

GOVANHILL NEWSLETTER



The Newsletter of Govanhill Housing Association in Govanhill and Merrylee

Spring 2025

Fun in the Sun for Easter in the Community Garden



On the 5th of April the Community Garden and Govanhill Housing Association joined forces for another fun packed Easter Family Event. Children and families came along and made windmills, took part in arts and crafts and met the Easter Bunny herself!



Spring / Summer Bank Holidays 2025

Please note, the Association will be closed on the following public holidays:

Easter: 18th and 21st April

May Day: 5th May

Spring Holiday: 23rd and 26th May

Glasgow Fair: 18th and 21st July

If you need any assistance during any of these closures, please phone one of our out of hours numbers below:

Tenant **Emergency Heating Repairs:** City Technical Services on **0333 202 0708**

Tenants **Health and Safety Emergency Internal Repairs:** MEARS on **0203 5893140**

Other Emergency Repairs: Pointer Call Handling Service on **0141 552 8647**



Abusive Behaviour Towards Staff will not be Tolerated

We believe that our customers have a right to be heard, understood and respected. We work hard to be open and accessible to everyone.

Occasionally, the behaviour of individuals using our services makes it very difficult for us to deal with them and the issues they raise. In a small number of cases the actions of individuals become unacceptable because they involve abuse of our staff.

We understand that people may act out of character in times of distress, and that customers may feel angry about the issues they have raised with us.

When this anger escalates and becomes aggression towards our staff, we consider this to be unacceptable.

In short, violence, abuse and aggression towards our staff will not be tolerated.

If we consider behaviour towards staff to be abusive or aggressive we will take the following steps in line with Association policy.

- Staff will end telephone calls if they consider the caller aggressive, abusive or offensive, our staff have the right to make this decision.
- We will not respond to correspondence (in any format) that contain statements that are abusive to staff or allegations that lack substantive evidence.
- In extreme cases, we may restrict contact and go through a third party.

We will always tell the customer what action we are taking and why, and a decision to restrict contact can be appealed.

More information about how we deal with unacceptable actions can be found in Unacceptable Actions policy.





More Tenants Benefit from our Education Fund!

We're delighted to share that we've awarded another **15 people** a grant of **£200 each** through our **Education Fund**. This support helps our tenants and their families whilst in further education like college or university.

At Govanhill Housing Association we firmly believe in being **more than just a landlord**. We're committed to helping our communities **thrive**, and education is a key part of that.

If you're a tenant and think the **Education Fund** could help you or your family, please keep an eye out for when we release further funding later this year.

The Govanhill Monthly Community Litter pick is Back!

The Govanhill community has kicked off their spring cleaning with the return of the Monthly Litter pick.

The first event took place on the 29th of March, and despite the poor weather over 30 people attended!

The litter picks will take place on the last Saturday of the Month throughout the Spring and Summer. The next event will take place on Saturday the 26th of April.

For more information search Govanhill Community Litter Pick on Facebook or look for announcements on the Govanhill Housing Association page!

You can also contact Cristina at **cchirilov@govanhillha.org** for more information.



Association Implements 2.7% Rent & Service Charge Increase

On 28th November 2024 the Management Committee agreed to consult tenants on one option, a 2.7% increase for rent and service charges. This figure was based on September inflation levels (CPI) + 1%.

Every year the Management Committee tries to keep rent increases as low as possible, whilst dealing with the reality of rising costs and the need to upgrade our properties. This is a difficult balance, but we believe that the 2.7% figure achieves this balance.

Rent Consultation Results

The consultation took place between 12th December to 31st January 2025, and a total of 2581 letters were sent as part of consultation. We also held four drop-in sessions to allow tenants to give feedback in person, as well as sending surveys out by text.

We had an excellent response rate, with **30% of tenants responding to the consultation.**

63% of respondents felt that their rent is good value for money

72% of respondents were happy with the level of information and consultation.

Rent Increase by Property Size

What a **2.7% increase** will look like per property size.

