Outcomes and Achievements

The tenants handbook was launched in November 2017. Production of the online video and DVD ended in January 2018, and was launched in April 2018 with a public screening at Ayr Town Hall that attracted very positive feedback in the local press. Feedback from tenants has been excellent so far, with many recognising the benefits the project brings as well as the risk and innovation involved in the delivery of this project.

As well as improvements to the information that South Ayrshire Council provides, their approach to the development of the handbook and DVD specifically (and to tenant participation generally) allows the council to hear tenants views and take them into

account, place tenants at the heart of decision-making and fosters good relationships between the council and their communities.

The success of this co-production approach to tenant participation can also be demonstrated through the results of a comprehensive survey. Tenants' satisfaction with opportunities to be involved in decision-making, for example, rose from 72% in 2015 to almost 99% in 2017. Similarly, satisfaction with the way tenants are kept informed rose from less than 76% to more than 97% in 2017, demonstrating that tenants recognise and value the work that the council is doing to improve engagement.

www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk



CIH SCOTLAND 2018

EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD

Sponsored by:



SafeDeposits
Scotland

This new award recognises housing teams who go above and beyond to deliver truly outstanding customer service. This also includes organisations that have used an innovative approach to gain insight into their customer needs and experiences and have used this to transform service to customers.

Block Talk

Cube Housing Association



Cube wanted to improve customer engagement and satisfaction and change perceptions of old style, traditional landlord and tenant relationships. Cube took customer engagement out into the heart of their communities and shaped a new modern way of working in the digital world.

Customer engagement is low within the multi-storey blocks within the Wyndford Area of Maryhill. There have been various events at the entrances to the blocks with Housing Officers and partner agencies including; Loretto Housing Tenancy Sustainment, Police Scotland and Scottish Fire & Rescue Service. We planned these events at various times including late afternoon and early evening. These events are based at the entrance of the multi- storey flats to catch customers entering or leaving the blocks.

The aim was to improve relationships and find out customers views and what's really important to them but first Cube needed to get them engaged. Overall

Cube's aim is to promote the services available, increase customer satisfaction, build relationships and delight their customers with the digital tools available which include iPads.

This campaign has been worthwhile and changed customer's lives. Customers really appreciate the fact that Cube has taken the time to talk to them face to face and ask their views, idea's and support them with digital skills. Cube's services are personalised and tailored to meet customers' individual needs.

Housing Officers set up surgeries with their iPads which allowed them to do all the background checks and establish who is in the household, when they last reported a repair and if their rent is up to date. The Housing Officers listened and showed that Cube cares by taking the time to get tenants' views on how services could be improved, find out their ideas and priorities and start to make changes in real time keeping customers informed every step of the way on the journey towards excellence and not waiting until the next annual survey.

Cube's concept is simple they are there to help. When customers rate Cube eight out of ten, the company asks what else could be done to make it a ten. This helps the company improve and establish what is needed to go that extra mile and delight their customers every time transforming their lives. Cube offers support with wrap around services helping with benefits, fuel advice, budgeting support, review housing options, investment priorities and establish what events their customers would like to participate in.

Outcomes and Achievements

Some Key successful outcomes/ tangible results:

- Helping customers out of poverty trap and giving assistance with managing their money, budgeting skills
- Taking services directly to the customer, increased engagement and enabled us to meet our customers who do not communicate on a regular basis.
- Continue the positive work Cube is planning frequent events within the blocks carrying out joint working with partner agencies to promote and join up services.
- Increase in referrals to Loretto Housing Tenancy Sustainment and home fire safety visits
- Increase in customers signing up to our online services for web self-service to report repairs and check rent accounts at a time that suits them. We offer IT training at our local HUB as customers prepare for Universal Credit and will need a bank account and email address.

This Campaign is very close to our hearts and Cube is really proud of what they have achieved...bringing customer ideas to life. It's a modern, exciting way to engage and refreshing to call tenants customers who are at the heart of everything that Cube does.

www.cubehousing.co.uk

Creating a Community Where Customers Come First

Elderpark Housing Association



Elderpark Housing is based in Central Govan providing around 1260 homes for rent. Their vision is to 'lead the way in delivering outstanding customer services and great places to live'

To achieve this, Elderpark Housing focuses on ensuring they understand their customers' needs, challenges and requirements. The product they offer is as much, if not more, about the service that Elderpark Housing staff provides than the homes that they offer.

The company has developed a strategy of updating and recording contact details and special requirements of tenants at the point of service delivery.

They offer a comprehensive Housing Options approach which is only used by some housing providers across Scotland. This involves providing those in housing need with an advice package outlining the options available to them including assessing their support needs, signposting and referring them to appropriate agencies ensuring they can make informed choices. This also ensures that Elderpark Housing develops a strong relationship with their customers even before they become a tenant.

Some examples of how they have adapted customer service to meet the needs of customers include:

- Each Housing Officer has a dedicated patch and takes lead responsibility for aspects of service including communications and publications, community development and events, welfare reform and Universal Credit to name a few areas.
- Community Benefit clauses are used to provide direct benefit for residents above and beyond the core housing function, some examples include:
 - Cleaning flats for those with mental health issues
 - Painting rooms for people with mental or physical health issues
 - Provided paid work experiences for people based within the local community
 - Provided apprenticeships in the office environment and with our contractors
- Elderpark Housing works closely with voluntary and council agencies to provide support in helping the most vulnerable and marginalised within their communities' access work experience opportunities.
- Govan is awash with local industry, large employers and significant resources but often Elderpark Housing residents have an educational attainment gap which limits their opportunities. The company conducted research and developed partnerships with these firms to identify how they can support their communities and reduce disadvantage.
- Used events including Family Fun days, 'Come Dine with Me' events (which included local young anti-social children preparing and serving a three course meal for elderly residents) and Burns Supper for staff to build relationships with local residents in a community setting.

- Employed young people through the Community Jobs Scotland to provide a Help Line Service for elderly and disabled tenants and help improve the appearance of local environment.
- Created and supported a social enterprise food co-op to help promote a healthy and affordable diet
- Operated a community centre, a food hub centre and two community gardens for the benefit of local residents.
- Developed an online business with a new website allowing for two way communication including live chat, repairs reporting, applying for housing and more. Complementing this enhanced Elderpark Housing's focus on social media to allow them to communicate with the local community.

- Elderpark Housing's recognised that Wi-Fi is often described as the 'fourth utility' and have implemented communal Wi-Fi in a number of their properties together with this being standard in their new build programme.
- Responded to the wishes of residents in terms of planned maintenance by changing how Elderpark Housing scheduled improvement works. Instead of renewing bathrooms and kitchens as one project they took on board feedback from tenants that this was causing disturbance therefore staggered these works over two years.

Elderpark Housing understands that Govan is an area with challenges and their customer focus is placed around understanding their needs, working with local partners to provide opportunities and ensuring that every tenant is treated as an individual with their own particular requirements.

Outcomes and Achievements

Elderpark Housing has a team of 28 staff who display the attributes of great customer service by showing empathy to those in vulnerable and difficult situations, taking on board customer feedback and identifying ways to improve what the company offers, investing resources in improving the homes and providing additional services above the landlord role and more importantly caring about the organisation, the community and the tenants we serve.

Their customer satisfaction levels are one of the best in the sector with 96% of tenants satisfied with the overall service, 100% felt that Elderpark Housing were good about keeping them informed about our services, 99% felt satisfied with the opportunities to participate with

the association and as the single biggest service used by our tenants Elderpark Housing is delighted that 96% were satisfied with the repairs service.

The association recently carried out a staff survey and the views of how staff feel about the association have a direct correlation with how customer service is delivered. 96% of staff were confident that services were customer focused and 96% were clear on the standard of customer service expected.

Excellent customer service is about caring about customers and communities and this is displayed by Elderpark Housing in abundance daily.

www.elderpark.org

Anti-Social Response Service

North Lanarkshire Council with Police Scotland, 13 Registered Social Landlords and Community Safety Partners



The council's Anti-Social Behaviour Response Service re-launched in 2014 after extensive consultation with their tenants and residents, community safety partners

and in conjunction with a Member Officers Working Group. The outcome was to re-align the service from a primarily re-active service to a pro-active progressive service and provide a holistic 360° service to the community.

There are six key objectives for the service.

1. To provide a clarity of purpose
2. To improve the first point of contact for tenants and residents
3. To offer a pro-active service, with increased visibility
4. To improve communications and processes within the service
5. To improve the marketing of the new service
6. To improve the service's sustainability to break the cycle of antisocial behaviour in our communities.

Creative and innovative partnership working has also enabled North Lanarkshire Council to meet not only their key service objectives, but also their five Council priorities:

1. Improved economic opportunities and outcomes.
2. Supporting children to realise their full potential.
3. Improve the health, wellbeing and care of communities.
4. Improve relationships with communities and the third sector
5. Improve the council resource base.

Key changes include a central telephone reporting service, operating 24-hours-a-day with online reporting options for consistency of advice; dedicated investigation teams in each locality, and schools education programmes to help break the cycle of antisocial behaviour.

Officers take action to address antisocial behaviour of different types including vandalism, graffiti, noise nuisance and hate crimes. These issues can have a significant impact on the lives of residents so the team aims to resolve incidents quickly, effectively and sensitively.

Officers take various steps to stop antisocial behaviour, including issuing written warnings, legal action, Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) and eviction proceedings. However, not all cases require this type of action and we offer mediation for low level problems with neighbours, focussing on prevention and early intervention to prevent escalation.

One of the biggest changes to the service is the creation of a team of night officers, who operate during peak evenings when residents need support and attend reports of ongoing antisocial behaviour. Officers can also hand out on-the-spot fines; remove

noise nuisance equipment from homes and, with the support of Police Scotland, put an immediate stop to serious antisocial behaviour incidents.

This team has issued 1,888 warnings in relation to ongoing incidents. 36 weekly hotspot patrols are carried out in locations identified through our locality teams, elected members, Community Safety Partnerships as causing concern for residents. Reassurance visits are carried out to vulnerable residents or those suffering from antisocial behaviour in the community to offer advice and support.

The team has carried out 1,907 out-of-hours visits in conjunction with Police Scotland for addresses on the cusp of anti-social behaviour. 1063 (55.74%) were not subject to any further complaints. A further 403 (47.75%) were subject to two or less complaints before the antisocial behaviour stopped.

Interactive presentations with young people who are first or future tenants are carried out. These highlight what is and isn't antisocial behaviour, how to be a good neighbour, the consequences of antisocial behaviour, how the council can help and support available. 87% of those who have received the presentation have not been subject to any complaints once they became a council tenant.

Through workshops and information promoted through local media and the council's web site and other communications channels, the service is promoted outlining what is and isn't regarded as antisocial behaviour and the powers we can use.

The council works in partnership with other housing providers and council services to address any other issues that arise. We have developed a categorisation framework to prioritise the most serious issues and have established a robust partnership with Police Scotland to deal effectively with any criminality.

Outcomes and Achievements

North Lanarkshire Council has improved performance for concluding complaints within agreed timescales: 2014/15-98.74%; 2015/16-99.76%; 2016/17-99.96% and 2017/18 is 99.99%.

Monthly customer surveys identified strengths and suggestions for improvement which were then incorporate into the service. Satisfaction rates have risen from 2014/15-77.78%; 2015/16-93.23%; 2016/17-93.55%; to 2017/18-96.65%.

The Mediation Team focusses on prevention and early intervention with 67% of referrals made resulting in no further complaints.

We have ongoing liaison with tenants and residents associations and the North Lanarkshire Federation of Tenants and Residents. The Chairperson stated in the Annual Performance Report: "The Federation, together with tenants, worked with NLC and are really pleased with the results especially with the performance in complaints and antisocial behaviour".

Staff input is encouraged through development days with community safety partners and as well as educational presentations, interactive workshops address areas for continuous improvement and collated results are distributed to all and adopted into the service.

Our service continues to be successful due to the strong relationships with our residents and partners and our willingness to evolve and meet their needs. The combined services of advice, enforcement, mediation and education to break the cycle of offending behaviours contribute to help support safe and sustainable communities for the residents of North Lanarkshire.

www.northlan.gov.uk

Supported Housing

Phoenix Futures



Phoenix Futures is a registered social landlord and registered charity dedicated to helping individuals, families and communities recover from drug and alcohol problems. They have three main values and beliefs which are; we believe in being the best, we are passionate about recovery and we value our history and use it to shape our future. They are specialists in recovery housing and have an abstinence based Supported Housing Service located in Glasgow. All residents have a history of substance misuse issues, mental health problems, homelessness and/or a history of offending. Phoenix Futures aim to overcome these barriers and support them to make positive transitions into productive independent lives.

Our Supported Housing Unit comprises 10 self-contained flats and can accommodate 16 residents for approximately a six month period. We have a disabled access flat on the ground floor which we recently had adapted, incorporating a new bathroom with wet room, to make it wheelchair accessible. All service users who access our service have completed a detoxification/rehabilitation programme, are drug and alcohol free and committed to maintaining their recovery.

As well as being funded by housing benefit, Phoenix Futures are also funded by local authorities to provide additional care and support to their residents, so it is vital that they work in partnership with and have positive relationships with various health and social care agencies. They work closely with Health and Social Care Partnerships and addiction teams across the UK and also work in partnership with many other organisations and agencies.

Service users' needs and experiences are at the heart of their programmes and they are committed to helping service users address and overcome issues

from their past which may have contributed to their substance misuse. In addition to this Phoenix Futures supports them to learn new skills to enable them to manage a tenancy and equip them for moving into their own tenancy within the community. All service users are allocated a named keyworker to support them. They work together to create an agreed care plan using the Outcome Star Tool, which monitors and evidences progress made by residents in all aspects of their life and recovery. As well as a named key-worker, Phoenix Futures use a peer led approach, which involves peers with lived experience offering mentoring and additional support.

Phoenix Futures embraces service user involvement as they are best positioned to evaluate and give suggestions to improve the services provided. This is done through daily handovers, monthly house meetings, quarterly anonymous service user satisfaction surveys and a service user council. During the house meetings the service users vote for a service user representative who is the voice of the community and responsible for taking any service user issues or concerns to the staff team.

The company also involves their service users in all of our community engagement work as this helps breakdown the stigma and barriers that most of them face due to their previous background and often chaotic lifestyles. The community engagement has included, among other things, our Recovery Culture – Recovery through Nature, Recovery through the Arts, and Recovery through Sports, Go Live at the Green, Scottish Recovery Walk and Coffee Mornings.

As part of their programme, service users are required to occupy their time with meaningful commitments including accessing education, volunteering and employability. Residents help improve their local community by volunteering at various local agencies which also helps with community engagement and further helps breakdown the barriers and stigma they face.

One of the main challenges Phoenix Futures has is ensuring that their service users are able to secure safe, suitable accommodation when they complete the programme and are ready for their own tenancy in the community. Phoenix Futures works closely with local housing associations and involves service users in presentations with these housing associations which has resulted in extremely positive outcomes.

Outcomes and Achievements

Overall Phoenix Futures community engagement and service user involvement has broken down barriers and changed the stigma to respect. This has helped the company to improve their relationship with the local housing associations as they are more aware of the commitment, passion and hard work that service users put into their recovery. They are also more understanding of our service user needs and therefore offer them appropriate permanent tenancies. Over the last year, this has resulted in 96% of our residents securing their own tenancy upon completion of their six month programme. Of these 71% are still abstinent.

Service User Feedback

"Moving in Phoenix's resettlement housing has been a great experience. It's allowed me to get used to having my independence back while knowing I have all the support I could need. I like that my opinion and feedback counts. All of the staff have been understanding, welcoming and helped me find my own path in recovery and life"

"Coming from residential treatment to supported accommodation done me the world of good, perhaps saved my life and reconciled my relationship with my kids and family"

"Since coming to the supported housing I have learned so much about myself. It's helped me to live independently, to budget my money, to cook. It's gave me the structure and a process of integration back in the community and society"

Care Manager Feedback

"I had excellent communication from both Michelle and David at Phoenix Futures Glasgow and including comprehensive reports and regular telephone updates. I felt entirely 'in the loop' throughout my clients placement"

www.phoenix-futures.org.uk

16+ Transitions Project

Scottish Borders Housing Association with Scottish Borders Council



The 16+ Transitions Project benefits vulnerable young people leaving care in the Scottish Borders, playing a pivotal role in meeting the specific needs of this unique customer base.

Young people leaving care are forced to grow up much more quickly than their peers, and have a greater risk of experiencing homelessness, ill-health and unemployment and becoming involved in criminal activity. The 16+ Transitions Project, which became operational in 2010, helps level this playing field, providing young care leavers with the skills needed for independent living, as well as emotional support and help to find training, education and employment.

Delivered in partnership with Scottish Borders Council, Transitions seeks to ensure more vulnerable young people are in a home of their choice; in employment, training or education; have a positive attitude to their future; and are able to make and maintain positive

relationships that matter to them. This person centred support is provided to young care leavers aged 16 to 25 years old, assisting them in the transition to sustainable independent living with opportunities to achieve positive destinations.

Three full time transition workers provide specialist support to help the young people to develop key skills and access the correct information and services, advocating on their behalf and empowering them to make decisions and take control of their lives. Transition workers also provide emotional and social support on relationships, community participation, health and wellbeing (including self-esteem and identity). Key to the project's success is the strong, trusting and lasting relationships with that the young service users build with the transitions team.

Each young person develops a pathway plan to identify their goals as well as the skills they have, need and want to develop. In partnership with the young people, the team has developed an Outcomes Star tool, which is used to measure and support progress, helping the young person to take ownership and recognise their progression – even if they haven't achieved their final goal - which is important to build the young person's self-esteem.

All support is tailored to the individual and while there are three workers with key specialisms, each worker provides the support that is required at that time. Good examples of this are; a worker cooking with a young person every week to develop their confidence in their own kitchen, attending DWP meetings or court visits, providing support to manage health conditions, being available when relationships break down and

situations change. The workers have realistic and adult to adult relationships with the young people, allowing them to progress into independent living confidently.

The Team works to increase the provision of transitional accommodation for young people across the Scottish Borders and directly engage and support young people "at risk" in the community to progress to sustainable independent living. The Team currently runs a flagship project of transitional flats, Albert Place, for looked after young people moving into independent living where care leavers can access higher levels of life skills education and emotional support before moving into their own tenancy, which houses four transitional flats, one training flat and a 24 hour concierge. The training flat is used by

young people to test out their independent living skills and be supported by transition workers- this may be for one day or a few nights at a time. Young people who are moving into independent living but need more emotional and educational support can stay in a transition flat for 6-12 months (more if the situation requires it). The project has involved young people in the planning and design of the Albert Place transitional facility and this is ongoing, with improvements such as Wi-Fi implemented.

These vulnerable and often disadvantaged young people are at the heart of the work of this project which endorses and emphasises the development of young peoples' wellbeing and life skills.

Outcomes and Achievements

More than 300 care leavers have been supported over the life of the Transitions Project. Through support from Transitions:

- 87 young people have secured independent tenancies (average 17 per year)
- 36 young people have accessed supported housing at Albert Place (average 8 per year)
- 83% of young people leaving Albert Place have sustained a tenancy for 12 months or more
- 121 have been supported to access employment, education or training (average 28 per year)
- 74 have attained employability skills (average 18 per year)
- 334 have improved their support networks in the community (average 61 per year)
- 110 have stated that they are experiencing increased self-confidence (19 per year)

On average the Project supports 55 care leavers at any one time.


