

# GOVANHILL NEWSLETTER



The Newsletter of Govanhill Housing Association

Autumn 2021

## Landlord Report

### Chair's Letter

**The main portion of this Newsletter features the charter performance report for the year 2020/2021.**

This report sets out how Govanhill Housing Association is performing against the standards set in the Scottish Social Housing Charter.

This report covers the year from April 2020 to March 2021, and the results reflect the exceptional and difficult circumstances brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This has affected every aspect of our work, from necessitating the closure of the offices to the fact it took us longer to let properties, and repair them, this was compounded by

significant delays in utility companies being available to clear debt from gas and electric meters.

Despite these issues the Association continued to work hard to deliver services for tenants and the wider community – during this period we let 141 properties and supported 633 tenants to access vital welfare benefit payments.

On behalf of the Management Committee I would like to thank all of our staff for their hard work during this time.

**Annie Macfarlane**

### Contacting the Association

For all general enquiries email [checkin@govanhillha.org](mailto:checkin@govanhillha.org)

#### Repairs

For repairs during office hours please phone **0141 636 3669, 0141 636 3634 or 0141 636 3654**

#### Out of Hours Emergency Repairs

Emergency Heating Repairs – City Technical Services on **0333 202 0708**

Out of Hours Health and Safety Emergency Internal Repairs – call MEARS on **02035893140**

Other Out of Hours Emergency Repairs – Pointer Call Handling Service, **0141 552 8647**

#### Factoring

Email **FactoringTeam@govanhillha.org** or phone **0141 636 3666 or 0141 636 3673**

#### Housing Team

To contact any member of staff by email, please put their name in the subject heading and use **checkin@govanhillha.org**. A full list of phone numbers for our staff team can be found on the contact us section of our website.

## Our Homes

As of March 2021, we owned and managed 2,776 self-contained properties. Our average weekly rent in 2021 was £92.34 which is slightly higher than the Scottish Average of £83.70.

On average our rent increased by 1% which is below the Scottish average of 1.2%.

In 2019/20 this figure was 2.2%.



## Property Size

Studio  
(1 apartment)



1.3%

1 Bedroom  
(2 apartment)



2 Bedroom  
(3 apartment)



3 Bedroom  
(4 apartment)



4 Bedroom +  
(5 apartment)



2.6%

## Our Rents Average Weekly Rent (including service charges)

Size of Property	Govanhill HA	Southside HA	Cathcart and District HA	New Gorbals HA	Scottish Average
1 Apartment	£74.15	£69.93	£61.41	£59.25	£73.61
2 Apartment	£86.07	£78.45	£65.24	£74.16	£79.48
3 Apartment	£93.51	£90.22	£80.17	£85.37	£82.60
4 Apartment	£106.70	£101.81	£91.27	£96.73	£89.81
5 Apartment or larger	£123.80	£115.43	£93.70	£110.12	£99.97

## Rent Collection

### We work hard to support tenants who have difficulty paying their rent.

Through the Govanhill Welfare and Financial Literacy Hub in Samaritan House, our staff helped 633 tenants and other residents access an estimated additional £2,049,238.44 in annual income through benefits and tax credits.

Of the rent due 5.2% of this rent was in arrears in March 2021. In 2020 this figure was 4.83%.

An increase in rent arrears is never positive, however, given the COVID-19 pandemic and associated financial hardship this is unsurprising. This is lower than the Scottish average of 6.14%.

## Customer satisfaction

### The Association completed a large-scale Customer Satisfaction Survey in 2020. The events of the COVID-19 pandemic, and in particular the impact of lockdown, is likely to have had an impact on the results.

Please note in this report we have chosen to compare our results only with other Associations

who completed their surveys during 2020/2021 as any other comparison would not reflect the significant change in circumstances at the time of Survey.

We surveyed 1027 of our tenants and asked for feedback on the quality of our homes and services.

Tenant satisfaction with	overall service provided	opportunities given to participate in landlord decision making	quality of home	repairs service	landlord contribution to management of neighbourhood
Govanhill HA	82.77%	94.74%	87.15%	84.96%	78.58%
Parkhead Housing Association Ltd	79.62%	75.19%	73.46%	69.51%	69.04 %
Govan Housing Association Ltd	80.08 %	70.21%	88.54%	78.71%	69.26 %
Thenue Housing Association Ltd	87.07%	70.23%	84.13%	94.7%	76.83 %
Whiteinch and Scotstoun Housing Association Ltd	93.07%	96.08%	82.23%	90.24%	85.84 %

## Anti-Social Behaviour

In 2020/21 we had 144 reports of anti-social behaviour. In 2019/20 this figure was 171.