1 Apt.	2 Apt.	3 Apt.	4 Apt.	5 Apt.
2024/25 weekly rent charge	2024/25 weekly rent charge	2024/25 weekly rent charge	2024/25 weekly rent charge	2024/25 weekly rent charge
£83.33	£97.36	£105.11	£120.81	£141.76
New Rent with increase	New Rent with increase	New Rent with increase	New Rent with increase	New Rent with increase
£85.58	£99.99	£107.95	£124.07	£145.59
Weekly Increase Amount	Weekly Increase Amount	Weekly Increase Amount	Weekly Increase Amount	Weekly Increase Amount
£2.25	£2.63	£2.84	£3.26	£3.83

Update your Universal Credit Account!



If you have your rent paid by the local authority it is important that you inform them of your new rent amount in your universal credit account.

If this applies to you, please follow the instructions below to change your rent in your account.

If you need any help with this, or have any other questions about your entitlements through Universal Credit you can contact our welfare rights team on **0141 636 3636**.

1. Updating your Universal Credit Journal 2025: Confirm Your Housing Cost To-Do screens walkthrough

Home To do list Journal

The Confirm your Housing Costs To-do will be in your To-do list on your Universal Credit account

2. Confirm your housing costs

Changes to your housing costs

Has your rent changed?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Have your eligible service charges changed?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Select yes to say your rent and service charges (if you have them) have changed

Continue

Back

3. Confirm your housing costs

Date of change

Did your housing costs change on 1 April 2025?

Check the letter from your landlord for the date of the change.

☒ Yes ☐ No

You need to select yes to say your rent changed from 1 April 2025

Continue

Changes to your rent

You are currently charged ... per month in rent

The Universal Credit system will display the current rent held on your account

Your landlord should have written recently with details of changes to rent or eligible service charges.

Are you still charged monthly for your rent?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Select Yes

How much is your new rent per month?

Do not include any service charges or rent arrears.

£

Enter the monthly rent amount from your rent letter

Continue

Back

4. Confirm your housing costs

Changes to your service charges

You are currently charged ... per month in service charges

The Universal Credit system will display the current service charges held on your account

Your landlord should have written recently with details of changes to rent or eligible service charges.

Are you still charged monthly for service charges?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Select Yes

How much are your new service charges per month?

Only include 'eligible' service charges. They will be listed separately on the letter from your landlord.

£

Enter the monthly eligible service charge amount from

Continue

Back

5. Once you have answered these questions you will see a summary of your answers. If you have made any mistakes you can change your answers. If you are happy with the information you have provided, press confirm to complete.

Tenant Participation!

Ways to get involved in Your Association

There are many ways to get involved with your Association, at every level, ranging from responding to consultations, to attending events, and even joining the Management Committee.

Our Resident Engagement Assistant Gillian is available if you are interested in getting more involved with the association. You can contact her by emailing gscott@govanhillha.org or by phoning **0141 636 3636**.



Coffee and a Chat at Samaritan House

On the first Tuesday of every month we host a tenant drop-in, an ideal place to have a cup of tea, meet your neighbours and find out more about what's going on with the Association.

These drop-ins take place in the community hall between 10-12am on the following dates:

6th May, 3rd June, 1st July, 5th August



Contribute to Association Policy and Processes

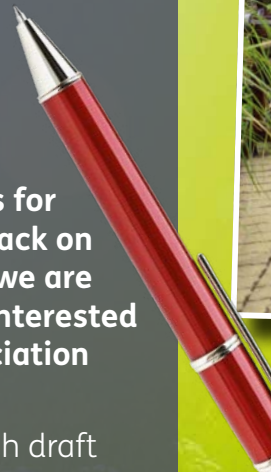
We want to create opportunities for tenants to be able to give feedback on our policies and processes, and we are looking for volunteers who are interested in influencing the way the Association operates.

This would involve reading through draft policies and processes such as our rent setting, allocations or equalities policies, and then giving feedback. We are also looking at setting up focus groups to discuss aspects of Association policy.

We are currently reviewing the below policies & would love to hear from you:

- **Equalities, diversity & inclusion**
- **Mutual Exchange (session will be held on 23rd April 2025)**
- **Estate & Environmental Management (session will be held on 30th April 2025)**

If this is something you are interested in, please contact Gillian at gscott@govanhillha.org.