The project plays a pivotal role in ensuring the voice of young care leavers is met. Alongside other registered social landlords and the through care and after care team, they have developed the Scottish Borders "housing options protocol for care leavers" which commenced in April 2017. The protocol recognises the vulnerabilities of young care leavers and ensures their individual needs are met in a planned way and that they are prioritised for housing allocations. This is delivered via a panel of members who agree the most appropriate housing options and support required.

www.sbha.org.uk



CIH SCOTLAND 2018

EXCELLENCE IN REGENERATION AWARD

Sponsored by: 

This award acknowledges the critical importance of a range of bodies, organisations and local groups in revitalising communities and neighbourhoods. It also recognises that physical improvements go hand in hand with social and economic developments to make a real difference to people's lives.

It is targeted at helping to achieve the strategic objectives to create places that are healthier, wealthier, fairer, smarter, stronger and greener. These regeneration projects worked in partnership with funders, service providers and most importantly, communities, to encourage successful regeneration that contributed to a wider vision and brings benefits to all customers. These shortlisted projects show evidence of lasting improvements that have been made in the area, both physical and socio-economic and that there are good prospects for the long term viability of the area.

Caring for You, Your Home and Your Community

East Ayrshire Council - Housing Asset Services with Bellsbank Community, CANI Community Group, Centrestage, Engie UK, NHS, Scottish Civic Trust, CVO, Bellsbank Primary, Bellsbank Church and Bellsbank Project



Collaboration, innovation and community place making at its brilliant best!

East Ayrshire Council's Housing Asset Services has successfully co-produced with communities to deliver exciting housing improvements over recent years but could see further opportunities for a truly holistic approach to make real differences to the health and wellbeing of their citizens while regenerating communities.

Following a previous successful Clean, Green and Vibrant initiative, Housing Asset Services and East Ayrshire Council's communities recognised that social isolation, loneliness, fuel poverty and health were significant concerns and wanted to work across boundaries to make a real difference. This however would take them totally out of their comfort zone.

A challenging journey followed with numerous conversations with many different organisations. Initial replies of "this is for Health and Social Care" or "we're technical people, not health professionals" quickly disappeared once everyone became aware of the real health impacts. Initial concerns were soon replaced with steely determination to reimagine an innovative and collaborative approach.

This truly unique, innovative and collaborative approach, with communities fully engaged and empowered from the outset, has seen a transformational effect in some of the most disadvantaged communities. Making a real impact on health and wellbeing whilst regenerating homes and the local environment.

The approach has seen the development of many exciting relationships and partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders including NHS; social enterprise

(Centrestage); Scottish Civic Trust, Engie UK; the voluntary sector; Community Groups and at the very centre – East Ayrshire Council's citizens.

The first community to see this innovative approach was Bellsbank and the community desperately wanted to make Bellsbank a special place.

In partnership with the Scottish Civic Trust and community, an exciting coloured render programme was designed to make a dramatic visual impact. The whole community, including the local school, were involved.

A strong partnership was built between HAS and the NHS to ensure that the council could really support with regard to health and wellbeing within the project. Training was provided by NHS to council staff to help them understand the issues and encourage kind and caring conversations.

The NHS Better Health Hub was identified as a confidential single point of contact who could help and support citizens with a range of concerns including:

- Energy advice/switching provider
- Money worries
- Managing anxiety
- Wellbeing and healthy eating
- Alcohol and drugs
- Stopping Smoking

Housing Asset Services (HAS) developed and provided every citizen with a bespoke information pack and ensured caring conversations took place

throughout the project explaining what support and help was available and arranged where requested. Also promoting NHS initiatives such as "Pharmacy First", "When You Are Ill, Know Who To Turn To", Dental Advice etc. to help reduce demand and improve outcomes.

HAS developed an exciting partnership with our contractor Engie and Centrestage with a summer programme of community activities around learning to cook on a budget taking place within the local church.

An opportunity arose for HAS and Engie to support members of Centrestage's Catalyst group gain valuable work experience and two members have now secured permanent employment.

HAS is supporting the local community group CANI who have set up a thriving youth club. Partnership working with CANI and Centrestage has also delivered a dignified food programme which directly helps people who need it most.

The voluntary sector have worked with HAS to deliver services to improve the local environment and promote activities/groups that people can get involved with to increase connectedness.

Creative and caring. Challenging but courageous. Citizen centred and collaborative.

Innovative and visionary thinking outside the box, regenerating communities while supporting health and wellbeing in a new way.

Outcomes and Achievements

Citizens see kindness, help and support from council and partners.

Community sessions delivered by Centrestage have helped many citizens improve their health and wellbeing.

The local community now also deliver a dignified food programme with Centrestage which directly helps people who need it most.

NHS have worked closely with HAS staff around social isolation and kind conversations.

"Being a part of this innovative and visionary project is allowing really positive impact to be made quickly, benefitting individuals across communities. We can respond directly to need with partners who share our vision, delivering their service in collaboration with ours to provide quick solutions and supports to those who most need them."

Fiona McKenzie CEO Centrestage

"Housing Asset Services have shown great vision and passion in leading the way improving health and combatting loneliness while delivering an amazing project."

Nicola Tomkinson Senior Health Officer, NHS

"The support provided has been absolutely fantastic. We are very proud to now also be delivering a community dignified food programme as a result of the great partnership working."

Bellsbank CANI Community Group

Over 99% customer satisfaction, visually stunning homes and a proud and strong community.

Really doing things differently to make a real difference

www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk

Anderston Regeneration, Glasgow

Sanctuary Scotland with Glasgow City Council, Scottish Government, ASTRA (Anderston Sanctuary Tenants and Residents Association)



Sanctuary's masterplan for Anderston has created 540 new, affordable homes for existing and new residents, replacing 495 sub-standard properties built in the 1960s. The housing mix provides homes for single residents, through to large family townhouses, which are rarely available in city centre locations.

Among the 1960s buildings demolished were:

- One x 18-storey tower block
- Two 2 x 10-storey slab blocks
- 4-storey concrete blocks

The demolished homes were factory-built and badly insulated – flat roofs leaked and heating bills were high. Ill-defined external spaces were difficult to maintain within what was a confusing street layout.

Anderston's current residents are housed in an area where high quality homes complement the public space that surrounds them.

Mother-of-three Helen Campbell-Adeyanju moved to Anderston three months ago. A delighted Helen said: "We feel like we've won the lottery."

The project's third phase received recognition from the Saltire Society, the Herald Property Awards and the Scottish Home Awards.

The masterplan was developed in close consultation with ASTRA, the Anderston Sanctuary Tenants and Residents Association. ASTRA's input helped ensure the transformation of Anderston was consistent with the community's wishes. As ASTRA requested, Sanctuary Scotland has:

- Restored the historic street pattern that was built over in the 1960s, including front and back gardens
- Limited the heights of new buildings
- Helped Anderston connect better with the surrounding locality.

All existing residents were to be (and have been) rehoused in new Sanctuary homes, allowing neighbours to reunite to continue the strong sense of community built up over many decades. It was essential for Sanctuary to bring people with us, an aim we believe we have achieved. A programme of 'build, decant, demolish' meant no-one was forced to move from Anderston during the regeneration. Speaking positively after Phase 1's completion, ASTRA member and Argyle Street resident Elaine Docherty said: "It's a different world."

The reinstated section of Argyle Street not only provides pedestrian and cycle access to the rest of Anderston but also connects to new amenity spaces built across the final phase of the site. South facing gardens are also provided to the southern edge of the final phase to encourage recreation and play.

Sanctuary's transformation of Anderston goes beyond better housing, an improved street plan and more attractive amenity spaces. Throughout the project we have worked with local artists, schools and groups so the community can make its own mark. This includes pupils from three primary schools having their hand prints scanned, digitally converted and fired onto ceramic tiles installed in the stairwells. Phase 3 saw Sanctuary work with the local primary schools and Glasgow School of Art to design a mural of 'ANDERSTON', a project with a value of £15,000 now installed for all to see.

The final phase saw Sanctuary restore three hippopotamus sculptures that had been area fixtures since the 1960s. A mural of Billy Connolly, who was born near Anderston, hangs from the development above the Clydeside Expressway. Glasgow artist Andy Scott, who created the mural, will unveil a statue of Charles Rennie Mackintosh in December to formally mark the regeneration's completion.

The creation of allotments has encouraged residents to exercise and made this green space more attractive. A car club reduces the need for residents to own a vehicle, reducing the demand on parking spaces in central Glasgow. The whole of Phase 5 is car free. The retail unit created hosts a SPAR across the road from the local Sanctuary office.

Councillor Susan Aitken, Leader of Glasgow City Council, said: "The transformation is amazing and shows it is possible to create hundreds of high quality, affordable homes in the heart of Glasgow."

Outcomes and Achievements

540 new affordable homes, a mix of 511 flats, 21 maisonettes, five townhouses and three wheelchair flats.

One retail unit (corner shop).

Community allotments.

Public art including:

- Billy Connolly mural by Glasgow artist Andy Scott (design chosen by area residents)
- ANDERSTON mural (designed by GSoA students with local primary/nursery pupils)
- Recasting Anderston's three 'hippos', popular community sculptures from the 1960s
- Wall tiles featuring the hand prints of area pupils in Phase 1's close entrances.

A bronze sculpture of Glasgow artist Charles Rennie Mackintosh will be unveiled to formally mark the regeneration's completion in December 2018.

Supplied and buried time capsules for Anderston Primary School (Phase 2) and St Patrick's Primary School (Phase 3).

Improvement works at Cranstonhill Nursery and Anderston Primary School.

Reinstatement of the 'missing link' in Argyle Street lost during Anderston's 1960's regeneration. The return to the original street plan has created a popular thoroughfare through Anderston to Finnieston, one of Glasgow's most vibrant areas.

More than 40 trade apprentices employed over the course of the project.

www.sanctuary-housing.co.uk

Laurieston Living

Urban Union with McTaggart Construction and Robertson Group



In Scotland, the Gorbals has a reputation for deprivation and poor housing. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, many residents of the demolished tenements in the area were rehomed in high rises - which impacted community living and encouraged anti-social behaviour, blighting the social fabric of Laurieston.

But Laurieston Living is changing things in the area. Delivered by Urban Union, it is a £100m revitalisation of Laurieston, in the Gorbals area, with plans to deliver a total of four phases over a nine-year period. This will include over 800 mixed tenure homes, community facilities, open space and recreation areas.

Urban Union employs a partnership approach and works closely with the Scottish Government, Glasgow City Council, New Gorbals Housing Association and Glasgow Housing Association to deliver this ambitious regeneration project.

In Phase 1A, Urban Union built 201 homes for social rent for New Gorbals Housing Association. Phase 1B involved the creation of 108 homes - 39 for mid-market rent for New Gorbals Housing Association and 69 for private sale for Urban Union. Phase 1C, currently under construction, will deliver 55 new affordable apartments for New Gorbals Housing Association. And Phase 2 is also now underway, with 173 private for sale homes being built.

The homes have been designed to evoke the traditional character and grid pattern of Glasgow tenement districts, with communal spaces to encourage community living and to deter anti-social behaviour. Exceptionally high industry standards were a key part of the design commitment, with all new homes on the development achieving an 'EcoHomes' rating of 'Very Good', meeting with 'Secured by Design' criteria.

All partners have committed to a well-insulated envelope to all buildings, large window openings to provide natural daylight, robust and sustainable materials throughout, recycling facilities and a large percentage of external amenity space, both communal and private.

The team is also committed to ensuring a coherent, sustainable approach focused on long-term projects which support growth and community living. From the beginning of the project local representatives were chosen to contribute to the overall masterplan. Urban Union constantly engaged with this group, with a public consultation on the final masterplan held locally and received very positively.

Furthermore, Urban Union strongly believes in the need to create genuine opportunities for locals. The organisation is dedicated to delivering educational opportunities in the construction industry for local young people. The development partnership has partnered with Holyrood High School in Glasgow to introduce an employability programme - trailblazing a better future for bright young people to support them through a pathway from school to further education. Laurieston also has a dedicated community benefits officer, who engages with the local community in ways that truly benefit them.

Urban Union has also partnered with The Barn, a local youth group, to create a vital volunteer network. These volunteers support local young people in areas such as diversionary youth work, encouraging positive

choices and the provision of disability support, ultimately encouraging social change. In recent months, Urban Union made a sizeable donation to The Barn, which has now been significantly renovated to allow it to better serve local young people.

Urban Union is committed to creating communities, not simply building new homes. To that effect, it has established a significant 'Arts and Living Strategy' at each of its development. Arts organisation WAVEparticle, based a stone's throw from Laurieston, created a five-year arts strategy for the area with the ambition of exploring and connecting it to the rich history of Laurieston, its people, places, interests, inspirations and aspirations.

Outcomes and Achievements

Laurieston Living has been a huge success, with hundreds of families now living at the development. To date, the focus has been on providing high quality accommodation for local people.

While that will continue in the second phase, there will be a noticeable shift towards addressing the wider needs of the community. One of the key aspects of that will be the creation of a Linear Park - providing Laurieston residents with greenspace they can call their own.

Since its inception, Laurieston Living has won a host of awards, including the RIBA Award for Scotland and the RIAS Architecture Award. But true success cannot be measured by awards. Instead, it can be judged by

the fact a genuine community has been formed - one that emphasises positive opportunities and the arts. Video portraits have been made, touch stones carved by children from demolished buildings and group tree planting events and arts exhibitions held - all initiatives employed to help bring the vision of creating a new community to life.

The many creative projects and opportunities for residents have secured the successful creation of a new community at the heart of Glasgow - and that will continue as Laurieston Living grows and grows.

www.urbanunionltd.co.uk



CIH SCOTLAND 2018 EXCELLENCE IN DEVELOPMENT FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING AWARD

Sponsored by:



This award recognises developers who have built new residential developments in any recognised affordable tenure. The shortlisted developments have created a new community with benefits to the wider area and have demonstrated excellence, beyond the minimum required standard in areas such as energy efficiency; community engagement and partnership working; design quality and location.

Dougrie Drive

Glasgow Housing Association as part of
Wheatley Group



The Dougrie Drive development in Castlemilk in the south of Glasgow is ideally located for easy access to facilities including primary and high schools, health centre, sports centre, bowling green, seniors' centre, post office, library and a small shopping centre. Dougrie Drive is close to Castlemilk Park and Woodlands providing natural outdoor walking opportunities, with pathways linking to the Commonwealth mountain bike and walking trails in Cathkin Braes.

When planning the development Glasgow Housing Association worked in partnership with Glasgow City Council to bring new homes to Castlemilk after years of inactivity in which there was a growing need for a variety of good quality homes. The association put people at the heart of the designs and at their consultation event they started with a vision for the community, then identified what really mattered to local people, such as location, specification, quality private outdoor space and safety. The association

worked together to create real value and buy-in from the local community. The contractor, CCG Ltd worked closely with local people who wanted to keep an access lane through the site opened, and successfully agreed a temporary and final layout.

The 130-unit mainstream and amenity development creates a rich variety of living by deploying three main building types. A large courtyard amenity block at one end of the site and terraced housing at the other, bookend the main run of 'courtyard clusters' - small buildings of semi-detached houses and cottage flats, grouped around public and private external spaces. Features such as large balconies and generous windows capture the fantastic views which the site affords. Modern open-plan, safe external spaces and a contemporary take on traditional terraces and cottage flats have all been achieved by managing costs intelligently and maintaining affordability.

Through the 'Community Benefits in Procurement' clauses and the work of Glasgow's Housing Association charitable subsidiary, The Wheatley Foundation, their contractor ensured that five people secured full-time jobs (including three from the immediate locality), leaving a lasting social and economic legacy for the area.

Residents receive services over and above management and maintenance such as welfare benefits, fuel advisors, winter home and fire safety checks. Additionally, the new empowerment service model 'Livingwell' provides a bespoke programme designed around the aspirations of individuals and offers a wide range of social, health and wellbeing services, activities outlined in a touch-screen TV within the common room of the amenity block.

Glasgow Housing Association designed this development to meet, at a minimum, an 'EcoHomes' rating of very good. The brick choice on the development has a high MARSS content and the structure throughout is timber kit, giving the development excellent sustainability credentials. These were enhanced by use of off-site methods of construction and CCG's IQ closed panel timber frame system which was taken to Stage three of CCG's process whereby panelised wall solutions are designed and manufactured in a zero-waste environment to be inclusive of insulation, wall linings, windows and doors.

The key objective was to reduce fuel poverty. The project was designed prior to Silver or Gold Standard but still has an impressive SAP average of 83. Glasgow Housing Association's success in achieving this has been captured in their new home tenant satisfaction survey where tenants have reported a drop in heating costs of 80%. All properties meet Housing For Varying Needs, providing flexibility for changing physical needs.

Glasgow Housing Association is immensely proud of this development. The association believes that they have created a new place with a strong identity and where people already feel like they belong and want to remain in for many years to come.

Outcomes and Achievements

Location: Excellent local services and walking/cycling opportunities with good transport links. Spectacular views.

Design: Large windows allow light and capture views. Generous balconies, terraces and gardens connect to the outside and allow natural surveillance. Courtyard clusters created with abundant greenery. Permeability is offset by permanence, expressed by a 'weathered brick finish'.

Wider Benefits: Work placements and curriculum support events for local schools offered, five people secured full-time jobs and five trade apprentices were employed. Residents were enthusiastic to move from much-needed family homes to obtain high quality, independent living.

Community Engagement: Design event held with the community and the contractor worked with local people to ensure they had full input to the new design. As testament 96% of tenants surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied and we welcomed positive statements such as: "I like everything, it just gives me peace of mind and I feel safe".

Energy efficiency: Use of off-site manufacturing. Average SAP rating 83, Eco Homes Very Good achieved, 80% decrease in fuel bills reported.

Partnership Working: Glasgow Housing Association worked with local groups, LHO committee, council and funders. The project transpired at a time of low activity in construction and came to fruition through a collective vision by all parties.

www.gha.org.uk

Pitscottie Road, Cupar

Kingdom Housing Association Ltd



Introduction and Location

The Pitscottie Road, Cupar development is located to the east edge of the village and offers a discreet location for 49 new affordable homes comprising wheelchair/amenity bungalows, amenity flatted cottages and family houses to meet a wide range of occupants' needs.

The requirement for new social rented homes was recognised as a priority due to the high house prices of existing supply in and around Cupar together with the low percentage of affordable housing available.

Design Quality

The site layout embraces the Designing Streets methodology, incorporating two vehicular accesses from Pitscottie Road, facilitating a safe phased handover to allow many of the homes to be occupied during the construction programme. The design incorporates a shared surface and a mixture of on/off street parking to encourage an animated street life and safe play for children.

Natural and historical elements were incorporated into the final design. The existing feature stone wall along the site frontage was repaired and retained. The overall layout encourages glimpses and vistas through to the immediate and wider surroundings, embracing and celebrating the rural farmland setting and ensuring that the residents remain rooted and aware of their location.

A green boundary was introduced where the development edge meets the farmland beyond and a wild flower "avenue for the bees" forms a soft buffer between the new development and the neighbouring dwellings. The surrounding landscape is allowed to encroach and nibble into the development, blurring and entwining the boundaries between existing and new.

The development is designed to rise and fall with the natural topography of the land akin to a traditional rural village. With the pockets of more formalised green areas and gardens introduced throughout the site and as the new planting, consisting of a variety of wild flower, shrubs, beech hedging and oak trees, continues to grow and become more established, the development feels more like it has grown and evolved within its surroundings rather than landing from out of town.

The completed development encourages a village type cluster, encouraging a sense of community and identity whilst at the same time, remaining connected, within a short walk, to its market town of Cupar, which itself is well connected through road and rail to Fife and the country as a whole.