## Percentage of Anti-Social Behaviour Cases Resolved

Landlord Name	Govanhill HA	Southside HA	Cathcart and District HA	New Gorbals HA	Scottish Average
Percentage of Antisocial Behaviour Cases Resolved	84.03%	100%	100%	57.14%	94.4%

## What is Anti-Social Behaviour?

**There is no precise definition of antisocial behaviour. Broadly, it is acting in a way that causes or is likely to cause alarm or distress to one or more people in another household.**

There may be a fine line between antisocial behaviour and disputes between neighbours over relatively minor inconveniences, although these may, if persistent, become antisocial behaviour.

Antisocial behaviour can include:

- noise
- shouting, swearing and fighting
- intimidation of neighbours and others through threats or actual violence
- harassment, including racial harassment or sectarian aggression
- abusive behaviour aimed at causing distress or fear to certain people, for example, elderly or disabled people
- dumping rubbish
- animal nuisance, including dog fouling
- vandalism, property damage and graffiti.

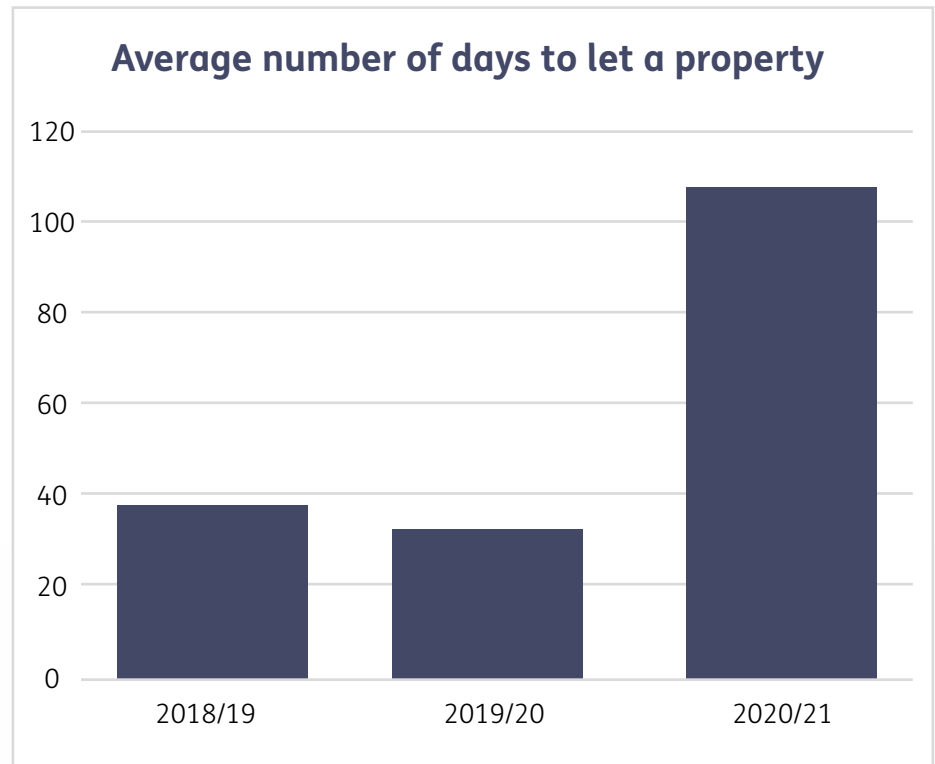
## Empty Homes

**During the last year we let 141 properties to a mixture of waiting list tenants, homeless referrals and existing tenants looking for a transfer.**

We worked hard to minimise rent lost through homes being empty, although this is another area where the COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact. We were initially due to restrictions in the first lock down unable to let properties. Rent lost last year was 1.88%, the previous year's figure was 1.03%.

The Scottish average this year was 1.37% which has also increased from 0.92%.

The length of time a property was empty was 105.14 days. A significant increase on the previous year, but something



that was to be expected given the restrictions imposed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In fact the 78%

increase in average days Scotland wide (56.29 days) illustrates starkly the impact Covid has had in this area.