Environmental Issues Drop –In

If you wish to speak to our Environmental Worker about anything to do with your local environment, Cristina will be available in the community hall on the second Tuesday of every month.

These drop-ins will take place between 2-4pm on the following dates.

13th May, 10th June, 8th July, 12th August



Community Garden Group

The Community Garden group meets every Wednesday in the garden from 1-4pm, and anyone who is interested in getting involved is welcome to come along for a chat. The group organise several well attended family events throughout the year, as well as looking after the green space. If you would like to get involved, they have an active group on Facebook – just search ‘Govanhill Community Garden Group’. Alternatively email **gscott@govanhillha.org**.



Environmental Residents Group and Community Walkabouts

The Association has set up an environmental residents’ group to work together to improve the local area. The group meets quarterly at Samaritan House. If you are interested in getting involved contact Cristina at **cchirilov@govanhillha.org**

The Environmental Residents Group will meet on the following dates in 2025. The meetings will take place in the community hall at 6pm.

29th April, 29th July, 28th October

As well as this group, the Association is running a regular walkabout jointly with Glasgow city council and local residents. It takes place on the second Tuesday of every month. The purpose of this is to highlight specific issues and work together to find solutions. If you would like to join one of these walks please contact Cristina.

MERGE (Minority Ethnic Residents) Group

The MERGE group is open to anyone from a black, minority or ethnic background who lives in Govanhill or Merrylee. The group are looking to re-start their regular coffee morning. For more information contact Gillian or follow our Facebook page!

Merrylee Residents Group

Do you live in Merrylee? We are looking to find new members for the Merrylee Residents and Tenants Group. If this is something you would be interested in, please contact Gillian.

Video Doorbells and CCTV: What you Need to Know!

If you are considering the use of doorbell recording devices such as Ring doorbells, you are responsible for the data that you collect and process. The Information Commissioner has a useful online guide at <https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/home-cctv-systems/>. The information Commissioner also gives advice to anyone who may be concerned about their neighbours use of CCTV or video doorbells.

We recommend that you read this information but here are a few key things to remember.

- We do not require you to seek permission if you wish to install a video doorbell, however, due care must be taken when fitting a device, and you will be responsible for any damage caused.

- If you are considering a traditional CCTV system you must contact us to ask permission first. Please consider if there are other ways you could protect your property.
- Think about the problem you are trying to tackle; it will usually be to capture anti-social behaviour or criminality. Govanhill HA encourages reporting antisocial behaviour to us and/or the police.



Your responsibilities if you install a Ring Doorbell or CCTV

If your recording device captures images beyond your property boundary, such as your neighbours' property, communal areas or public streets and footpaths, then your use of the system is subject to the data protection laws.

This means

- Telling people that you are recording by displaying a sign.
- Regularly or automatically deleting footage.

- Stop recording a person if they object to it. You may also have to provide people with footage you have recorded if they ask for it.

More information about your rights and responsibilities regarding video doorbells and CCTV can be found in the information leaflet available at govanhillha.org.uk. For further guidance and support you can also contact the ICO helpline on **0303 123 1113**.

Close Matters: Looking After our Communal Areas!

What the Association Will Do

Close Cleaning

We are pleased to announce that if you are a tenant of the Association & live in a close, stair cleaning is now in place.

What does our cleaning service involve?

- Removal of any litter/debris in the communal stair.
- Brushing and cleaning floors and walls
- Cleaning bannisters and doors.
- Washing windows.

What we expect from tenants and residents

To keep common areas as clean and safe as possible we ask for the following from tenants and residents.

Do not leave bags of Rubbish in the Close or Communal Area

All rubbish should be placed in the bins in the back court and not left in communal areas as this can produce odors and attract rats and mice. Our cleaning staff will remove bin bags when they find them, however this could incur a charge.



Do not store personal items in the close

It is important that residents do not store any personal items in the close. This includes bicycles, prams and pushchairs. Our staff regularly inspect tenement stairwells and will contact anyone keeping their own items in the stairwell. We may have to remove any items we find in the stairwell as they are a fire risk.