Energy Efficiency

All the properties are designed as Low Carbon Homes to achieve the Silver Standard for Sustainability. This influenced the final specification and included high performance windows and external doors, energy efficient boilers, continuous running decentralised mechanical extract ventilation, water saving taps and toilet and a flue gas heat recovery system. All properties are fitted with photovoltaic panels, energy monitoring meters, energy saving lightbulbs and water butts to collect rain water for use in the gardens.

Community Engagement and Partnership Working

Throughout the build, dialogue continued with local residents through regular meetings, where each was invited to discuss programme, issues of concern and traffic management. Kingdom introduced a new initiative to alleviate some concern through issuing a "noise programme" to the residents so that they knew what to expect and when.

Other community groups were involved throughout the build. Most notably was the local charity, Motorvators, which Kingdom commissioned to provide the artwork for the site. The Motorvators project provides Mental Health support in North East Fife, and the team designed and constructed a life sized plough horse in recycled metal and machine parts, a nod to the site's agricultural past.

The local school ran a competition to name the horse, with entries being judged by Motorvators. The successful school children were invited to attend the naming ceremony on site.

Outcomes and Achievements

Popularity

The development and location proved very popular with prospective tenants and also contributed to the objectives associated with the integration of Housing Health and Social Care. Eight of the new homes were identified for rehousing people from the local long stay hospital allowing them to live independently. Since first let there has been no re-lets.

Design

The properties have been designed to comply with various design standards including:

- Silver Sustainability Standard
- Housing for Varying Needs (HfVN)
- Secured by Design

A resident handbook provides details/instructions on the systems installed and gives tips on recycling and energy saving to reduce energy consumption.

HfVN design will help sustain the community by accommodating changing needs and lifestyles of tenants allowing them to live independently and remain in their homes.

Tenant feedback

The project's success is supported by high levels of tenant satisfaction specifically relating to storage, utility room provision and how spacious and warm the homes were.

Children regularly play in the street, a positive outcome from the well considered traffic management and layout.

Community Benefits

Kingdom launched its independent socio-economic impact study at Pitscottie promoting the benefits achieved through Kingdom's affordable housing investment. Pitscottie provided six training placements, eight jobs, three apprenticeships.

www.kingdomhousing.org.uk

Leith Fort

Port of Leith Housing Association



Background

The redevelopment of Leith Fort with a total of 94 new build residential units is part of the City of Edinburgh Council's programme to replace older housing stock that would be difficult to refurbish to make way for new, energy efficient homes. It was completed in December 2017 by the City of Edinburgh Council and Port of Leith Housing Association. The site was previously the location of an 18th-century military fortification before being reconstructed as a council housing estate in the 1960s. The original council estate contained a seven-storey tower block, which was isolated within the confines of the existing fort walls, yet managed to dominate the surrounding area. It not only cut the area in two, but also did little to engage

with its immediate context and latterly became a hub for anti-social behaviour. The current redevelopment project looked to redress these issues and develop a scheme which would sit sensitively within this historic area of Leith. The current development consists of seven terraces with 32 units for social rent and 62 for mid-market. With more sympathetic three-storey building heights, the scheme successfully integrates with the existing urban fabric of the surrounding residential neighbourhood, while negotiations with Historic Scotland led to a sensitive reduction in height of portions of the historic fort wall to help break down these perceived physical barriers. The site's masterplan aims to provide houses and garden that animate the street and encourage visibility across common areas of the site, helping to attain its 'Secure by design' certification.

Design

Making use of the traditional Edinburgh colony housing typology, the duplex over ground floor flat configuration allows for a dense mix of housing suitable for its urban setting, while still providing each dwelling with its own front door and private garden. In doing so, it encourages a lifestyle centred around urban living, yet with ample space for families. The shared stairs to upper flats, open gardens, ample landscaped amenity space, and well-connected pathways encourage interaction and

familiarity between neighbours. The 'living streets' concept was used when designing the public spaces, and encourages a balance between play areas, pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles.

Sustainability

Utilising simple and robust materials, such as facing brick and metal roofing, the development is durable and easily maintained. It also provides a cohesive, consistent architectural language across the site, which is sympathetic to its context. Additionally, the material considerations emphasise a "fabric first" approach to sustainability, where passive measures such as increased insulation and solar gain were employed to reduce energy consumption for tenants. Natural ventilation measures were used where possible, with "breathable roof" construction being implemented with natural wood fibre insulation systems. Additionally, the materials sourced for the project emphasise durability and recyclability, with low-environmental-impact materials being sought wherever possible.

Connectivity

Before the construction of the tower block, the site was previously a military fort. The current development makes use of the pre-existing historic walls and gateway to frame the development. The communal greenspace which lies at the heart of the site is connected through all of the major routes through the site and provides a focal point for the emerging community. Furthermore, a set of canons previously on the site have been repositioned as a focal point of the communal greenspace, while stones removed in the boundary wall configuration were reused to help create retaining walls throughout the site. The integration and adaptation of the traditional fortification walls allows for the preservation of the site's historic character, and opens up the walls to allow for the houses and gardens to animate the street.

Outcomes and Achievements

The ambition with Leith Fort was to develop a community that is well-connected, mixed, and sustainable, while also able to integrate fully into the wider North Leith community. Throughout the planning and redevelopment process, successful community engagement was one of the key priorities throughout the redevelopment process. The community were invited to drop-in sessions from the early stages of the project, and were invited to participate along with the archaeological works. The opening up of new pedestrian routes to increase connectivity for residents and visitors was also a key priority.

Since the completion of Leith Fort, and the arrival of new tenants, a strong community spirit amongst residents has already been developing. A residents group has already been established, and applications were recently submitted through the Leith

Neighbourhood Partnership to organise community activities on the site. The resident's association successfully received a grant from the 'Leith Chooses' program to help fund the events and activities of this association, demonstrating the support for the emergent community both inside and out with the development.

Furthermore, one of the B-listed Palladian lodges is currently being considered for a community enterprise business that could further strengthen the community and contribute to the vitality of Leith.

www.polha.co.uk

EXCELLENCE IN SCRUTINY AWARD



Sponsored by:



This award recognises landlords who have shown excellence in how they have worked collaboratively with their tenants to analyse and interpret performance information in line with the requirements of the Scottish Social Housing Charter and related to regulatory framework. All shortlisted entries have worked in partnership with their tenants to embed scrutiny across their organisation and shown how this has led to positive outcomes for tenants.

Aberdeen Housing Service Review Group

Aberdeen City Council



The Housing Service Review Group was established in 2004 as the Tenant Service Review Group but had a name change with the introduction of the Charter. It is a Registered Tenant Organisation and has 20 members. This group is the umbrella group for scrutiny in our Housing Service and sits separately but is part of our Tenant & Resident Participation Framework clearly showing the significant role this group represents.

In 2006 this group was transformed from being a group which was seen to try "to catch the Council out" to a group who wanted to work with the Council to improve the services they received and after all who better to do this than the people who receive the services. This was clearly shown in the motto the group chose - "Working Together for Better Services". The group agreed that there would be no restrictions on who could join the group - you did not have to have a computer, a mobile phone or a certain qualification - this group wanted to ensure they represented all tenants. They really wanted to work with the council and take away the 'them and us' mentality but also to improve services for all tenants.

Aberdeen City Council has developed Scrutiny over a number of years and at the pace of the involved tenants- it started with evolving the original group - offering the training and support - then completing the physical reviews. Then came the next stage - looking at the TP Budget monthly moving on to Housing Performance based on the Charter then looking at the Housing Revenue Account and developing this approach and combining the performance with the physical reviews

- Scrutiny in Aberdeen City Council has been a positive experience - starts at the top
- Each group member giving a Council Identity Badge - gives them a sense of pride
- There is on going training provided to the group
- The Group now has the confidence knowledge and experience to present to other tenants all over the North East, Scotland and at National Conferences
- Group members participated in the two day Stepping Up to Scrutiny Programme and are being encouraged to support new members
- The Scrutiny Framework is innovative and fun but the importance of Scrutiny is in the Tenant Participation Framework
- "What would make you come through the Door" is an innovative approach to encourage new members to the group, to explain to staff what it means for them and has been shared throughout Scotland Northern Ireland and Wales
- The council's Housing Performance Group has brought officers from different services and directorates to work with our tenants.

The council has accepted the recommendations of this group and those they have not accepted they have explained why also the group has accepted the reasons so there is a two way conversation

This group has helped to transform TP in the Council but also as a working together to improve services for all our tenants. It is not always about saving money but ensuring best value and customer satisfaction.

The Chief Executive of Aberdeen City Council wrote regarding the Housing Management Review

"It is a great pleasure to have the opportunity to offer a few thoughts as a foreword to this report by the Housing Service Review Group. The City Council has recently refreshed its strategic business plan and I and my colleagues across the council are working hard to change the way we go about things. We are particularly keen to ensure that everything we do has a positive

impact both on those people we serve and those people who work for the council, as well as being the very best use of the limited resources we have available to us. I can think of no better example of putting the aspiration for this way of working into practice than a review such as this. The Aberdeen Housing Service Review Group representing tenants, owners and others are clearly passionate about the services they receive from the council and are keen to work with us in an open and positive way to ensure that improvements are made and continue to be made. With matching enthusiasm and openness from the council team I believe that the very helpful recommendations made in the report can be taken forward in the same spirit of partnership that has resonated through the work on the review"

Outcomes and Achievements

To date the group has done a:

Review of Repairs - this was in 2010 - the review team spent two days at the repairs depot, speaking to staff at all levels, going out with the tradesmen in their vans and watching the technology worked -tracking the tradesmen as they moved from job to job. 38 recommendations e.g. to highlight award winning apprentices more - interview in Newsbite also having materials in vans

Review of Community Safety - this was in 2012 - members spent four days reviewing this service - dressing up as City Wardens walking the street, accompanying the anti social behaviour team with their visits - seeing at first hand the abuse this team were subjected to. Made 29 recommendations e.g. make phone app for parking - implemented.

The Housing Management Review 2015 was the biggest review and the one that has had the biggest impact. Because of the Housing Performance & Budget Group - a sub group of this group, our Housing Volunteers have a much greater understanding of the performance data they wanted to find out why

the voids were taking so long for example The group spent three days at each Housing Officer in the City The Area Housing & Community Manger embraced this report and the Housing Development Officer has been working on the 45 recommendations. The recommendations made have been built into the Housing Improvement plan.

The next review was a review of Repairs - in 2017 the group spent five days at the Repairs Depot and four reviewers spent half day at the call centre. They were allowed to sit and listen to the calls if the caller agreed. The group were amazed at the number of calls dealt with but also some of the expectations - "can the Council come and clean my door step as a dog has fouled". The Group made 42 recommendations but also commended the service on what had been achieved from the last review e.g. all policies were mappings which made it very easy for the group to understand and windows were re glazed on site.

www.aberdeencity.gov.uk

How Your Rent is Spent – Housing Revenue Account Methodology

Dundee City Council with Dundee Federation of Tenants' Associations



The Council and The Dundee Federation of Tenants' Associations (DFTA) identified the development of a Housing Revenue Account methodology as recommended in the Scottish Government's "Guidance on the Operation of Local Authority Housing Revenue Accounts (HRA) in Scotland" 2014 as a priority action in the Tenant Participation Strategy published in 2017.

A major challenge was making tenants aware of the Housing Revenue account, what it can and cannot be spent on. The council supported and encouraged local tenants to participate in development sessions facilitated by Scotland's Housing Network (SHN) when they were drafting guidance and a template tool for HRA methodologies. Aberdeenshire Council and Dundee Council tenant participation staff worked hard to ensure that tenants were included and Aberdeenshire and Dundee both hosted development events in March and October 2016.

In October 2017 the Council, DFTA and other tenants' representatives formed a working group to develop and agree a HRA methodology and to use this to improve communication and awareness for future consultations and in particular the annual rent consultation. This group met regularly between October 2017 and September 2018 with additional independent support for the tenants delivered by TIS.

A key challenge that the Group identified was that the HRA was difficult for tenants to understand and though the working group had developed a good knowledge it would be a challenge to make this easily comprehensible by the majority of tenants. The group

agreed that the HRA methodology should be written in plain English, have a glossary and a summary version. Additionally it was agreed that an open seminar for tenants would be organised.

This event, "How Your Rent is Spent" was widely advertised by the council and the DFTA and had these explicit aims:

- To provide tenants with information and a greater understanding of what their rent pays for
- To explain how tenants' representatives have been involved in developing new guidance for doing this
- Raise awareness of how rent levels are set
- Hear from tenants what their priorities are.

Participants in the event unanimously agreed that the objectives had been met and many expressed an interest in taking part in similar events including the council's approaches to tenant scrutiny.

A summary of the event and record of the discussions have been fed back to tenants and at the time of writing are being publicised to all tenants.

The final meeting of the Working Group was held in September 2018 where it was agreed:

- A final draft of the HRA methodology using the SHN template to be published in October 2018.
- The production of a summary of the HRA methodology to be used in the rent consultation commencing in October.
- To consult with the DFTA on the rent consultation content for 2019/20.
- To report how tenants have been engaged in the HRA/Rent consultation process to the council.
- To re-convene the working group in spring 2019 to review the approach and refine the methodology, our communication and the rent consultation for the 2019.

Tenants who took part in the working group agree that the greater understanding of the HRA and the constraints that surround it means that they are better able to discuss budgetary and performance information which is discussed at quarterly meetings with senior housing staff. Similarly tenants engaged in the council's Scrutiny Panel are able to use this information and knowledge to define their work programme for the future.

Outcomes and Achievements

Throughout the process of developing the HRA methodology and using this to frame other discussions we have achieved the following:

Partnership Working:

- Engagement of tenants in a working group involving the Council the DFTA and TIS to discuss the HRA Methodology using Scotland's Housing Network HRA methodology tool

improvements in services and delivered good outcomes for tenants:

- A successful tenants' seminar held on 21st July 2018 where tenants agreed that the event provided good information that was easily understood.
- Agreement of a Housing Revenue Account Methodology which is to be published in October 2018.

Improved value for money:

- Summary information on the HRA and "how your rent is spent" is to be included in the annual rent consultation commencing in October 2018.
- Testing tenants' priorities for expenditure at the "How your rent is spent" seminar to focus options for the rent consultation.

Overcoming Challenges:

- Improving tenants' representatives understanding of council funding by engagement of tenants in development sessions across the North East of Scotland with Scotland's Sousing Network
- A successful tenants' seminar held on 21st July 2018 where tenants agreed that the event provided good information about council funding and housing investment priorities that was easily understood.

Embedding Scrutiny in Performance Management:

- Involving the DFTA in the working group enables them to more closely scrutinised the council's performance at quarterly performance meetings with senior Housing Managers and the Housing Convenor
- Considering tenants experience with other performance data:
- Involving members of the Scrutiny Panel in the working group enables them to more closely scrutinised the council's performance through their annual scrutiny plan.

www.dundeeccity.gov.uk

Tenant Scrutiny Group

East Lothian Council with East Lothian Tenants & Residents Panel



The Tenant Scrutiny Group was formed in May 2013 to develop a tenant scrutiny framework in partnership with East Lothian Tenants & Residents Panel (ELTRP). The group includes East Lothian Council staff and five tenant representatives from ELTRP. The Scrutiny Group is driving forward the development of scrutiny and has been instrumental in developing a framework which explains how scrutiny is reported and properly managed (this process was highlighted in the CIH Developing Effective Tenant Scrutiny Practice Guide). The Group has also developed a scrutiny pack for recruiting tenants which helps to identify what skills and abilities tenants have and the training they will need to help them participate. This recruitment

process has resulted in some new tenants getting involved in scrutiny work. The Group meet on a monthly basis and when researching for the next scrutiny activity, look at performance information for that area, meeting with managers and staff to hear about how the process works and often arrange study visits to other councils or tenant federations to learn from their experiences. Training with tenants who are carrying out the scrutiny activities takes place and ongoing support is provided by staff throughout.

The council works hard to embed performance management into their work with tenants and provide monthly housing sessions for ELTRP Executive Committee Members to help them increase their knowledge of council services and also to help them become more informed so they are in a position to scrutinise performance. Some of these sessions have looked at the ARC our SHN benchmarking information and results from ongoing satisfaction survey on repairs, planned works, new tenants survey amongst others. The panel members have also started to scrutinise the council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and training has been provided by their finance team. The SHN's written methodology has also been used to explain the HRA income and expenditure in detail.

ELTRP representatives also attend regularly programme board meetings with elected members and senior managers within the council, business

plan meetings with senior managers within housing and property maintenance and meetings with the Housing Convenor to raise and discuss performance and areas that tenants would like to scrutinise. The Tenant Scrutiny Group applied for Scrutiny Approved Accreditation and received a Gold Award in September 2018. This has helped the group to highlight their strengths, successes and also provide information on how the group can improve scrutiny performance.

"We are delighted with this award, which recognises the hard work of staff and the huge commitment of our tenant volunteers to help shape the excellent housing service we deliver." Jim Goodfellow, East Lothian Council's Councillor, Cabinet Spokesperson for Housing and Community Wellbeing.

TIS Chief Executive, Ilene Campbell, was delighted to award the council with the highest standard of accreditation at the gathering. She said "This level of award reflects the relentless dedication and commitment of East Lothian Council to deliver the very best housing services to tenants."

In June the Scrutiny Group won the won the Scrutiny Excellence award at the TIS Annual Conference, which recognises excellence in scrutiny practice by a housing

organisation that others can learn from and that will inspire future tenant scrutiny in Scotland. It rewards exceptional tenant led scrutiny activities that create an outstanding improvement or change to individuals, the wider community, the housing organisation and housing service.

TIS Chief Executive, Ilene Campbell, said: "The way that the council's Scrutiny Group works to develop scrutiny is thorough and robust. East Lothian Council has made efforts to gain views from tenants about the value of being involved, and results indicate that tenants are clear they have an impact on improving services and gaining personal benefits. Their recent Scrutiny Approved Accreditation success shows that scrutiny is embedded within the organisational values."

The Scrutiny Group have currently reported that they - "continue to strive to improve and offer new opportunities for tenants to scrutinise areas where they think we could improve or where performance shows that we are not performing as well as some others. We are currently working hard with colleagues in property maintenance and are excited to be preparing on our next scrutiny activity looking at the repairs service".

Outcomes and Achievements

Scrutiny has achieved improvements and positive outcomes. Some examples of scrutiny activities which have been carried out are:

- Tenants Involved in Grassroots Scrutiny (TIGS), which looked at the estate inspection process which ELTRP were reporting was not working. A template was developed to review the process and this has led to significant improvements in estate inspection performance with training for staff and tenant representatives also being carried out.
- Mystery Shopping project looked at communication with the council. This resulted in changes being made to the council's Automated Telephone System.
- Antisocial Behaviour Survey to follow up on feedback received on a previous ELTRP survey and due to concerns being raised by the panel. The outcome was changes to the Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) targets and more advertising of methods available to tenants to report ASB.

- Scrutiny of the HRA, a number of training sessions have been provided and a study visit to another Tenants' Federation was arranged. This work continues and already tenants have a better understanding of the HRA and are asking questions about areas of spend.
- Job-shadowing Housing Officers and tenants sitting in on sign-up interviews with new tenants took place. This resulted in a number of recommendations being made and feeding into a review being undertaken by the council. The tenants reported back to the council using a DVD rather than a conventional PowerPoint presentation. This was very well received and tenant representatives visited all Housing Teams to show the DVD to staff and officers who participated in the activity.

www.eastlothian.gov.uk

Horizon Gets RIG-orous on Scrutiny

Horizon Housing Association



Horizon's scrutiny journey began in spring 2016 after Horizon board and staff attended the Tenant Information Service (TIS) 'Scrutiny, Making it Happen' programme. Following this we asked TIS to facilitate a series of tenant roadshows across central Scotland. The purpose of the roadshows was to raise awareness of the benefits of customer involvement in scrutinising our performance on housing activities.