If you have a bicycle and need storage, please contact the Association. If you are a tenant, we may be able to fit internal bicycle storage free of charge.

Do not Vape or Smoke in the Close

We ask that tenants and residents do not smoke or vape in communal areas, not only does this increase the risk of fire, but the smell is unpleasant for others.



Funding Success for Merrylee Tenants Group!

The Merrylee Tenants and Residents group were delighted to receive £1000 from the Arnold Clark Community Fund to support their work in the community.

Many thanks to Arnold Clarke for supporting the group!

Arnold Clark
COMMUNITY FUND



Summer Excursion Planned for Merrylee Residents

The regular summer excursion for Merrylee residents will take place this year, if you are interested in getting a place please contact Gillian by emailing gscott@govanhillha.org or phoning **0141 636 3636**. Full details will be available soon.

CATHCART & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

The Cathcart and District Community Council is looking for new members!

If you live in Merrylee and are looking to get more involved in your local community, why not go along to the **Cathcart and District Community Council**? You can visit their website at catchcartdistrict.org.uk for more information about the group's activities. The group also has a Facebook page where they share

information about what is going on in the local area.

Meetings take place every second Wednesday of the month (except April, July, August and December) 7-9pm in Cathcart Baptist Church.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday the 14th May from 7-9pm at Cathcart Baptist Church.

Look out for the latest edition of the **Govanhill directory!**

Coming soon in the Post!

The staff at Govanhill Community Development Trust are working hard on a new directory of services, with up-to-date information about where to go for help and support.

The directory will give detailed information on the wealth of resources available in the community and will be delivered to all residents within the applicable post code area!

Keep your eyes peeled for it landing on your doorstep, it is full of valuable information and resources.



JOB CLUB GOVANHILL

FINDING AND APPLYING FOR

- JOBS
- TRAINING
- FURTHER EDUCATION
- VOLUNTEERING
- ESOL



EVERY THURSDAY 10AM TO 3PM

**LARKFIELD CENTRE
39 INGLEFIELD ST
GLASGOW G42 7AY**

**CONTACT US
TODAY!**

CYNTHIA UBONG-UMOREN

07901 317598 | cubong-umoren@govanhillha.org

HUGH O'HAGAN

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Tenancy Sustainment at Govanhill Housing Association

What is tenancy sustainment?

Tenancy sustainment is the term we use for the additional support, assistance and resources that the Association provides for individuals and families to help them manage their tenancy.

We provide a range of services to support our tenants and help them overcome challenges and thrive in their homes.

Who can receive our services?

This service is offered to tenants who are referred by their housing officer and is generally aimed at tenants who are struggling to maintain their home due to issues such as mental illness, unemployment or disability.

What sort of support is offered?

Our tenancy sustainment staff offer support with housing, and maintaining the condition of your property. They can signpost tenants to other resources that help tenants address issues, thrive and improve their life situation.

What happens after a referral?

The tenancy sustainment team will contact the tenant by letter or phone. They will then make an appointment to see the tenant in their home. The member of staff will assess the individual needs of the tenant, and work with them to make an action plan. This action plan will set goals to track progress and a timeline for completing agreed actions.

Our staff are here to help, we want tenants to be able to thrive in their communities and be happy in their homes. Tenancy sustainment is one way that the association offers extra support for those who might need a bit more help.

How can I get more information?

If you would like more information about this service contact the Association on **0141 636 3636** or **checkin@govanhillha.org** and ask for Tenancy Sustainment.



Fire Safety: Important Information to Keep you Safe!



The fire service has seen an increase in house fires over the last 6 months. It is important that tenants and residents take steps to prevent fire in the home. Here are a few important reminders of the steps you can take to stay safe.

Communal Areas

Do not store items in any communal walkways, landings or near exit doors. This includes stairwells and balconies. These items are a trip hazard, can block someone's means of escape, and cause hazards for firefighters. **Do not wedge open fire doors! These prevent fire from spreading.**



Smoke Alarms

Maintain your smoke alarm: **never cover your smoke alarm, or remove batteries** unless it is to change them. Test your smoke alarms on a weekly basis.