These events resulted in a nascent customer scrutiny group, which was formed in autumn 2016. The group, with the support of TIS, worked with staff to develop Horizon's Strategic Scrutiny Framework which was subsequently agreed by Horizon's board. The group also agreed to adopt a 'tenant led inspection' approach to review the services we deliver as a landlord. Additionally, the group undertook a branding exercise choosing the name Resident Improvement Group (RIG) and its quality mark logo.

RIG has a core membership of eight tenants and they meet monthly. In addition to the Strategic Scrutiny Framework, RIG abides by the terms of reference and code of conduct for scrutiny activities; documents which were developed by the tenants themselves.

RIG, supported by TIS, has undertaken two scrutiny projects in the last 18 months. The first looked at how Horizon communicates with tenants about repairs and the second reviewed our lettings standard. RIG chose these service areas itself based on performance information, satisfaction survey results and the group's own personal experiences as tenants.

To undertake the projects, RIG worked with TIS to develop a work plan which involved: information and fact finding about policies and national context; understanding the Horizon approach (looking at procedures, policies and approach 'on paper'); followed by reality checking and looking at what happens in practice.

TIS supported RIG to produce a report to present to Horizon's board. All recommendations made by RIG have been accepted and action plans have been

developed by staff – approved by both RIG and the Board - to implement changes. Progress against the action plans are monitored by RIG and the Board.

RIG's scrutiny work has delivered improved service delivery and value for money in several areas:

- Improved staff efficiency in repairs logging and handling.
- Clear information provided to tenants about the repairs service.
- Clearer awareness of, and increased tenant satisfaction with, the lettings standard.

We are committed to strengthening and supporting RIG and we have committed funding to ensure independent support for two scrutiny projects annually.

We ensure ongoing awareness of scrutiny and recruitment to RIG, including:

- An article highlighting RIG's work in every Horizon newsletter A dedicated page on Horizon's website www.horizonhousing.org/tenants/get-involved/resident-improvement-group
- Horizon staff promote and encourage participation in all contacts with tenants and customers.

Establishing a scrutiny group has not been without its challenges – 40% of our tenants are over 65, 65% identify as disabled and our properties are spread over 11 council areas. To overcome these challenges, Horizon Housing Group:

- Ensure transport is provided for people to attend meetings, which are held at a time to suit RIG members.
- Organise 'Tea in the Car Park' events to provide a face-to-face informal opportunity to encourage new people to get involved.
- Explore the use of Skype.

RIG and Horizon staff have developed a sound communications plan to share the scrutiny work with the wider tenant population, identify service improvements and encourage new people to become involved.

Horizon Housing Group supported RIG to produce a short film publicising its work and how to get involved which can be found at www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=56&v=y6fd-XPdYvY

An independent satisfaction survey carried out in August 2018 indicated that 86% (up from 81%) of tenants were happy with opportunities to participate, with 22 highlighting a wish to join RIG. The association is looking forward to following this up.

Outcomes and Achievements

In the relatively short time since RIG has been established, the group has become an integral part of Horizon Housing Association's governance and performance management structures. RIG's views and recommendations are considered carefully by the Board, and staff are then held to account to ensure action plans are followed and service delivery changes are agreed.

With the support of TIS, RIG acts as an independent entity scrutinising Horizon's service delivery. Scrutiny projects have so far been based on RIG's analysis of performance information, satisfaction survey results as well as their experiences as tenants and they are now offering, through their web page, other tenants an opportunity to highlight areas for potential scrutiny projects.

The association is tremendously proud of RIG and are committed to supporting the group to grow and develop. As Julia Fitzpatrick, our former Managing Director, states on the RIG film: "RIG represents a step change in how we work with and respond to tenants' views and we are keen this group goes from strength to strength. We are open to the fact it can sometimes be challenging for an organisation to hear these views, but we thank RIG for the challenge and long may it continue!"

www.horizonhousing.org

Superb Scrutiny at Maryhill

Maryhill Housing



Maryhill Housing's commitment is that they'll listen, they'll learn, they'll act. These principles are central to their corporate plan and are embedded across the business.

So what does this mean in practice?

- In 2017 they worked with the Tenant Information Service to refresh their scrutiny arrangements. Maryhill Housing undertook best practice visits to River Clyde and the Wheatley Group and the scrutiny group themselves developed a new scrutiny governance framework. This gives the scrutiny group, called the Service Improvement Panel (SIP) a direct link into the board and sets out the requirement for the board to take action in response to scrutiny recommendations. Actions are then tracked by Maryhill Housing's Audit and Risk Committee in the same way as internal audit actions
- showing how important it is to Maryhill that they act on what tenants are telling them.
- Each year the association shares their performance, cost benchmarking, financial results and customer satisfaction and complaints data with the group and they identify where a scrutiny review would add

value. They identified delivery of our investment programmes as a top priority because in 2016/17 Maryhill Housing delivered spend of £1.5m against a £4m programme and they could see from complaints that customer experience required improvement.

- The group embarked on an ambitious data gathering exercise including interviewing customers; reviewing literature; site visits and interviewing staff and contractors. The group developed the resultant recommendations themselves and reported directly to their Board. The chair of the Service Improvement Panel said "I have been involved in my local RTO for years but this is the first time I feel like I've actually understood the issues and made a difference to all of our customers".
- Maryhill Housing also has a range of other ways that customers are invited to scrutinise their services. The best example is the self-named Tenant Service Improvement Group. This brought together a loose group of residents concerned about our new rent structure and the process followed to consult tenants around this. This group has been supported to be fully embedded in the rent consultation processes. Maryhill Housing asked TIS to support them to write a remit and constitution, helped them to formalise into a registered tenants' association and funded them to do this; Housemark cost comparison data was shared openly with them so they could scrutinise and see where Maryhill Housing is expensive compared to their peers; worked with them to co-design the rent consultation literature; and this year Maryhill Housing worked with them to design genuine options for rent increases for tenants.

- Maryhill Housing invites their customers to challenge them and is open about where the company needs to improve. Maryhill Housing worked with a group of customers to design this year's annual review and as a result things look a little different. Now the areas for improvement are highlighted in bold rather than the good news stories. Maryhill Housing has also taken this approach at their AGM where the presentation focused on what the company needs to improve on rather than the successes from the year.
- Maryhill Housing also ensures that their board understands tenant experience. Maryhill Housing has moved away from purely KPI-based performance information to focus equally on customer experience. On a quarterly basis the company don't just report on whether they have responded to complaints within timeframes, they now tell their board why their customers are complaining and crucially what the company is doing about it. Maryhill Housing also holds an event each year for their board members to meet with their tenants' organisations to understand first-hand about the services Maryhill Housing provides.

Outcomes and Achievements

Outputs:

Introduction of genuine meaningful rent options for customers

Improved information for tenants before, during and after they receive improvement works in their homes

Move to post-inspect 100% of kitchen and bathroom replacements (up from 20%)

Improved rent consultation literature clearly showing how rents are calculated

Savings of £30k a year through more effective recalling of repeat reactive repair jobs (from a previous scrutiny review).

Savings of £20k per year from system improvements to identify properties with major works improvements still under warranty

Perceptions:

Service improvement panel feeling like they are in control of the scrutiny process because they are setting the agenda.

All staff sessions held to explain what scrutiny is about and its benefits, this meant staff overcame their fears about being asked to present to the Service Improvement Panel because they understand their remit.

Feedback from customers at a members' event that they feel we are more open and willing to listen than we have been in the past.

www.maryhill.org.uk



CIH SCOTLAND 2018 MARGARET BLACKWOOD EXCELLENCE IN HOUSING INNOVATION AWARD

Sponsored by: **Blackwood**
homes | care | support

This award recognises programmes or projects which have clearly demonstrated how they have developed an innovative approach which has made a real difference to the lives of tenants and customers. This includes any new product, service or technology.

Shortlisted programmes or projects have used innovative approaches to solve a particular housing problem and have clearly evidenced success in either improvement of customer service satisfaction levels or have improved the lives of people in the community where the organisation works.

Affordable Housing in the Highlands

Albyn Housing Society



Providing quality, affordable homes across an area as large as the Highlands will always be a challenge, but it is one that Albyn Housing Society is facing head on by becoming leaner, fitter and more focused on our tenants. At the heart of this transformation is innovation.

This all started with a significant organisational restructure which commenced in 2013. By reducing management posts Albyn Housing Society has been able to release an estimated £250k each year for frontline services, which are now led by their realigned customer services team which integrates housing management and maintenance.

Previously, the company followed the traditional housing service model comprising a housing management team and a separate maintenance department. Now, they have small patches of around 200 tenancies looked after by an officer and an

assistant, enabling them to offer a more bespoke approach.

This has given staff a much closer view of individual tenancies, especially in relation to Universal Credit. When it was first rolled out locally, the company saw rent arrears for the average claimant rise to almost £1,000. However, since we introduced the new team structure, this has dropped to less than £600. Albyn's overall rent debt has fallen by a third, too.

Albyn Housing Society has also improved occupancy turnaround, including an increase in the number of tenants moving into their new home as soon as the previous tenants leave, resulting in less rent income lost through voids and more housing applicants being housed earlier.

Overall, this new approach to customer services has resulted in helping tenants and housing applicants access the Universal Credit system more successfully, manage their rent accounts better and secure a home more quickly.

As part of this overall restructuring, Albyn Housing Society has also modernised our employment relationships by negotiating a new contract that is 80% smaller and introduces a more flexible staff handbook that better reflects today's dynamic world and work places.

Albyn Housing Society has also created an innovation team designed specifically to explore new opportunities to collaborate, develop new services and generate revenue within their social enterprise subsidiaries. One example is our FitHomes

project, which aims to help people live safe, well and independently in their communities for longer by using cutting edge data-gathering technology and Artificial Intelligence to help detect the onset of ill health and potentially even prevent episodes such as falls.

Earlier this year the company took handover of their first 16 'FitHome' units at Dalmore, which will provide proof of concept. The first tenants are helping the company test and shape the development of future FitHome projects, some of which are already in planning for areas including Nairn and Inverness.

Albyn Housing Society are ambitious to develop the concept into a sustainable, scalable business model that could transform the way health and care at home is delivered across the Highlands, Scotland, the UK and beyond.

Their team has also delivered the Big Lottery funded 'Money Matters' programme which provides information and advice services to households on low incomes and experiencing fuel poverty and other

challenges. It is a partnership of a number of agencies including other Registered Social Landlords, Citizens Advice Bureaux and local energy advice agencies across the Highlands. So far, it has been an enormous success with many tenants now saving hundreds of pounds on energy bills and other household costs.

At Albyn Housing Society, innovation isn't just about technology – it's about rethinking traditional approaches and fine-tuning them to make them work better in a world that is rapidly changing. This year, the Society turned 45, and by realigning their teams and collaborating to develop services that really matter to the people in the communities they serve and they are confident they will be here for many more decades to come.

The housing society has also been one of the first Scottish Housing Association to successfully obtain funding via a Private Placement to enable them to support their ambitious development plans to build 750 properties by 2020.

Outcomes and Achievements

Outcomes and Achievements

Albyn Housing Society's focus on future proofing the organisation and improving customer experience has achieved a number of positive outcomes for both the business and its tenants.

- Overheads released for reinvestment into frontline services – estimated £250k each year. Continued customer satisfaction – % of tenants satisfied with their new home – 98.48%, % of tenants satisfied with repairs service – 93.88%

- Reduced Universal Credit related rent arrears – average has dropped by over £400
- Reduced overall rent-debt by a third=
- Increased collaboration with public and private sector
- Reduced voids – average turnaround has dropped from 18 to zero days.

www.albynhousing.org.uk

HEAT (Hillcrest Energy Advice Team)

Hillcrest Group of Companies



With energy costs rising increasing numbers of social housing tenants are finding it difficult to heat their homes and, according to the Scottish Government's latest Scottish House Condition Survey, 748,000 households are in fuel poverty across Scotland. For many it is a choice of heating or eating and in modern day Scotland it is completely unacceptable that families are struggling in this way.

To counteract this profound housing problem, since 2013, Hillcrest Housing Association (HHA) has employed a dedicated energy advice team. HEAT (Hillcrest Energy Advice Team), part of HHA's wider Tenant Services Team, consists of three members of staff (Euan Hird, Craig Thompson and Gemma Macgregor) who regularly go the extra mile to improve the lives of people and families in the communities we work in.

Since 2013 the team has developed a free energy advice service to help with a number of things including: using heating system programmers efficiently; switching supplier and tariff and changing payment methods; obtaining Warm Home Discounts and Winter Fuel Allowances; advising on fuel debt, budgeting and liaising with fuel suppliers on behalf of tenants; dampness and condensation; hints and tips on saving energy in the home; and advising on local grants and initiatives.

Through delivering this service the team identified a real need for help with emergency energy support. A

number of tenants referred to them were identified as being in a critical situation – they had either self-disconnected from energy supplies or were close to doing so. The longer term consequences and costs associated with this were a concern for the team so they set about addressing the issue.

In early 2017 the team successfully bid for £10,000 from Energy Action Scotland to provide an emergency energy token scheme. Throughout the year the money was used, through their established referral system, to help people who were classed as being in critical need. Throughout 2017/18 vouchers were provided up to the value of £50 dependent on household composition and the time of year i.e. winter or summer and if it was a family or sole occupant.

This money was used to provide emergency gas and electricity credit to tenants who were off supply, and was particularly useful after the introduction of Universal Credit, where tenants were waiting at least six weeks to receive benefit payments. Without this fund, many of Hillcrest's most vulnerable tenants would have had no heating and hot water during the coldest winter for eight years, and would likely have found themselves in greater debt and with greater risk to health and well-being.

Bob Sander, Hillcrest's director of housing commented that "The team's innovative approach to addressing a serious issue is one to be commended. Although there was no money available to provide this service they did not let this put them off and instead successfully secured an external fund.

"£50 might not sound like a lot of money but the difference and impact it can make is huge. It can certainly be the difference between someone having to make the choice of eat or heat and prevents a short term problem spiralling out of control."

Tenant P said, after being topped up – "The service I had from the energy team was invaluable. I have two young children, and had to start claiming Universal Credit in November 2017. The TSS team helped with my application, and the HEAT team made sure we had heat and hot water over Christmas. Excellent service all round."

Outcomes and Achievements

Last year's funding was very successful, delivering credit to 198 households (312 people) so far.

Age breakdown:

0-4 = 34: 5-13 = 46: 14-20 = 44: 21-30 = 78: 31-42 = 49: 43-55 = 40: 56-64 = 20: 65+ = 1

As you can see, there were many children involved, and many of these households were topped up over the Christmas period.

Reason for top ups

Benefits delay = 107: Debt on meter = 10: Off supply = 22: Standing charge debt on meter = 6: TSS referral = 10: Other HHA referrals = 29

The majority of the benefits delay section was down to the roll out of Universal Credit (77), and HEAT worked with TSS to deliver food parcels and energy top-ups to ensure that households had food, and an energy supply during the period that Universal Credit was being claimed.

Funding from Energy Action Scotland is not available this year but again this is not going to let the team stop them delivering the project throughout 2018/19. A bid has been submitted to Hillcrest's innovative gift aid scheme for £15,000 to allow them to assist many more tenants.

www.hillcrestha.org.uk

Leaving Care Housing Protocol

West Dunbartonshire Housing with West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership



West Dunbartonshire Council has recently implemented a Leaving Care Housing Protocol which promotes the principle that care leavers will be provided with the securest form of tenancy available to them and will not routinely be provided with homeless accommodation. Through this protocol the young care leavers will have the accommodation and support needed to achieve independence and stability within the community with dedicated guidance being provided by their Throughcare/Aftercare worker. To achieve this wrap around service the Leaving Care Housing Protocol provides tailored support to young people aged 16 up to their 26th birthday to enable them to gain skills, confidence and competency to maintain a tenancy.

A key aspect in delivering the aims of West Dunbartonshire Council's Leaving Care Housing Protocol was the change to our Housing Allocations Policy which in November 2017 introduced Young Care Leavers as a group to be given reasonable preference providing a more direct pathway to housing. This change removes the need for young care leavers to access homelessness services and

facilitates an Accommodation and Support Pathway to be agreed which provides the securest form of accommodation to support transition from care. The five key Accommodation and Support Pathways outlined in the protocol make it clear that on-going assessment and agreement can facilitate movement between the Pathway being followed.

One of the issues highlighted in the council's homelessness strategy "More than a roof" is that youth homelessness accounts for over a third of all incidences of homelessness in West Dunbartonshire. The Leaving Care Housing Protocol is one response to this issue as it will ensure that no young care leaver in West Dunbartonshire is made homeless. The Leaving Care Housing Protocol also ties in with new legislation which came into force on the 1st of April making a change so that all young people leaving care are exempt from paying council tax up to their 26th birthday. All these extra provisions for a vulnerable group will greatly help to change young people's lives for the better.

Along with the provision of a secure Pathway into housing for young care leavers the council also offers young people free driving lessons to help improve their chances of securing a job. As a commitment to support young care leavers 20% of the places are reserved for those young people who have needed help from the care system. The young person's Throughcare / Aftercare worker also work with the "Working 4 U" service, which provides a direct link to a range of services such as working with the Youth Alliance, access to training, apprenticeship opportunities, employability support and qualifications. The council is therefore working collaboratively to increase social inclusion, making their young people feel included and protected within society, and making sure the nurturing role as corporate parents is fulfilled. With the effective

partnership working between housing, the health and social care partnership and Working 4 U, it will be a very positive change in easing the transition of a young care leaver from care to their own secure tenancies.

West Dunbartonshire Council believes that their Leaving Care Housing Protocol provides an example of best practise and have been happy to share the document and approach with many other local

authorities who have requested a copy. At the time of writing the council is finalists in the COSLA Excellence Awards where their approach has been entered under the Service Innovation and Improvement category. CELCIS (Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland) have also commented positively on the focus of the protocol.

Outcomes and Achievements

The numbers of care leavers going through the homeless route is monitored, last year the council had 360 incidences of youth homelessness which accounted for 32% of all homeless applications. Through implementation of this care leavers protocol, and other initiatives to tackle youth homelessness in general, this has reduced to 24% in this quarter already, and the council would expect moving forward, with these changes fully implemented, that no young care leaver will need to present themselves as homeless and that the overall level of youth homeless in West Dunbartonshire will continue to fall.

West Dunbartonshire Council is one of the first local authorities in Scotland to give young care leavers reasonable preference in their allocations policy and to develop a protocol which ensures a Pathway to a secure accommodation will be available those leaving care right up until their 26th birthday. By putting this protocol in place the council aims to make a real difference and ensure that these vulnerable young people are listened to, and have as good a chance as any other young person of making a success of their lives.

www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk

GoMobile – Doing More for Our Customers in their Homes

Wheatley Housing Group



Everyone in housing knows that a key challenge facing us and our customers is Universal Credit. It's hugely complex for customers as they adapt to new ways of managing their household finances and paying their rent. It's therefore more important than ever before that housing officers have the time and space to spend with their customers, supporting them to meet this challenge, while building and maintaining a great relationship that encourages them to maintain positive rent payment behaviours.

Wheatley already has a localised operating model, with their housing officers each looking after 200 homes across our 50,000 social homes in Scotland's central belt. The company is always looking for

new ways that their staff can spend more time with customers, freeing them from administrative or desk based tasks.

It was on this basis that Wheatley developed GoMobile, a new innovative IOS mobile application that allows their housing officers to provide a wider range of services in their customers' homes than ever before. It draws on information from across their housing management systems to create an interactive dashboard that is available for their staff. This includes the ability to:

- Check rent statements and provide a full rent payment history to customers
- Carry out income and expenditure calculations and create payment plans with customers
- Request services from across Wheatley Group for their customers such as Welfare Benefits Advice, fuel advice or repairs
- Access and update all household details, including fire safety information
- Provide digital advocacy, helping customers access Wheatley services online for themselves

Importantly a key blockage for our customers is that in many of the neighbourhoods we operate in the internet connection is poor. Wheatley therefore created an app that can download customer records onto the mobile device which are accessible whether

there is an internet connection or not. The data syncs next time the device is connected to the internet.

To facilitate GoMobile, we have provided the 300 housing officers across Wheatley Group with an iPad each. This ensures security of data for our customers while allowing our staff the ability to draw on the full range of applications through their iPads such as translation apps, fuel comparison websites or educational videos on YouTube such as the introduction to the UC journal.

To ensure a smooth transition to new ways of working, Wheatley undertook significant testing with customers through a number of focus groups. They also ran workshops with managers on how they would structure work in future to ensure ongoing collaboration with teams, even as they spend less time in the office.

Housing Officers were on boarded to the new service through a series of Collect and Connect sessions, delivered in partnership with Vodafone and Barclays. Barclays also provided additional support with one to one mentoring through the Digital Eagles scheme for employees who were new to iPads. Vodafone is currently turning their partnership working with Wheatley into a video case study for use with their other partners.

At these events, all housing officers completed a short survey about their digital skills which were turned into individual learning plans for each. Through these means, Wheatley is ensuring their staff are able to provide the best service to their customers using their new tools.

Given the success of this initial launch, GoMobile has been extended to other customer facing services such as fuel and welfare advisors, experimenting with Skype to allow distance appointments when Wheatley's housing officers are in customers' homes.

Outcomes and Achievements

By September 2018, Wheatley has been able to track every single home visit conducted by housing officers and the outcomes from each. This includes tracking no-accesses so that the company can put in place individual strategies to reduce these. For example, as soon as a no-access is logged, a text message is automatically sent to the customer.

A small scale survey of affected customers revealed that over 80% of customers either agreed or strongly agreed that their housing officers' use of iPads helped them get what they needed as part of the home visit. Over half of all respondents told us that one of the improvements is they felt Wheatley were able to deal with their enquiry more quickly and deal with a wider range of issues in the home.

Housing officers told Wheatley it was allowing them to do more for customers. For example, in rents, housing officers can show customer their balance, complete an income/expenditure, access housing benefit portal, make payment arrangement and sign customer up to direct debit while in their home. As one Housing Officer said - "it's a one and done for both me and the customer."

www.wheatley-group.com



CIH SCOTLAND 2018 EXCELLENCE IN HEALTH AND WELLBEING AWARD

Sponsored by:  river clyde
homes

This award recognises excellence in the areas of fit for purpose housing, adaptations and preventative services. Shortlisted entries have demonstrated how they contribute to the National Health and Wellbeing outcomes and have improved outcomes for their customers. They have demonstrated that they have excelled in partnership between housing and partners in health and social care, having a positive impact on the wider local community, used innovative approaches and successfully dealt with complex issues.

Caring for You, Your Home and Your Community

East Ayrshire Council – Housing Asset Services with NHS, EAC Health and Social Care, Bellsbank Community, CANI Community Group, Centrestage, Engie UK, Scottish Civic Trust, CVO, Bellsbank Primary and Bellsbank Project



Collaboration, innovation and community place making at its brilliant best!

East Ayrshire Council's Housing Asset Services has successfully coproduced with communities to deliver exciting housing improvements over recent years but could see further opportunities for a truly holistic approach to make real differences to the health and wellbeing of our citizens while regenerating communities.

Following our previous successful Clean, Green and Vibrant initiative, Housing Asset Services and the council's communities recognised that social isolation, loneliness, fuel poverty and health were significant concerns and wanted to work across boundaries to make a real difference. This however would take us totally out our comfort zone!

A challenging journey followed with numerous conversations with many different organisations. Initial replies of "this is for Health and Social Care" or "we're technical people, not health professionals" quickly disappeared once everyone became aware of the real health impacts. Initial concerns were soon replaced with steely determination to reimagine an innovative and collaborative approach.

This truly unique, innovative and collaborative approach, with our communities fully engaged and empowered from the outset, has seen a transformational effect in some of the most disadvantaged communities. Making a real impact on health and wellbeing whilst regenerating homes and the local environment.

The approach has seen the development of many exciting relationships and partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders including NHS; social enterprise (Centrestage); Scottish Civic Trust, Engie UK; the voluntary sector; Community Groups and at the very centre – East Ayrshire Council's citizens.

The first community to see this innovative approach was Bellsbank and the community desperately wanted to make Bellsbank a special place.

In partnership with the Scottish Civic Trust and community, an exciting coloured render programme was designed to make a dramatic visual impact. The whole community, including the local school, were involved.

A strong partnership was built between HAS and the NHS to ensure that the council could really support with regard to health and wellbeing within the project.

Training was provided by NHS to council staff to help them understand the issues and encourage kind and caring conversations.

The NHS Better Health Hub was identified as a confidential single point of contact who could help and support citizens with a range of concerns including:

- Energy advice/switching provider
- Money worries
- Managing anxiety
- Wellbeing and healthy eating
- Alcohol and drugs
- Stopping Smoking.

HAS developed and provided every citizen with a bespoke information pack and ensured caring conversations took place throughout the project explaining what support and help was available and arranged where requested. Also promoting NHS initiatives such as "Pharmacy First", "When You Are Ill, Know Who To Turn To", "Dental Advice" etc. to help reduce demand and improve outcomes.

HAS developed an exciting partnership with their contractor Engie and Centrestage with a summer programme of community activities around learning to cook on a budget taking place within the local church.

An opportunity arose for HAS and Engie to support members of Centrestage's Catalyst group gain valuable work experience and two members have now secured permanent employment.

HAS is supporting the local community group CANI who have set up a thriving youth club. Partnership working with CANI and Centrestage has also delivered a dignified food programme which directly helps people who need it most.

The voluntary sector has worked with HAS to deliver services to improve the local environment and promote activities/groups that people can get involved with to increase connectedness.

Creative and caring. Challenging but courageous. Citizen centred and collaborative.

Innovative and visionary thinking outside the box, regenerating communities while supporting health and wellbeing in a new way.

If East Ayrshire Council can do this, everyone can - let's replicate this fabulous example!

Outcomes and Achievements

East Ayrshire Council citizens see kindness, help and support from council and partners

Community sessions delivered by Centrestage have helped many citizens improve their health and wellbeing.

The local community now also deliver a dignified food programme with Centrestage which directly helps people who need it most.

NHS has worked closely with HAS staff around social isolation and kind conversations.

"Being a part of this innovative and visionary project is allowing really positive impact to be made quickly, benefitting individuals across communities. We can respond directly to need with partners who share our vision, delivering their service in collaboration with ours to provide quick solutions and supports to those who most need them."

Fiona McKenzie CEO Centrestage

"Housing Asset Services have shown great vision and passion in leading the way improving health and combatting loneliness while delivering an amazing project."

Nicola Tomkinson Senior Health Officer, NHS

"The support provided has been absolutely fantastic. We are very proud to now also be delivering a community dignified food programme as a result of the great partnership working."

Bellsbank CANI Community Group

Over 99% customer satisfaction, visually stunning homes and a proud and strong community.

Really doing things differently to make a real difference.

www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk

goConnect

Glen Oaks Housing Association with NHS, Clyde College, Glasgow Life, Glasgow HSPC, Police Scotland, Aberlour, Glasgow City Council Thriving Places, WIN Project, Working Rite, Jimmie Dunachie Family Centre, Early Year Scotland, Rainbow Nursery, SALP & GCVS



goConnect has established a partnership of organisations and groups in their communities. They work with voluntary groups and organisations by sharing resources, ideas and premises, and have a common objective, to help improve the lives of residents in their communities. The aim of this project is create community capacity using community led services to help support, encourage and empower our residents to become involved in and help develop themselves and their own communities.

goConnect works with vulnerable tenants - people with anxiety and depression, long term unemployed, carers, single parents and alcoholics, elderly, lonely and people from ethnic minority backgrounds. Many of them suffer from poor mental health and are isolated in their homes. The company is particularly helping groups of tenants that often face challenges in accessing the labour market by offering customised support that recognises key developmental needs and most appropriate modes of skills learning for different groups. Some of these groups need social skills, confidence building, work experience through volunteering before they can be considered for employment.

goConnect's project has two staff members who visit new and vulnerable tenants in their homes and assess their needs, interests and support requirements to help improve their quality of life. Tenants are then referred or signposted to relevant organisations, groups, classes or clubs. A large part of this project is supporting people, keeping regular contact with those who are not ready to engage with other services to gently encourage them and build up their confidence.

Social activities, clubs and classes (social, hobbies and educational) are used to engage with residents whilst attempting to alleviate isolation and loneliness, improving mental health and increasing self esteem and confidence. goConnect staff attend the clubs and get to know our participants, then support and encourage them, introducing new skills, hobbies, advice, possibilities and hope to raise their confidence, self esteem and help them reach their potential.

goConnect try to nurture their tenants and encourage them to try new skills, courses and volunteering roles. When they are ready to job search, they are referred to the sister project (Starting Out) inhouse who help them with IT skills, welfare benefit advice, CV's, job searching etc.

Statement of support from our partners:

Madge, Win Project:

"Good luck, you are a wonderful woman and do so much for others in the local community and going above and beyond the call of duty"

Pat, GCC Development:

"The goConnect Project works with partner agencies, using the principles of the Thriving Places Model, pulling community resources together for the benefit of their tenants. It works with vulnerable tenants, including tenants who are long term unemployed, have mental health conditions, are from BME backgrounds. The aim of the goConnect project is to create opportunities to better the lives of Glen Oaks tenants, to improve health and wellbeing, and to build community capacity.

The goConnect team help these tenants by signposting/ referring them to relevant support agencies, and encouraging participation in social classes and events. This project works within Glen Oaks' three communities: Arden, Darnley and Pollok, ensuring that all tenants are given the opportunity to participate. The classes ran by goConnect include knitting and crafting, to photography, IT and English as a Second Language.

The project has already proven to be beneficial for these communities: tenants are reporting less anxiety, are demonstrating more independence, and are more aware of their health and wellbeing, which staff believe is starting to relieve pressure on mental health agencies.

The two staff are so enthusiastic about helping people, and deserve to be recognised for the work they are doing within these communities."

Outcomes and Achievements

The goConnect project is helping their most vulnerable groups to overcome multiple barriers, tackle exclusion and create new opportunities to help support, encourage and empower residents.

goConnect is seeing the benefits - tenants report feeling less lonely and isolated; greater improvement in their mental health; less anxiety and depression; positive outlook on life; greater aspirations.

Quotes from our participants:

M aged 57, recovering alcoholic:

"This group is a life saver for me. Since I gave up alcohol, I look forward to the clubs. It keeps me busy and takes my mind off my problems"

A, aged 44, severe anxiety:

"I really wanted to come to goConnect clubs and classes. I tried for weeks but would have really bad panic attacks.

The team has no idea how much they have done for me. They encouraged and praised me and made me believe I could do anything. They really have saved me from a life of anxiety and panic attacks. I even got my first job ever which I love and I am so proud of myself. This project really has saved my life!"

www.glenoaks.org.uk

Designing for Health

North Lanarkshire Council



'Designing for Health' is a multi-faceted housing project which uses dementia design principles to improve new council housing stock and the suitability of the existing housing stock to better meet the needs of people with dementia or other complex health needs.

From concept this project was co-produced with partners in health and social care, sheltered housing tenants, the third and independent sectors which led to a number of positive outcomes for both current and future tenants, residents, carers and families.

This project innovative in design, working with partners across services and communities sought to identify the key issues facing older people with complex needs and worked with older people and experts in the field to identify solutions to help promote independence, health and wellbeing amongst older people.

The project entailed a whole system the approach to improving the health and wellbeing of some of our most vulnerable older people across communities. In doing so not only did we develop a range of ways in which the design of our new build housing, existing stock and specialist older people's housing could be improved, we also trained our workforce to help

identify the issues people with dementia face living at home and how we can assist people to overcome them to live well, independently.

'Designing for Health' involved three key stages:

- Identification of issues
- Development of action plan to address
- Review and evaluation

It met many strategic objectives both locally and nationally across services, contributing to:

- The national health and wellbeing outcomes, particularly outcome two
- The local housing strategy - helping promote independent living through the provision of high quality housing and housing support services
- Health and social care's strategic commissioning plan's outcomes
- Reshaping care for older people
- Scotland's National Dementia Strategy
- Scotland's Ageing and Housing Strategy

From the outset, meeting the needs of people with dementia was identified as a key priority across services and communities, recognising the current and future challenge of an increasing ageing population and supporting older people with more complex needs in their own homes for longer.

Already having embarked on a dementia designed retrofit of a four in a block in partnership with BRE we recognised that design measures to improve both existing and new supply housing only partly addressed the issues. We aimed to target the whole housing workforce to upskill staff in knowledge to achieve a true dementia friendly workforce.

It involved:

- The development of a bespoke design guide for council sheltered housing complexes – this ensured that all refurbishment projects were dementia friendly, whilst still enabling choice for tenants in the selection of refurbishment materials.
- Review of all council new build exemplar floor plans to incorporate dementia friendly design measures both internally and in the surrounding external environment
- The review of capital programme works to identify areas in which dementia design could be incorporated into routine programmed works

- Roll out of training across health, housing, social care involving housing advisors, managers, architects, strategy, OT's, and other allied health professionals on the new bespoke guide and importance of good design

North Lanarkshire Council is currently building on this further, adding further materials to their online training module, and working with partners to roll out dementia training to our tenants as well as developing a range of information on good design for new tenants, carers and relatives. This will help further improve the health and wellbeing of older people across communities.

Outcomes and Achievements

This project has led to a number of key achievements including:

- 'Future proofing' older people's housing, making it more suitable for an ageing population and people with more complex needs
- Improved the accessibility of new supply housing reducing the need for people to move to alternative housing or long term care
- Reduced the need for adaptations/equipment through thoughtful consideration to design
- Improved awareness of dementia and other conditions and the impact of the built environment on people with health needs
- Improved independence and improved quality of life amongst older people with dementia and older people with other complex needs
- Improved quality of life, health and wellbeing amongst carers
- Reduced the need for more formal support
- Reduced the likelihood of falls, trips and other accidents in the home
- Reduced admissions to hospital through accidents in the home
- Reduced carer's stress.

North Lanarkshire Council has impressively high satisfaction rates with the council's new supply programme. Their new build satisfaction surveys reports that 95.1% of tenants are satisfied with their new build home. Most of the new tenants do not realise that the design has been modified to incorporate dementia friendly design principles. These changes have no additional cost and services and family carers have reported that older people and people they care for feel more secure, are more independent and have improved health and wellbeing.

Feedback from the council's sheltered housing tenants has been overwhelming positive. The implementation of a new toolkit has enabled better mechanisms for customer involvement and engagement in making key decisions about their environment.

Staff feel better equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to implement design changes and better meet the needs of people with dementia. Through this enhanced partnership working has been achieved, particularly involving local people through the council's co-production group.

www.northlan.gov.uk

Sheltered Housing Service

Renfrewshire Council



Renfrewshire Council has 288 sheltered houses spread throughout Renfrewshire, managed by their team of Sheltered Housing Officers and Health and Wellbeing/ Activity Co-ordinators.

They believe that their sheltered housing service is now an outstanding example of excellence in health and wellbeing as :

- Their tenants tell the council, via a range of forums, that the sheltered housing service has transformed their lives
- The service is designed and delivered to align with the National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes, in particular

Outcome 1: 'People are able to look after and improve their own health and wellbeing and live in good health for longer' and

Outcome 2: 'People, including those with disabilities or long term conditions, or who are frail, are able to live, as far as reasonably practicable, independently and at home or in a homely setting in their community'

Outcome 9: 'Resources are used effectively and efficiently in the provision of health and social care services'

- A team of volunteer 'tenant inspectors', who we ask to check standards at our 11 complexes, now rate the service as 'excellent'
- *The Care Inspectorate state in their 2018 report that: "staff within the service had established very good links with the local community. People were actively encouraged and supported to participate in their local area, and to pursue their own interests."*

Following feedback from the council's tenants, and in advance of reports such as 'Age, Home & Community : The Next Phase, 2018', Renfrewshire Council re-designed and re-focussed their service in 2016/17 to provide a broader range of health and wellbeing activities for their tenants, and maximise the benefits of involving the wider community.

Events and activities for our tenants now include:

- The establishment of Paisley's first ever walking group for older people 'The Paisley Puffins'
- An Intergeneration Choir with a local school, which now performs at local events
- Regular day trips to see The Kelpies, a sail on Loch Lomond, horse racing, steam train ride etc
- Massage, reiki and hydrotherapy sessions
- Digital support to help tenants learn about smart phones, tablets, Skype etc
- A new in-house befriending service for those who prefer one-to-one support.

Not only this, but the service purchased its own specially adapted bus following a staff member's success in an 'Intrapreneur' competition - transport can now be provided whenever it is needed

At a time when many housing providers have ceased providing traditional sheltered housing on grounds of cost, Renfrewshire Council has committed its sheltered housing team to providing an enhanced, modernised, person- centred service which meets the changing needs and expectations of older tenants, as well as maximising the benefits from an inclusive, community-wide approach to service delivery.

Whilst there were no significant costs in restructuring the service, evidence shows that there are particular benefits for tenants, the Council, the NHS and the Health & Social Care Partnership from having people living independently with support in their homes for longer, e.g.

- Less visits to A&E departments
- Reduction in injuries from slips and trips
- Tackling loneliness and social isolation.

Ian Beattie, head of health and social care services, Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership comments:

"We value the work that the sheltered housing service carries out, and the strong focus the team has on preventative measures to safeguard older people, as well as the new broad range of health and wellbeing initiatives. " I believe that this has had a positive impact on promoting independence and assisting older people to live at home for longer."


Outcomes and Achievements

- An enhanced Sheltered Housing Service at no extra cost
- Exceeding National Health & Wellbeing Outcomes
- The Care Inspectorate state in their 2018 report that: "tenants felt valued and respected by staff...the people we talked with told us the manager and staff listened to them and responded positively to their needs." Some of the comments we received include, "staff cannot be any more helpful", "staff go above and beyond".
- A number of 'firsts' for Renfrewshire Council include a walking group for older people, free access to hydrotherapy sessions at a local facility, reiki and massage sessions in the lounge areas of several sheltered complexes
- A staff member won an 'Intrapreneur' competition with a proposal to provide a specially adapted bus for Renfrewshire Council tenants to attend outings and events, so no-one would be excluded
- Benefits to NHS, Health & Social Care Partnerships – less visits to A&E, reduction in slips and trips, directly tackling the impact of loneliness and social isolation
- There were 1,562 attendances at events in the past year, an increase from 904 in 2016/17
- Inspection by Renfrewshire Council's tenants have rated the service as 'excellent'.

www.renfrewshire.gov.uk



CIH SCOTLAND 2018 BOB ALLAN YOUNG ACHIEVER IN HOUSING EXCELLENCE AWARD

Sponsored by:  Parkhead Housing Association

This award recognises individuals who have demonstrated that they have shown passion, commitment and flair in putting the human aspects of tenant or client services first.