Lithium Batteries

Lithium-ion batteries are found in household items like mobile phones, laptops, and vapes as well as larger products like e-bikes and e-scooters.

Don't use or charge your device if you notice the battery: producing smoke/feeling very hot to touch/ looking swollen or has any type of lump or leak/ making a hissing or cracking sound/smelling unusual/ taking longer to charge or does not fully charge.



Plan for an Emergency

The Scottish Government strongly recommends an emergency plan with an evacuation bag. You can also receive a free visit from Scottish Fire and Rescue who will give you more information about how to stay safe. Visit firescotland.gov.uk/contact-us/home-fire-safety-visits/



Planning for the Future: you and your family are



TELL US IF SOMEONE HAS MOVED IN OR OUT

Why You Must Tell Us Who Lives in Your Home

As your landlord, we need to know if anyone else is living in your home. This is very important, especially when it comes to **succession rights**—the legal right for someone to take over the tenancy if the tenant passes away.

Under the **Housing (Scotland) Act**, certain family members or people who have lived with the tenant for at least 12 months before their death may have the right to succeed the tenancy. However, if we are not aware of who is living in the property, this right may not apply.

To protect your household's rights, you must inform us in writing about any new person moving into your home. This includes family members, partners, or anyone else who may be staying with you on a permanent basis.

Why is this important?

- It ensures the right people can take over the tenancy if needed.
- It prevents any issues or disputes in the future.
- It helps us manage housing properly and support tenants.

If you need to update us about who is living in your home, please contact us as soon as possible. Keeping the Association informed helps protect your rights and ensures a smooth process if succession rights ever need to be considered.

Make Sure protected

None of us like to think about what would happen in the case of a life limiting illness, but nobody lives forever, and the decisions we make when we are fit and well can have an impact on what happens to our homes and families after we have gone.

Please read the articles below, they include important information about simple actions that you can take to make sure your rights are protected.

POWER OF ATTORNEY

Why You Should Have a Power of Attorney in Place

A Power of Attorney is an important legal document that allows someone you trust to make decisions on your behalf if you become unable to do so yourself. Many people assume that their family can automatically make decisions for them, but in Scotland, this is not the case without a legal Power of Attorney in place.

What is a Power of Attorney?

A Power of Attorney (PoA) is a legal agreement that allows another person, known as your attorney, to make decisions for you regarding your finances, property, health, and welfare if you become unable to manage these yourself due to illness, accident, or incapacity.

Why is it Important?

- **Protects Your Interests** – Without a Power of Attorney, no one has the automatic right to make financial or medical decisions on your behalf, even if they are a close family member.
- **Avoids Court Delays** – If you become unable to make decisions and don't have a Power of Attorney, your loved ones may have to apply to the court for guardianship, which can be time-consuming and costly.
- **Gives You Control** – You decide who will manage your affairs and what powers they will have, ensuring your wishes are followed.

How to Set Up a Power of Attorney

To create a Power of Attorney, you need to:

- Choose a trusted person (or people) to act as your attorney.
- Work with a solicitor or legal professional to draft the document.
- Have the PoA signed and certified by a solicitor or medical professional.
- Register it with the Office of the Public Guardian (Scotland).

Don't Wait Until It's Too Late

A Power of Attorney is not just for the elderly—it is a sensible step for adults of all ages. Life is unpredictable, and having a PoA in place ensures that someone you trust can step in to help when needed. If you haven't set up a Power of Attorney yet, consider doing so as soon as possible to safeguard your future and give yourself and your family peace of mind.



YOU CAN HELP

STOP **X** THE RATS



DON'T PUT FOOD ON THE GROUND!

We have had reports of people dumping food on the ground, and although we understand that the intention might be to feed the birds, the reality is that this behaviour encourages rats.

Please don't put any food on the ground! You may think you are feeding the birds, but you are feeding rats.



DO NOT PUT FOOD OUT FOR BIRDS!

HELP STOP **X** THE RATS

For missed collections or bin problems please contact Glasgow City Council using the MyGlasgow App or by phoning 0141 287 2000