The shortlisted entries have demonstrated how the individual nominated has shown a creative or innovative approach to finding solutions for tenants or clients; shown continuous improvement of the delivery of services to customers in the pursuit of excellence and shown that they are an inspiration to colleagues, tenants or clients.

Rhona Matthews

Albyn Housing Society



Albyn Housing Society welcomed Rhona Matthews (24) as a temporary housing assistant in 2016.

It was Rhona's ambition to succeed, her outstanding work ethic, emotional maturity and the ability to build rapport with everybody around her made it difficult to say goodbye when her six month temporary contract was approaching its end. Jennifer Soley, Rhona's line manager, recognised the makings of an exceptional staff member in Rhona and encouraged her to apply for a full-time position that became available.

It is Rhona's drive to go over-and-above her job role that stands out to her line managers and colleagues. Whenever a new project requires support, Rhona will be the first to put herself forward for it, as was evident when Albyn Housing Society trialled a different approach to housing allocations using Choice Based Letting. Rhona was a self-appointed website administrator, who managed the uploading of content and any amends that were required, she was also responsible for the creation of the new bid form and

manned the 'live chat' customer service element of the new webpages making sure that potential applicants had immediate access to help and advice.

Rhona is also a team lead on the new welfare system, Universal Credit, and represents the entire customer service team on a liaison group. She makes sure that she is up to date with the complex and at times, challenging, revisions and updates relating to Universal Credit as well as making sure that everyone else in the customer service, and wider teams, is up to date. She is also the primary user for the Universal Credit Landlords Portal and has delivered training to her colleagues on how to use the new system.

In addition to all of this, Rhona is a lead on a new anti-social behaviour project that the board at Albyn Housing Society will be rolling out in late 2018. As part of this project she, interviewed a range of existing Albyn tenants, produced a detailed proposal for the project and suggested six recommendations that were easily implementable - all of which were received well by the leadership team, and board of management, and are being implemented as part of the project. Rhona's recommendations centred around improving communication and service provision for Albyn's customers when they report anti-social behaviour.

Another of Rhona's easy-to-implement solutions to a problem that Albyn Housing Society was facing was securing responses to tenant satisfaction surveys. Albyn struggled to receive prompt, accurate feedback from tenants after repairs had been completed in their homes. The old method required tenants to fill out a job satisfaction survey and post it back to the offices in Inverness or Invergordon.

However, Rhona saw an opportunity to, not only, make the process easier for the tenant but save Albyn Housing Society money – she implemented a text satisfaction survey which allows tenants to send instant feedback to Albyn on the repairs they have had completed in their home. Our response rate is now at 42% and our average satisfaction rate is 1.6 (1 = very satisfied and 2 = fairly satisfied).

Rhona continues to impress her colleagues with her ability to work autonomously as well as being able to achieve high quality work, in a short space of time. Her manager, Jennifer Soley, said of her:

“What she can achieve in a short space of time is incredible. Not only is Rhona producing high quality work, she is inspiring those around her to push themselves, think outside the box and make every effort to be the best that our organisation can be.”

“Rhona is very well thought of across the entire business, she is known for pushing herself and giving every project that she is involved in her everything – she does this because she really does care.”

“In addition to her incredible work and the qualities that make her a great employee, she is also a great person. She is always thinking of other people, is very empathic towards tenants and her colleagues and has a very caring nature. These are qualities that come to her so naturally and so effortlessly - qualities that will make her an incredible housing officer in the future.”

“Rhona is a real team player and recognises that what she has achieved is thanks to having an incredible and supportive team around her who have guided and trained her as a new member of staff.”

Outcomes and Achievements

Rhona has successfully added a range of skills, expertise and a new enthusiasm for change to the business.

She played a key role in the trial of ‘Choice Based Letting’ for Albyn Housing Society as well as manning the new system, the live chat and being solely responsible for the updating of the website.

Rhona is the housing society’s ‘Universal Credit’ representative at an operational level and is responsible for making sure all housing officers, assistants and management are up to date with key revisions and updates relating to the welfare system. She is also the primary user for the ‘Universal credit Landlord Portal.’

One of her latest projects is the anti-social behaviour project which she autonomously worked on, created a range of recommendations and presented to senior members of the Albyn Housing Society team. The recommendations from Rhona’s research are now being implemented, making a difference to the lives of tenants across the Highlands.

One of the most cost-efficient pieces of work that Rhona has been responsible for, in both the idea and implementation, is the text surveys for tenants. She has reduced costs for Albyn Housing Society and at the same time increased instant, honest feedback from tenants which will help the society to shape its service offering going forward.

Louise Butchart

Hillcrest Housing Association



Louise is a young manager in Hillcrest who joined the company some 18 months ago. During that time, Louise has proved herself to be a highly competent member of staff.

Louise is the kind of manager who will always go the extra mile for people. In the last few months, she has had the additional challenge of acting up as her Area

Manager who has been off on long-term sickness.

This is a lot of responsibility for someone fairly new to the organisation to take on board but Louise has approached the challenge and has made an excellent contribution to ensuring that Hillcrest Housing Association’s level of service for tenants has not been affected.

In addition to managing her own team of housing officers, she has also been managing the three maintenance officers, the allocations and admin teams. The Dundee office where she works is our biggest area office, covering 2,500 properties and in the course of the last year, dealt with just under 500 void properties.

In addition to leading her team of four housing officers, she has been involved in a number of significant projects, including the following:

Louise carried out a service review for the Waverley Sheltered housing project. Hillcrest has one sheltered housing scheme, and this is at the Waverley in Broughty Ferry, Dundee. It had been announced that the local authority was withdrawing the supporting

people funding for the existing warden post. This caused a lot of unrest and uncertainty amongst tenants and a lot of relationship building was required to ease these concerns.

Louise led a process of consultation with the residents, involving a survey, one to one meetings and a series of group meetings to come up with a solution. Essentially, the residents are now paying a very similar amount of money for their warden service, but it is now delivered through our colleagues in Gowrie care. This process was lengthy and sometimes difficult, but Louise handled it with great skill and sensitivity. The new warden service is working very successfully.

Louise has introduced a number of efficiencies to the team and organisation. She carried out a review of the areas that the housing officers manage and has set up a common work tray for anti-social behaviour cases that now distributes the work evenly between the housing officers. She has also introduced a number of templates as a way of checking the quality of the way individual ASB cases have been dealt with that she uses with housing officers at their workload meetings.

Louise is also leading a new and innovative project, delivering a large mural at one of our properties at Cardean Street. This is an exciting new development that has involved the artist, funding bodies legal teams, tenants and owners, and is part of the opening initiatives connected to the new V&A museum.

The V&A held a design session with local stakeholders on its opening weekend.

Prior to Louise working with Hillcrest, she was employed by Sanctuary Scotland. Gordon Laurie, fellow of the Chartered Institute of Housing and former Director at Sanctuary had this to say about Louise.

"As soon as Louise joined the Sanctuary Dundee team in 2014 it was apparent that we had been fortunate to recruit someone special. Her background in housing benefit was particularly useful to us at a time of reforms to the welfare system, and she became an in-house expert and "go to" person for benefits/universal credit issues. Louise was more than willing to share her knowledge and expertise with her colleagues. She also quickly proved herself to be exceptionally competent in the wider duties of a housing officer. Throughout her time at Sanctuary she was always keen to learn and develop her skills, knowledge and expertise.

"Were it not for a strong and stable management tier at Sanctuary, Louise would inevitably have progressed through our structures to supervisory/managerial posts and I was not at all surprised to learn that she had secured advancement by moving to Hillcrest.

"Put simply, Louise was one of the most talented young professionals I encountered during my career. It is a pleasure to endorse her nomination for an Excellence award."

Outcomes and Achievements

Rob Hughes, Hillcrest's operations manager commented that "In short, Louise is a young manager in a very busy housing environment, dealing with a wide range of tasks, from complex Anti-Social Behaviour cases through to arts projects. She manages her team highly competently and with great humour, and has taken on her recent additional responsibilities with exactly the same approach."

In a recent appraisal one of Louise's team members commented that "Louise is always encouraging to me in relation to my working practices, being honest in

the way I carry out my work and is there for advice if required. I feel confident in my own ability and this allows me to carry out my work effectively."

"I would describe my working relationship with Louise as honest, open and professional. I respect Louise in all ways and am respectful of her workload too, to the point whereby I know that Louise is there for assistance and advice if required."

Jordan Anderson

South Lanarkshire Council – Housing and Technical Resources



Jordan Anderson commenced employment with South Lanarkshire Council as a temporary Clerical Assistant within Housing Services in May 2012.

Jordan quickly had an understanding and knowledge of the processes and used this to develop his skills across housing and homelessness services over the next five years and was recognised by his colleagues, line and senior managers as hard working and skilled. Jordan also displayed an ability to meaningfully contribute to his own team and the wider aims of the service and the organisation.

Jordan was promoted to a new role of Resettlement Assistant within the High Risk Team of the Central Homelessness Service in February 2017. One of his first tasks within this role was to work alongside the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) Lead Officer to set up South Lanarkshire Councils Environmental Risk Assessment Procedure.

This involves risk assessing all properties in which Registered Sex Offenders and high risk offenders are living, regardless of tenure type. Jordan brought a fresh approach to developing new systems and procedures, utilising his IT skills to make the process as efficient as possible. This minimised the time required by officers on each case whilst maintaining the high standard and thoroughness required. Jordan also utilised his understanding of housing and homelessness to ensure information between services and partner organisations were effectively shared, ensuring the relevant legislation was adhered to. Jordan's involvement has aided the effective management of MAPPA cases and associated housing stock, as well as continuous improvements within the wider service.

Jordan's role involves working alongside colleagues from the Local Housing Offices and liaising with senior managers within Social Work Resources and Police Scotland's Lanarkshire Offender Management Unit.

Jordan contribution has been recognised by colleagues within Housing and Technical Resources and with partner organisations.

Jackie Fernie, South Lanarkshire Councils' Homelessness and Housing Support Manager said:

"Jordan is confident in his abilities and displays the right balance between a sensitive but firm approach to his coordination and monitoring tasks. Jordan has been success in contributing to the wider team priorities, ensuring the appropriate resources and arrangements are in place to support the vital work of the Resettlement Team".

Outcomes and Achievements

Within 2016/17 Jordan completed 210 Environmental Risk Assessments. This resulted in 3,195 property checks and 9,585 systems checks being carried out by him in order to provide colleagues from Police Scotland and Social Work services with the appropriate information they require to make their decisions. Jordan regularly goes beyond the requirements of his role to ensure colleagues across the council and partner organisations receive the necessary information, with the overall aim of improving the lives of all residents of South Lanarkshire.

In this year, Jordan also successfully completed the Level 3 certificate towards his CIH Diploma in Housing

Studies, balancing both the demands of his role and the course and demonstrating further commitment to the service by dedicating his own personal time to ensure success in both.

South Lanarkshire Council believes Jordan is an excellent candidate for the Bob Allan Young Achiever Award given his hard work and dedication to both his role and ongoing learning and development. He is 26 years old and although his career with Housing Services is in its infancy, he has already impressed colleagues, managers and partners within the service on his abilities, forward thinking approach and desire to improve his knowledge and skills.



CIH SCOTLAND 2018 HOUSING TEAM OF THE YEAR EXCELLENCE AWARD

This award recognises teams who have delivered an outstanding contribution to their organisation and for the housing sector. It recognises something special, as part of developing new services, dealing with difficult situations or delivering the best services. Shortlisted entries have been able to demonstrate that the team nominated is outstanding and have tackled a particular project well together.

Customer Services

Albyn Housing Society



With a mind-set of 'we can do better than this,' Albyn Housing Society committed to reducing the lag time between residents leaving a property and the entry date of the next to just zero days in a bid to improve its customer service offering, maximise business efficiency and deliver allocation targets – a project they named 'Zero Day Voids.'

The customer service management team, made up of Jennifer Soley for the south region and Jim Banks for the north region, pulled their team of housing officers and housing assistants together and challenged the current mind-set; 'we have 18 days to get someone new in the property'. No longer was that acceptable, because for each 18 day period that the team took to reallocate a property was 18 days that someone in their community was effectively homeless. With this realisation, the customer service team took it upon themselves to reduce that void period to zero days – a mighty task but certainly not unachievable.

Initially the housing team was sceptical – twelve months ago when the idea was floated the actual void period sat around 23 days, the target being 18 days, however the team at Albyn Housing Society were all striving for the same thing-reducing temporary homelessness in the Highlands.

The implementation began with a review of the allocation process, an exercise that quickly established that the process was long, involved a huge amount of unnecessary steps and it could be simplified and made much quicker.

As with all new schemes, the uptake from staff was a tale of two halves. Half of the team were excited and ambitious from the offset, the other half were slow adopters, and sceptical that it was achievable. Jennifer and Jim used the early adopters as trailblazers and by doing so, created a bottom up culture of enthusiasm, ambition and an eagerness to succeed at the task in hand.

And, in just six months, each housing officer achieved at least one zero day void on their patch. With all other voids being turned around significantly quicker than they had been in previous years.

How did they do it? In reality, a series of very simple steps were implemented, coupled with a 'can do' attitude, took the average void period from 23 days to an average of 9.76 in just six months. During 2017/18 the team allocated 234 voids, 86 of which were in zero days.

The steps:

- As soon as a tenant notifies Albyn Housing Society that they will be vacating their property, the customer services team begin the process of looking for a new tenant
- Inspections take place while the current tenant is carrying out their notice period and repairs scheduled accordingly
- All repairs are completed while the tenant is carrying out their notice period, but to ensure there is no onus on the tenant to be there for access, a key box is installed on the exterior of the home so that multiple tradespeople can access the house at once.

The success of this project is setting a new precedent within the housing association community. The customer services team recently presented the concept at the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations conference, having been inundated with other organisations wanting to know how Albyn Housing Society took a very ambitious target, and achieved it.

It is testament to the culture within Albyn Housing Society and its commitment to local people in need of quality housing that they welcome other organisations with open arms, tell them how to implement a zero day voids programme and go as far as having other organisations shadowing them to learn and adopt best practice.

Jennifer and Jim always knew that with the right motivation their team would get on board with the new programme. Only by working together would they make it possible to reduce the void period from 23 days. However, they never expected to do as well as they have. Everyone is striving for a zero day void but Albyn Housing Society recognise that that cannot be achieved every time, the team still aim for as quick a turnaround though to get as close to zero days as possible.

Achieving a zero day void period positively affects tenants, potential tenants and positively impacts on Albyn Housing Society as a business.

Outcomes and Achievements

The Zero Day Voids programme has reduced the average time taken to prepare and allocate a property from 23 days to 9.76 days across the Highlands.

Albyn Housing Society is seeing the benefit of the programme, no longer do they have properties sitting empty and rent payments are year-round on all properties now.

Additionally, and most importantly, for residents of the Highlands who are in need of a property, they can access one, without delay, ultimately reducing homelessness in the area.

Housing Team

Fife Housing Group



The last few years have been a bit of a rollercoaster for colleagues in Fife Housing Group after regulatory involvement in 2012; a change of management team, review of terms and conditions, organisational restructure and office relocations. In 2016, following restructure, an additional two Housing Officers and a Debt Recovery Officer post were introduced. Housing Officer patches were reallocated which saw a reduction from approximately 500 to 350 homes per patch. The intention was to give Housing Officers

more manageable areas but in reducing the patches Fife Housing Group also added to their remit to carry out pre-lets, viewings and sign-ups - previously carried out by other colleagues; this aimed to offer Housing Officers an enhanced relationship with tenants, seeing them through from the start of their tenancy. Housing Officers remain responsible for estate management, dealing with anti-social behaviour and but their main priority is recovery of arrears.

With the introduction of the Debt Recovery Officer post it was also felt that this would support Housing Officers but also give another dimension to the company's processes. The Debt Recovery Officer provides support to tenants who are in significant financial difficulties, with the highest arrears and who are not engaging with Fife Housing Group.

The changes have brought about a significant reduction in net rent arrears from £366,068.00 (-3.47%) in 2016 to £271,121 (-2.38%) at end of August 2018. There has been a lot of hard work and commitment gone in to reducing these arrears and in light of the changes in Welfare Benefits and with the introduction of Universal Credit, this has to be commended. The rules relating to Universal Credit and the way in which

it works is a learning curve for everyone; having had a good relationship with the local Housing Benefit team and being able to provide information and advice on this and being quite specific and being confident of the information being provided, Housing Officers now feel that there are many barriers and hurdles to get over with Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to try to produce the best outcome for tenants and frustration that they are unable to provide answers themselves. Over the years, Housing Officers have worked hard to create strong links and networks with third-sector agencies, Housing Benefit and colleagues in other support agencies to help and Fife Housing Group will continue to do this as part of the DWP Universal Credit Development Group. This has been key to continually reducing rent arrears.

During the restructure, the Housing Team was also given responsibility for engagement within the group, including complaints which were previously managed elsewhere. Fife Housing Group has seen

huge improvements made in the management of complaints into the group, ensuring everything that is recorded as a complaint which wasn't happening previously. This has also added to an improvement in customer satisfaction levels since the last full Customer Satisfaction Survey. The team is also responsible for arranging social events to ensure engagement with tenants from all areas. The team decided to hold Community Café events for tenants and now hold four per year. Having organised an afternoon tea in Rosyth as part of 'centenary year' it was a huge success with 75 elderly residents enjoying afternoon tea and entertainment, a slipper exchange, nail bar, digital skills and with various support agencies present, this also provided essential information and advice on health and wellbeing. This was so successful that the team took the lead on producing a much bigger vintage tea afternoon event for 150 tenants on behalf of Fife Housing Association Alliance which was a roaring success.

Outcomes and Achievements

Arrears Performance

February 2018 £317,824 - 2.85%

March 2018 £316,678 - 2.84%

April 2018 £313,954 - 2.75%

May 2018 £299,641 - 2.63%

June 2018 £289,673 - 2.54%

July 2018 £284,723 - 2.49%

August 2018 £271,121 - 2.38%

Complaints

2016 - 71.79% of stage one complaints responded to within timescales

2016 - 50.94% of stage two complaints responded to within timescales

2018 - 88.53% of stage one complaints responded to within timescales

2018 - 100% of stage two complaints responded to within timescales.

Customer Satisfaction Results

The satisfaction levels of participation opportunities has increased from 84% in 2016 to 97% in 2018.

The satisfaction levels of keeping tenants informed has increased from 86% in 2016 to 96% in 2018.

Community Cafés, the afternoon tea held for older tenants in Rosyth and the Vintage tea have been received very well, clearly building on Fife Housing Group's commitment to community engagement.

Tenancy Sustainment Service

Hillcrest Housing Association



The Hillcrest Housing Association team has continued to achieve outstanding outcomes for their tenants against a backdrop of staff absence, additional properties being built and major changes to the benefit system.

Generally, the rollout of welfare reform - including Universal Credit, Scottish Flexibilities and reduction of backdating entitlement to one month - has meant the complexity of cases has increased resulting in additional work and multiple appointments to resolve issues. Even faced with this the team continued to produce outstanding results and improve the lives of our tenants.

Specifically the team identified the winter of 2017 as being a particularly tough time for the people they work with - it was one of the worst recorded in history. Not only were people on low incomes facing the yearly struggle with food, fuel, providing warm clothing and presents for their children but this was coupled with the rollout of Universal Credit in three of our areas of

operation. This could have resulted in severe financial hardship due to delays in benefit payment at the most expensive time of the year for fuel costs.

Having identified this as being a particular issue the team endeavoured to work with internal teams and external agencies to overcome the challenges that their tenants were facing.

The team worked closely with The Coat Appeal and Toy Appeal with the aim that no child in any of their tenancies would be left without warm coat/clothing or a present on Christmas day. They also worked with Hillcrest's Energy and Advice Team who did emergency fuel top-ups to ensure that no-one over this period was left without heating or means to cook.

Having identified that the local Foodbank was to be closed for periods over the festive period the team arranged food collections to their offices from staff and members of the public. This meant they could provide a food parcel to those most in need. This approach proved successful and was gratefully received by tenants who had been concerned about how they would cope over the festive season when the majority of support services are closed.

Bob Sander, Hillcrest's director of housing commented that "As a team the tenancy sustainment service continue to impress me with their outstanding results. The financial gain they generate for tenants is to be commended and the benefits to Hillcrest as an organisation are fantastic.

"The team don't just stop there and on top of their day to day workload are always looking for areas where they can go that extra mile. The work they put into ensuring tenants had food and fuel over the Christmas period was an excellent example of this."

Outcomes and Achievements

- During the year 2017/18 the Tenancy Sustainment Service (TSS) received 1,760 referrals for support. Demand on the service is growing year on year. This is a 28% increase on the 2016/17 referrals of 1,370.

Through working with TSS - 523 households had a financial gain this totalled:

£955,839.42 this is broken down as follows:

- Successful applications to charities: £16,010.06.
- Discretionary Housing Payment awards: £30,784.14
- Unclaimed Housing Benefit and backdate requests: £364,318.83
- Unclaimed other benefits: £408,907.68
- 61 food parcels were arranged with a financial value of £2,624.05
- Successful Scottish Welfare fund applications: £59,894.00
- Successful Council Tax Reduction applications: £33,200.20

- White goods received: £1,264.98
- Other successful funding applications £30,693.78

The 1,760 referrals are broken down as follows:

- Three cases were referred for support with Bedroom Tax
- 551 cases were referred for general support predominantly with welfare benefits and money management issues
- 56 cases were referred before tenancy sign-up
- 513 cases were referred on a mandatory basis as part of the Income Management process
- 270 cases were referred as part of the new tenant sign up procedure
- 193 tenants referred themselves for support
- 174 tenants were referred as they had been identified as new Universal Credit claimants

45 of our tenants benefited from the extra efforts put in over the Christmas period.

Corporate Team

Maryhill Housing



The Maryhill Housing corporate team are the unsung heroes of the company and last year made a huge contribution to progress across the business, despite significant changes. Here are just some of their successes:

- The HR team successfully navigated the business through restructures of three teams. They ensured that staff were treated fairly and with dignity at all times whilst protecting the interests of the business. Practically they also recruited more staff in the space of three months than they would normally recruit in two years. The HR team have also found the time to achieve Healthy Working Lives bronze award; review numerous out of date policies; develop a new appraisal system and develop a new leadership development programme.
- The IT team successfully secured funding from the Scottish Government to provide fibre broadband free of charge to residents of Maryhill Housing's high rise blocks. They also launched a new website and intranet; a new self-service portal for customers; and a new IT helpdesk internally. They led the delivery of remote working technology to the company's housing teams and procured key contracts ranging from mobile phone to third line support.

- The Finance team transformed the budget management process by moving from quarterly to monthly management accounts. They have also significantly improved understanding of budgets across the business by getting out to each service area and helping managers review their budgets on a monthly basis. As a result the association has confidence in budget management and development for the first time. The Finance team also led our value for money agenda which delivered year on year savings of £300k last year.
- The Corporate Support Team introduced a new Bursary scheme and allocated over £12k to support our tenants' learning and career progression. They ensured that the association raised over £2k for charities of the year SSPCA and the North West Foodbank. They also rolled out digital board meetings, saving our staff hours at the photocopier and the world a lot of trees! They delivered a programme of office moves to allow a satellite office to be converted into a desperately needed community space and to create space for the board to meet in our own offices.
- Last but not least, all of our Corporate Teams worked together to ensure the association was compliant with GDPR by the May deadline.

All of the above was achieved despite changes in the Senior Management team and a change in line management for a number of people in the team. They responded to these changes positively, acting as champions and leaders of change across the business.

Maryhill Housing is about delivering outstanding services to customers. This wouldn't be possible without the people behind the scenes giving our frontline staff the skills, resources and equipment to make a difference to customers every day.



CIH SCOTLAND 2018 MARGARET VASS AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN FRONTLINE HOUSING AWARD

Sponsored by: **weslo**
housing management

This award celebrates achievements of individual housing officers. The winner will have excelled in the management and delivery of everyday tasks which are too often overlooked but are essential to the success of social housing providers. The successful nominees have been able to demonstrate success in making a positive difference to the lives of tenants/applicants; continually striving to improve the tenant/applicants experience themselves and have an excellent understanding of the business of delivering housing services, maximising incomes, supporting organisational improvement and making best use of partnership working.

Elaine Sommerville

Elderpark Housing Association



Elaine has worked within in housing for over 20 years and joined Elderpark Housing Association in 2006 as a Housing Assistant before progressing to Housing Officer. She demonstrates a strong commitment to learning having undertaken a Post Graduate Diploma in Housing Studies.

Elaine combines a high level of competency in housing knowledge and policy with personal attributes of flexibility, energy, attention to detail, great communication skills, encouraging teamwork to help achieve her inherent desire to support vulnerable tenants. These are tenants who are at risk of losing their home or need additional support to make the best use and enjoyment of their home.

In addition to managing a patch, Elaine also supports the organisation by leading on many activities within the association's tenant participation strategy, reviewing and improving procedures and representing the association on forums such as Glasgow City

Council's homeless persons letting boards and the Housing Options forum. Elaine's effectiveness at improving service delivery is backed up her desire to do the best for tenants and a desire to drive the service forward by routinely reviewing and questioning how things can be done better.

Elaine has lead customer panels on a range of topics, including estate management issues, website review and on the content and layout of publications. Elaine's approach to planning and her organisational skills means that these activities are well structured with a clear outcome which then can be implemented through policy and procedure development.

The outcome can be demonstrated by positive satisfaction results: 98% of tenants satisfied about being kept informed and 97% of tenants satisfied with opportunities to participate.

Elaine excels in partnership working and logical thinking; Elaine has worked with Glasgow City Council Leaving Care services to develop a protocol to help re-house vulnerable young people in a supportive and sustainable way. In turn Elaine's was asked to promote this good practice and the success of the project in forums such as the GWSF and the Essential Connections Forum run by HSCP. Elaine's rational approach to her work means that she can help move a concept from being a good idea or aspiration into a workable procedure which brings about lasting change and improves the service to tenants. For example the association recently introduced a curtains and blinds service charge for new tenants who were previously destitute or vulnerable to being able to sustain their tenancy.

She has exceptional analytical skills and takes responsibility for performance reporting within the Housing Management department including production of the Annual Return on the Charter, Annual Landlord Report and other communications to our customers.

Across all areas of Housing Management performance Elderpark has seen improvements with tenancies sustained over a 12 month period increasing from 90% to 95% in last three years, all aspects of tenant satisfaction increasing and a reduction in both rent arrears and void loss in each of the last three years.

Elaine also provides immense support to other team members. This is particularly evident when supporting

new staff by providing training and support to ensure that they settle into the organisation and are able to contribute fully to the needs of the organisation.

Elderpark Housing Association's Chief Executive, Gary Dalziel said "Elaine has shown amazing commitment to Elderpark Housing and our tenants and that passion she has to support those in need has been impressive. She has a real skill in being able to balance the performance and analytical aspects of her role with providing care, support and empathy for our tenants. I have 100% confidence in her abilities and have been struck by her determination to do the best for her tenants and service users."

Outcomes and Achievements

Elaine is compassionate and believes support (when wanted) can improve the lives of the association's tenants. She supported a tenant with alcohol issues, who had underlying mental health issues after leaving the armed forces. The tenant would defecate in his flat, partly as a consequence of poor mobility and diet. This caused a smell nuisance to other neighbours. Elaine made repeated visits over 18 months and with the help of family members and medical professionals managed to stabilize the situation and get the tenant to engage in the care required to support him. Elaine exhibited the desire not to give up on him when others had.

Elaine managed the process of moving 35 tenants into four refurbished blocks of flats. The work involved was extensive and she ensured that every tenant was supported by providing carpets and blinds, assisted with their essentials and checking that each property matched the individual's needs. This workload was challenging enough, however her colleague was also absent throughout which required her to undertake the tasks involved in this project, fulfil her regular duties and cover for her colleague. She carried out all aspects to a high standard with her only priority being meeting the tenant's needs.

Angela Muntun

Fife Housing Group



Angela has been a housing officer with Fife Housing Group since November 1990. Initially with Scottish Homes before transferring to Fife Special Housing Association as part of a LSVT on 29 January 1997. Angela has had responsibility for most areas of Fife at some point or another during her working life but for the last 10 years she has been the Housing Officer for the West Fife villages including High Valleyfield, Oakley, Culross and Crombie. The area has high unemployment rates and a number of Fife Housing Group's tenants are encountering financial difficulties on a daily basis. There are a number of tenants with

drug and alcohol dependency which impacts on people's behaviour making it an area with a higher than normal antisocial behaviour issue, making the role of the housing officer very demanding and diverse. Angela's remit includes carrying out pre-let interviews, viewings, sign ups, estate management, dealing with antisocial behaviour and rent arrears control. On a number of occasions she is carrying out interviews and viewings to properties with children and grandchildren of tenants she signed up for their own properties many years before

Angela was instrumental in providing a great frontline service when dealing with the particularly difficult task of decanting disabled tenants who had an issue with a pipe bursting under the floor of their property. The tenants needed to be decanted for a number of months to enable the house to be dried out and the work to be completed. The nature of their disabilities meant that they could not be decanted into a standard property and there was also the added complication of having two older cats which also needed to be catered for. Angela managed to secure a holiday let which met their disability needs for a few weeks initially and arranged for all of the tenants own items to go into storage. She then arranged to move them to the holiday let, including identifying and securing

cat beds and crates for the period whilst in the holiday let. She then contacted various agencies and housing providers and using her network of contacts managed to agree a lease for six months for a bungalow style property with wet floor shower which suited the tenant's needs in full. She arranged full decoration and flooring for the decant property, taking the tenants views into account, she even took the tenant to pick some of the furnishings for the decant property, getting it ready for tenants to move into on a more permanent basis for six months. She arranged all the removals between the initial holiday let and the decant, including using her weekends to wait for carpet fitters, night times to help the tenants put their personal items into the bungalow to make it feel like home. She then arranged the full removal of the tenants back to their original property following the work being complete; again she provided help and

support at weekends and in the evenings as well. This was by no means a normal decant and things would not have progressed as quickly or as smoothly as they did without Angela's input.

On another case recently she was working with a younger tenant with a drug dependency. He was awarded compensation and knew himself that if he held onto it, he would use it to fund his drug habit. He has access to two children and was looking forward to getting them for a week over the school summer holidays but knew his furnishings were in poor condition. Angela took him to a local supplier where he picked new items of furniture and furnishings, she provided him with curtains and gave him some other items of her own to help the tenant make the house more comfortable for him and his children.

Outcomes and Achievements

Over the years Angela has built up many relationships with colleagues both within the association and with partners to ensure she provides the best service possible to her tenants and has identified and liaised with a number of support services. Angela strives to make sure her tenants get the best help and guidance available.

Over the years she has made many links with colleagues in social work looked after children teams, vulnerable adult teams, Police Scotland, third sector support agencies, mental health teams, local councillors and MSP's.

After 28 years, Angela will be retiring from the association in early April 2019 and will be a great loss to our association, colleagues, tenants and their families. She shows no signs of slowing down yet and is currently involved in our new 19 home development in Crombie, getting everything in place, ready for the handover to some more new tenants moving into the new houses and creating homes of their future.

There is a very large pair of shoes requiring to be filled.

Louise Errington

Hillcrest Housing Association



Louise Errington is a housing officer with Hillcrest Housing Association and has been with the organisations since 2004, becoming a housing officer in 2010.

Louise is the type of officer who will often go the extra mile for her tenants, she is conscientious and committed to her job. Tenants find her extremely approachable and she regularly receives compliments for what she does. She is however, an extremely efficient officer, she is quite diligent in pursuing rent arrears, she will follow up cases in the expected timescales and go out of her way to call on tenants outside of normal office hours if there is a better chance of getting them in at that time. She regularly deals with Anti-Social Behaviour cases and receives praise for her approach – she addresses these quickly and sensitively and will involve a range of other agencies where this is required – for example, recently she was involved in dealing with a vulnerable tenant who was being moved to more suitable

accommodation after being taken advantage of by some of the association's other tenants. This involved a multi-agency approach to get a positive outcome for the tenant, and was praised by the local Safer Communities team as *"a great piece of joint working with a lot of people going over and above the norm."*

Louise has also been involved with some of our more challenging tenants – In the case of a 90 year old hoarder, she liaised with the tenant to ensure that his house was cleared and cleaned and then on-going support was provided to him by a local support provider. Similarly, with another tenant who has mental health issues and a habit of disposing of waste inappropriately, she has been slowly building up trust with the tenant so that support agencies can begin to address his behaviours.

Louise is always keen to learn and has adapted to new ways of the working. She was one of the early exponents of using our housing management system, QL, on a mobile tablet when out on housing visits.

Alastair McKendrick of the lawyers at TC Young, commented that *"I have worked with Louise for many years on all housing management matters, ranging from rent arrears cases to managing anti-social behaviour issues within Hillcrest's housing developments. Louise is an exceptionally knowledgeable and efficient housing practitioner to work with. She takes a proactive approach with all her cases she refers for court action or advice, and has always undertaken diligent efforts to resolve any issues prior to contacting me. Her work on a number of cases we have worked on together has been invaluable in securing the desired outcome for Hillcrest and tenants."*

Outcomes and Achievements

Typical of Louise's approach is the following incident in February of this year when we had severe snow. Louise travelled from her home in St Andrews to Glenrothes to undertake two tenancy sign ups despite there being a red alert for extreme weather conditions. Louise contacted the incoming tenants to advise of the delay in the sign ups and to rearrange them. The incoming tenants were extremely disappointed and frustrated as they had arranged to move into the properties and they had carpets being fitted. Despite the bad

weather – and problems with her own car – Louise borrowed her son's car and had him travel with her for company due to her concerns about the travel conditions. Louise made it to Glenrothes and signed up the new tenants. This action taken by Louise meant that the new tenants received their keys when they expected, we did not suffer any rental loss and no additional work was created for Louise's colleagues. For this action, Louise was given an award under the company's Award and Recognition scheme.

Elaine McAulay

Link Housing



Elaine has worked with Link for over 30 years. She is the epitome of an excellent housing officer and has the welfare of both Link and her tenants at the heart of what she does always. She never seeks the limelight or considers her actions special, but carries out all roles with the utmost care and to deliver the quality of service the tenant deserves. She consistently works above and beyond expectations. Her tenants testify to this and the company is often told what a great housing officer she is by them when we carry out joint visits. That's not to say she in anyway avoids difficult conversations, but her integrity and respect for her tenants shines through.

She walks that difficult line of being persistent and tenacious with colleagues in order to get things done, without causing offence. She is highly respected by her colleagues and achieves results in bringing her visions to improve areas/performance to reality through her tolerance and empathy. It's difficult to capture the whole person in a few words, but the following are examples that will give you a clear sense of why she shines as a housing professional.

During a period of extreme work pressure Elaine took the role of monitoring the team to make sure things were done and supported the Housing Manager. She was not asked to do this, she just saw the gap and knew what she could do to help keep the team afloat and services being delivered to tenants. This was recognised as being exceptional by the director.

Elaine has huge empathy and works with her tenants to find the best ways to support, manage and improve their homes. She is always the first to use our sustainment budget imaginatively for the benefit of the tenant. She has been the leading force in improvements to her area. Hamilton Street is a great example of this. This development of older properties, primarily for singles or couples was a deprived area, with high turnover, despite various physical improvements over the years. However, the rear gardens were in very poor condition, neglected and unused by tenants, other than dogs and with the resultant problems.

She bid for improvement works to be carried out by the in house team, describing her vision and working with tenants to design a space that is both attractive and functional. This took months of hard work and her meticulous eye for detail led to wonderful additions like the chimney pots from roof improvements being used as containers for flowers. The before and after photographs of the site are clear, but the greatest evidence is the tenants' new sense of community. A highlight was noted during a routine visit in the summer when a group of tenants were spotted outside playing acoustic guitar in pergola. Unimaginable a year before.

She similarly bid for a Linkgiving day to be dedicated to the front garden at Bridgehaugh in Stirling, an old mixed tenure development. She led the project and in a single day, in her inimitable, persuasive style turned the area from unloved to a well maintained garden using staff and her excellent negotiation skills to obtain help from all sorts of sources, including council staff using their digger to dig out old dead bushes. She received great feedback from owners and sub let students returning later in the day.

Thankfully, Elaine shares her vision and knowledge readily with colleagues and has mentored several trainees over the years, more recently as a result of redundancy. It is testament to her energy and passion for her profession that both have come through the very difficult time committed to their new role and with a clear vision of what they aspire to become.

Outcomes and Achievements

She applied for funding from Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) to resolve a mixed tenure issue and obtained £3,000 for residents to spend on the areas affected. It was this money she spent on the Bridgehaugh improvements.

She nominated the improved garden area to Beautiful Scotland for the 'It's Your Neighbourhood' award which they won with distinction. Her comments at the time were "The value to me was not in getting the award but in seeing how proud the tenants were in being given this opportunity to improve their lives." The tenants were over-awed at the experience of going to a ceremony and having the chance to speak. The confidence this has brought out in them has been

fantastic. There is now a vibrant tenants group which is keeping the improvements going.

Her colleagues recognise her hard work and have said:

"Not only do your tenants and colleagues think you are fantastic, you have been selected by Beautiful Scotland for the "Its your Neighbourhood" award for your work with the tenants!"

"Well done to you Elaine for your superb organisation of the day. And your splendid idea to bribe the road guys with bacon rolls!"

And all this whilst reducing her arrears last year and improving tenancy sustainment.



CIH SCOTLAND 2018 THE APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR EXCELLENCE AWARD

Sponsored by:



This award recognises the contribution of apprentices across the housing sector. The winner of this award will have demonstrated their commitment to personal development with achievement and attainment in learning. Through their contributions in the workplace, demonstrate that they have exceeded expectations and made a difference to the organisation they work in. They will also be able to provide evidence of approaching day to day work with a positive outlook and demonstrating a willingness to be creative and innovative.

Amy Simpson

Eildon Housing Association Ltd



Year of Young People – Finance Assistant
Apprentice (AAT)

The organisation

Eildon Housing Association Ltd is committed to excellence in the provision of Housing, Care and Support services for individuals and communities that the association serves, within the Scottish Borders.

As part of the association's five -year Strategic Plan, Eildon Housing is committed to operate within a sound financial framework. The finance team are integral to the financial health of the organisation with robust systems, processes and qualified staff in place.

At the core of the associations strategic plan is a large scale digital transformation project. The aim of the digital strategy is to offer improved services to tenants and stakeholders. For the Finance department this has proved a challenge as the company moves to new systems and process.

The team

After years of consistency in the team we have and gone through a period of flux. Therefore, when Amy was recruited the association was looking for a star who could not only learn and develop from the team but offer the team a sound pair of hands who can multi- task and do a good job.

After an extensive recruitment campaign Amy Simpson was appointed as a Modern Apprentice (Trainee Finance Assistant). Amy commenced work with the association straight from school and has quickly adapted and developed in all the key disciplines of the role. Amy has successfully completed Association of Accounting Technicians level 2 and 3. All of the studying Amy has undertaken has been directly her responsibility and all lectures were done on-line. Amy made the decision not to leave the area and attend university but to remain in the borders and gain a qualification whilst working. Amy has a career path which involves gaining level 4 AAT and thereafter studying for a professional accountancy qualification. The organisation is supportive of Amy's future career aspirations and will support Amy to achieve her ambitions. Amy has recently been appointed as a permanent Finance Assistant as recognition of her achievements and her work ethics.

The role of a Housing Association Finance is multi disciplined due to the number of skills required to action: Payroll; Accounts Payable; Accounts Receivable, Cash Book and Nominal Ledger including reconciliations. Amy now has a sound knowledge of these key areas and can competently pass on her new to new recruited Modern Apprentice.

Amy has joined a team of seven with an average age of above 40. She has brought equilibrium to the team as her peer group have demonstrated paternal skills towards the young recruit. This said Amy has forged successful equal relationships with colleagues and can hold her own in difficult conversations around the day to day tasks of the team.

Testimonial

Amy recently was part of a small working group who helped shaped and organised our Staff Conference. In the lead up to the Staff Conference each member of the group was requested to invite ideas and

suggestions from themselves and also to provide feedback from their teams, Amy was enthusiastic and extremely competent in this from the outset and was equally happy to suggest things as she was to provide valid opinions on those made by others.

On the day of the conference, Amy took on board that as a member of the organising group, she had a wider responsibility to ensure that the day went smoothly and ensured that delegates were aware of what to expect and encouraged others in the various activities on the day

Outcomes and Achievements

Project outcomes and achievements to date.

Amy has demonstrated to the association how effective it is to recruit and retain young people in apprenticeship roles. Amy is an ambassador for apprentices and has taken her skills and knowledge to a wider audience on behalf of the association. Amy has attended local schools to break down barriers between secondary education, higher education and the world of work. Amy has met local and national politicians flying the flag for modern apprentices who gain a valued qualification whilst working. Amy has attended Aspiring Leader lunches as a recognised Leader of the Future at the Borders College Campus in Galashiels.

Amy has successfully brought equilibrium to a team of seven, as she works confidently and diligently to develop her finance skills from her peers and through studying.

Amy has successfully passed all seven exams and is looking to the future to become fully qualified Accountant.

From an organisation view Amy has demonstrated how successful apprenticeship programmes are, Eildon Housing Association has recently recruited both graduate and modern apprentices.

Morgan Lennie

The Wheatley Housing Group Ltd



Morgan joined Wheatley's modern apprentice programme in September 2017 in what was her first ever housing role. She was placed within the corporate governance team whose remit is to service all 23 of the boards and committees across the Wheatley group.

Morgan has been a great asset to the team since she arrived. She is proactive, not sitting and waiting for things to be given but will actively seek work out. Morgan is able to determine when situations are urgent and has volunteered to stay after hours or work through lunch breaks to ensure deadlines were met.

Morgan arrived quiet and shy but very quickly gained confidence and voiced her suggestions and opinions for the benefit of the team. Morgan's excellent IT skills meant that she was called upon by senior team members to assist them with projects they were working on which gave her a great insight into the organisations and some of the things that Wheatley is involved in. One senior member in particular had been looking for a project plan to be devised to assist with his project to merge two subsidiaries and Morgan was instrumental in the development of spreadsheets, plans, documents and folder creations to ensure this process was seamless.

Morgan has great drive and determination and showed this in being the first modern apprentice this year to complete her SVQ. Morgan did this alongside her daily tasks never once saying she was unable to complete anything, once again demonstrating her excellent time management. Morgan has a skill for prioritisation which is exceptional for such a young person just starting their career.

Another modern apprentice approached Morgan for assistance in completing their own SVQ as they had heard Morgan was doing so well with hers. Morgan used everything she had learned to coach

her colleague through the difficulties they faced and encouraged her colleague to become more confident which is inspirational.

Morgan assisted the Senior Governance Manager in creating a workflow to streamline the board paper process. This involved Morgan speaking with other members of the team to gain their opinions on how they thought the process should work and also find out a bit more on their individual roles so as to assist in the final plans.

Morgan showed so much positivity and confidence over her first few months that it led to her being asked to lead on a project to devise "how to" guides for not only current team members but new people joining the team. Morgan embraced this challenge and faced it head on. She consulted with team members to firstly ensure that she didn't miss anything but secondly so that everyone felt that they had contributed to the final product.

Outcomes and Achievements

Morgan being the first modern apprentice in her year to complete her SVQ (Business and Administration Level 3) was a fantastic achievement which she put her heart and soul into not settling for anything less than a perfect score.

Morgan decided after completing her SVQ that she would like to further her education by applying for a bursary for a higher English distance learning course. Morgan was successful with this application and begins her course September 2018.

One of our subsidiaries required a team to be set up to work on a project to undertake significant migration of systems and processes to streamline their part of

the business. Morgan was approached and asked to be part of this team as a result of her excellent reputation she has gained in her short time in the organisation.

Morgan played an active role in assisting with the 2018 modern apprentice recruitment intake and will prove a valuable asset to them in their first year as apprentices.

The modern apprentice programme covers lots of additional training outside of the actual placement which Morgan has been described as being an active member who starts and gets involved in lots of interesting discussions.

Caitlin Donald

YourPlace Property Management



Caitlin joined the YourPlace Property Management Edinburgh team last summer when the company had just completed significant transformation of migrating the systems and processes to bring together both the Glasgow and Edinburgh teams working with one vision and service delivery model.

As part of this there was a new team structure and ways of working are still being embedded. This could be unsettling to a young person entering their first role, however not for Caitlin. Caitlin saw this as an opportunity to learn, grow, develop and embrace it as an opportunity to be part of an exciting new direction to our factoring business. Caitlin took to learning everything she could about property management,

customer service and basic business approaches. Weekly visual measure board meetings are held to discuss performance, improvements, successes and opportunities. Caitlin had some great ideas alongside organisational skills, an example of this being creating a shared priority and task sheet between the factoring and asset teams that work across multiple sites one single view of all property and development specific information that was in progress or coming up. She brought fresh ideas and brought energy into some of our more established team members.

Caitlin adds value to our team, she has a voice that is current and can see opportunities that when you have been doing a role for a long time we may not see. An example of this is the promotion of signing up YourPlace customers to online digital accounts helping them conduct their business with the company through self-service at times convenient to them. Caitlin has shown her initiative to learn everything she can from repairs, to customer forums and volunteering to attend evening meetings of proprietors with her team leader so she may learn how these work and conduct them as well as providing valuable admin support.

Caitlin recognises when something is not working and will use her initiative to do something about it, an example of this being YourPlace's key management system. When she started Caitlin shared with the team

that this was not the most efficient and could do with an overhaul and was encouraged to take this on as a mini project. Within a day she had scoped out two different systems, thinking of what resources and practical items she would need to implement these along with the pro's and cons of each. She actively consulted other staff using the keys to get their feedback, used this to make finishing touches and had the plan implemented and new system operational within two weeks. YourPlace's trade operatives, property surveyors and factoring team all now have one way of working and Caitlin not only built up valuable relationships by engaging with the team she

has earned the respect of everyone working with her for being known as someone that gets things done and has a can do attitude.

Caitlin welcomes constructive feedback and sees this as an opportunity to strive to learn and do better for next time or to help her mature in her role. The company receives great feedback about Caitlin's people skills and her empathy. She shows a maturity beyond her years and has learned not to shy away from difficult conversations but how to do this whilst maintaining relationships with customers and or colleagues asking for advice or guidance when she feels she needs or wants to check an approach.

Outcomes and Achievements

As a result of Caitlin's hard work and completion of her SVQ an opportunity of a place on the Institute of Residential Property Management course became available – this is an industry wide recognised qualification in factoring and property management. Caitlin and her line manager discussed if she felt she could take on this challenge which required a six day classroom attendance and home study before an exam. Caitlin was so keen to take part in this she changed her annual leave to make sure she could be

present to take part in the course dates. YourPlace was delighted when Caitlin passed the course with flying colours at 85%. The trainer on the course commented that if they ever had an opportunity to employ Caitlin they would not hesitate she was a bright talent.

Caitlin has been a valued team member in the last year and so much so that a recent opportunity has arisen for a Business Advisor post within our factoring team and Caitlin has applied, interviewed and been successful in obtaining the role.



CIH SCOTLAND 2018 EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP AWARD

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ALACHO

Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers

This Award is for an individual, and its purpose is to recognise excellent leadership in the sector. It aims to demonstrate the quality of leaders that we have in housing, and to show the rest of the world how brilliant housing people are.

Gary Dalziel FCIH

Elderpark Housing Association Ltd



Gary Dalziel has worked in the housing sector for over 25 years and over 13 years at a senior level. After taking up the role of Chief Executive at Elderpark Housing 18 months ago Gary is now responsible for heading up one of the best performing organisations within the sector in terms of customer satisfaction.

Gary strives for excellence in everything he does and creates a culture of trust and continuous improvement within organisations whilst also mentoring and inspiring others at all levels. His energy, enthusiasm and commitment make him an excellent role model for hard work and self-motivation. He is an extraordinary natural leader who has achieved a great deal already in his career and contributed so much to the sector through improving organisational performance, education, training and mentoring. Gary is well known and very well respected across the sector and Elderpark Housing Association has used testimonials to support their nomination which they believe demonstrate how highly regarded Gary is and the level of support he has in having his achievements as an excellent leader recognised.

"Through natural leadership skills and a large amount of time dedicated to both studying and delivering sector relevant education Gary displays a number of qualities associated with good leadership in that he is approachable, has self-awareness, sets direction, acts with integrity and has an innovative and collaborative approach. He is genuine in his willingness to give staff the tools, opportunity, guidance and support to fulfil their potential. Testament to Gary's leadership is the positive impact he's had on developing the skills of many housing professionals so they can go on to become future leaders in our sector." David Byfield, Corporate Services Manager Linstone.

"I think Gary's two primary leadership skills are first the ability to develop a clear strategic direction with his team that builds ownership and consensus through the team. This is accompanied by his ability to recognise and nurture talent within his team to achieve these strategic objectives." Colin Turnbull, Director Hawthorn Housing Co-op.

"Gary operates a genuine open door policy and he is never too busy to spend time providing support, advice and guidance. He does this in such a way that he really listens to what you say but does not provide you with the answer but rather empowers you to make the decision yourself and be confident in your ability to do so. We believe this demonstrates he really cares about building trust and an in-depth understanding of the individuals within his team.

"I started working with Gary a few years ago in my first job within the housing sector as a graduate intern at Linstone Housing. From day one, he was supportive, inspirational and encouraged me to continue developing my skills and career in the sector. Through his leadership, I saw our entire team flourish at Linstone and the whole organisation benefited from his excellent relationships with all levels of the staff team. Gary is truly deserving of being recognised by CIH

for his dedication to the staff at every organisation he has been involved in." Emma McShane, Housing and Corporate Services Officer, Linstone.

Since joining Elderpark Gary has injected energy and enthusiasm into the team and taken time to promote the good work that goes on at the association, ensuring staff and committee get the recognition they deserve. This has really made the team feel respected and valued and want to follow the vision he

has created. Gary has a great sense of humour which he has uses to gain people's trust. He can regularly be seen engaging in conversation with staff at all levels from senior management through to modern apprentices. The company truly believe that Gary's hard work, dedication, continuous commitment to the sector and excellent natural leadership skills deserve to be recognised.

Outcomes and Achievements

Gary's academic achievements are many having obtained a Master of Philosophy in Housing Studies, an MBA in Public Service Management, achieving a distinction for his dissertation on Leadership and Culture in the Scottish Housing Association sector. Gary has lectured on the CIH Level 4 Diploma for a number of years and acts as a tutor for CIH and SHARE providing training on business planning, financial management and governance to committee and senior staff. Gary is a Fellow of CIH and currently serves on the CIH Board as Vice-chair and has been instrumental in the development of FLAIR.in full.

Gary has successfully led on the rebranding and development of websites for two organisations demonstrating his innovative flair and drive to ensure continuous improvements establish platforms that are fit for purpose. He has a strong track record of business planning and has been responsible for producing and developing robust business plans for over 10 years. Gary has effectively managed change within organisations, including full staff restructure and implementation of new services.

Gary has successfully turned around an association in a failing financial position, delivering healthy cash flows year on year from 1m to 5m over a six year period.

Sheila Bunt

Prospect Community Housing



Never judge a book by its cover.

Traditionally, physical perceptions of leaders are male, tall and fit. The leader Prospect Community Housing is nominating possesses none of those attributes. Sheila Bunt is a below average height granny with health challenges, yet she exhibits true leadership qualities. As a founding member of Prospect Community Housing 30 years ago, Sheila remains a dedicated committee member and tenant, still inspiring the association to deliver excellent services to Wester Hailes, Edinburgh.

The vision came in the beginning in 1988, when Sheila and others campaigned for better housing and environments in the deprived, dysfunctional periphery estate of Wester Hailes. Starting with nothing, Sheila

kept going, through negotiations with the council, MPs and funders, learning through training and from others as she went and being bold. The landscape has changed but the vision remains; providing homes and building communities together. Sheila thrives on change, from the insistence on changing street names to end a negative connotation, to exiting the final salary pension scheme early within the sector.

As well as chairing Prospect, Sheila helped found a local youth centre. Meanwhile, she worked in the social club; signing cheques for Prospect one minute, pulling pints and resolving arguments in the next. All with a smile and a joke but never a pushover.

"As a young person growing up in Wester Hailes, Sheila Bunt was a woman you could speak to and trust. She was a voluntary youth worker that wasn't fazed by anything because she cared about our community. Sheila gave up a lot of her personal time to support voluntary agencies, as member of the Wester Hailes Representative council along with being a mum / gran and doing some paid work in the local social club. She had a lot of passion and drive but the biggest things for me are care and empathy. In a nutshell Sheila has dedicated 30 years of life to the people of Wester Hailes and continues to do so."

Scott Troup, Local Community Worker

Integrity shines from Sheila. Staff members describe her as consistent, reliable, enthusiastic and honest. She doesn't want the limelight, just wanting to get the job

done. Whether chair, vice chair, secretary, treasurer or ordinary committee member, Sheila has got to grips with all roles, quietly and determinedly, never domineering.

Whatever the challenge, from employing the right staff, funding, the economy, staffing issues or negotiating with regulators, councillors, other lenders, auditors etc., Sheila's self-confidence enables her to cut through any waffle and get to the crux of an issue. She is assertive and reasoned in her views.

Sheila motivates and develops others. She is still part of Prospect's recruitment process, ensuring that her passion is replicated in new staff members. One staff member recalled that originally as an administrative assistant, she is grateful to Sheila who spotted her talent for fixing things. Sheila supported her to complete a college course to then become our IT

Officer. Sheila develops and supports new committee members. More than one staff member commented how she is committed and inspiring.

Many mention Sheila's approachability. Her wit and humour help her create bonds with others. Her empathetic and supportive nature means "you could talk to her about anything." She has been able to remain calm while make tough decisions on committee when others baulked at the challenge. That Prospect has only had two directors in 30 years is an example of the stability she brings to the team.

Thus, whatever you think a leader looks like, Prospect would argue Sheila Bunt, Prospect Committee member, in her 30th year with the company is a very worthy winner of the CIH Excellence in Leadership award for 2018.

Outcomes and Achievements

Sheila helped set up Wester Hailes Housing Association in 1988 with no assets and no previous experience in housing. She was and remains, an unpaid volunteer.

The outcomes of the project and achievements are:

- Changing the face of Wester Hailes from a concrete jungle by getting rid of many of the high rise flats.
- Long lasting change of the physical environment, reputation, safety and reduction of crime.
- Prospect now has 892 properties for rent, provides a factoring service to 38 and continues to prosper.
- Annual turnover increased to £4.8m in 2017/18.
- Prospect employs 31 staff including 11 with a clear local connection to the area. Their committee members include eight tenants.

- Prospect's full time Welfare Rights Officer generated c£350k for their tenants in 2017/18.
- Prospect's full time Community Projects Officer partners local agencies to develop projects to benefit everyone in this community, Prospect tenant or otherwise.
- Prospect's overall tenant satisfaction was 93% at last survey in December 2016.
- Prospect's rents are amongst the lowest for Edinburgh Registered Social Landlords.

Sheila has always genuinely wanted to make a difference. As an outstanding leader and excellent role model she has achieved this, whilst continuing to be the heart and soul of Prospect.

Jennifer Simon

Maryhill Housing



Maryhill Housing is nominating Jennifer Simon for this award because of the outstanding contribution she has made as a leader to the company since joining the association as Housing Manager in 2012.

Jennifer joined Maryhill at a time of significant change for the association shortly after the second stage stock transfer of 2,000 properties from GHA.

Jennifer led the housing management service and over time her portfolio expanded to include the association's customer contact team and concierge services and void management. Jennifer was asked to take on these challenging areas of the business because of her proven track record in service transformation.

In January 2018 Jennifer secured the role of Director of Operations – assuming responsibility for all customer-facing parts of the business and in a short space of time has delivered significant performance improvement across repairs and asset management.

What makes Jennifer a special leader?

- Her passion for what she does. Jennifer views her job as a real privilege and this comes through in her enthusiasm to tackle even the most challenging situations whether that be the need

to restructure a service or deal with an eight page factoring complaint.

- She always leads from the front. Jennifer would never ask her teams to do something she wouldn't do herself and regularly assists customers, takes calls and even helps out on reception during busy periods. She is never too busy to see or speak to a customer.
- Her outstanding customer service. Jennifer goes above and beyond for customers on a regular basis. One Christmas she spent a day of her holidays helping two elderly customers resolve a repair issue (when she wasn't responsible for repairs) so they could use their toilet! Her compassion for others comes through in her kindness – she has been trying to help a homeless man who she regularly sees access permanent housing and supported a homeless member of staff into accommodation with a neighbouring association.
- Her honesty and openness. Maryhill can rely on Jennifer to tell us when things aren't going right and her willingness to listen to difficult or challenging feedback. She never dismisses anyone and takes time to really listen to what customers say, even when they grab her in Tesco at 7.30 on a Friday night!
- Her pragmatism and ability to think flexibly. Jennifer has fantastic common sense and can see her way through complexity. She has re-written processes across the business ranging from arrears management to rechargeable repairs.
- Her support for her colleagues and peers and for developing her teams. Jennifer champions promotion or equality and diversity in the workplace. Jennifer volunteered to mentor our PATH trainee, has appointed eight apprentices into the Operational directorates and led the development of our Community Jobs Fund programme.

Outcomes and Achievements

What has Jennifer achieved?

- Significant performance improvements in the housing management service. Reducing void turnaround from 85 days to 12 days in four years and reducing rent arrears by almost 200k in the same period.
- Significant performance improvements in the reactive repairs service. In just eight months since moving into post Jennifer has improved emergency jobs within target from just seventy five to over 95 percent.
- Developing a customer-first culture in her teams that improved customer satisfaction between 2012 and 2015 by 5% and significantly reduced the numbers of complaints about staff attitude or approach.
- Successfully implementing first a move to specialist housing management and then a move back to generic housing management this year. Jennifer's focus on the customer will ensure that the new service builds connections between our front line staff and our customers.
- Building a reputation for excellence at Maryhill – Jennifer is a fantastic ambassador for the association and is asked to represent associations in forums from housing first to homelessness.



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