## Repairs and Maintenance

**As a result of restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic the Association prioritised emergency repairs, which is reflected in the increase in time taken for non-emergency repairs to be completed.**

During 2020/21 the Association carried out 2699 reactive repairs. This is a significant decrease from the 5675 carried out in the previous year. This is reflected across Scotland, with landlords on average completing 20% fewer repairs as a direct consequence of the pandemic.

The average time taken for non-emergency repairs increased from 5 to 10.3 days, the Scottish average during this period was 6.7 days.

On average we completed 3.62 repairs per occupied property. During 2020/21 the average time taken to complete an emergency repair went from 1.77 to 2.1 hours. Although this



represents an increase it remains much better than the target response time of four hours for this category.

## Average time to Complete an Emergency Repair

Govanhill Housing Association  
**2.1 hours**



Scottish Average  
**4.2 hours**



## Comparison with other Associations

Landlord Name	Govanhill HA	Southside HA	Cathcart and District HA	New Gorbals HA	Scottish Average
Average time taken to complete emergency repairs (hours)	2.1	2.0	3.4	1.5	4.2

## Repairs completed right first time

Landlord Name	Govanhill HA	Southside HA	Cathcart and District HA	New Gorbals HA	Glasgow HA	Scottish Average
Percentage of repairs completed right first time	85.8%	96.7%	91.0%	95.6%	96.3%	91.5%

Last year we reported 96.2% of repairs completed right first time. In 2020/2021 COVID-19 restrictions and safety precautions impacted our ability to gain access to properties to complete repairs, leading to a decrease in the percentage of repairs completed right first time.

## Repairs satisfaction

In our most recent tenant satisfaction survey 84.96% of respondents said they were satisfied with the way the Association deals with repairs and maintenance.

### New Repairs Feedback System

This year we have introduced a new system for getting feedback on our repairs service. After a repair is reported tenants are contacted by text or email and asked a series of short questions.

If you get such a request, please answer the questions if you can. Your comments help us to improve our service to you.



### Gas safety checks

**One of the most important maintenance visits we make to our tenants' homes is to carry out an annual gas central heating and gas safety check.**

We continue to work with tenants to make sure that these vital checks take place. This was more difficult this year because of COVID-19 restrictions. Last year 84 properties missed the legal timescales for gas safety checks, however these were caught up as soon as the easing of restrictions permitted us to do so.

## Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)

**The Scottish Housing Quality Standard is a Scottish Government measure which sets the minimum standard for properties in Scotland, it includes a set of five broad housing criteria which must all be met if the property is to pass SHQS.**

All our properties are required to meet this standard if it is possible to do so.

Due to the age, construction, and layout of our properties we are unable to achieve

this standard fully. Where we fail to meet this standard, it is due to the size of kitchens in some of our older properties which lack the required minimum storage, electrical sockets, and activity spaces.

Despite these limitations 81.1% of our properties now meet this standard which is an improvement on last years figure of 75.8% of properties and we plan to have reached almost 87% next year.

Landlord Name	Govanhill HA	Southside HA	Cathcart and District HA	New Gorbals HA	Scottish Average
Number of Properties Meeting the SHQS	81.1%	74.8%	74.6%	90.3%	91.0%

## Your Association and the Environment: The Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing

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

With COP26 about to take place in Glasgow meeting EESSH standards is particularly high on the agenda, and we are working hard to meet this standard.

The age of many of our buildings makes

compliance with EESSH complex. Most of our properties (over 65%) were built before 1919 and are therefore over 100 years old. There is an environmental benefit to continuing to use and maintain older buildings which does not find expression in this data.

In 2020/2021 1577 (56.8%) of our properties were compliant with this standard. Of the rest of our properties 274 (9.9%) do not meet the EESSH. The rest of our stock is either exempt from the EESSH or compliance is unknown.

## Comparison with other Associations

Landlord Name	Govanhill HA	Southside HA	Cathcart and District HA	New Gorbals HA
Number of Properties Meeting the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing	56.8%	84.4%	54.2%	99.6%

## Complaints Figures

**The Association works hard to provide the best possible service, but we don't always get it right. Our complaints process allows you to ensure that we are notified when things have not worked the way they should and offers us a valuable opportunity to improve our services.**

We have managed throughout the pandemic

to respond to complaints within agreed timescales except on a very few occasions where we have agreed with complainants that the time should be extended to provide a full response.

In 2020/21 there were 59 complaints, 35 of these were stage 1, 17 stage 2 with a further 7 being escalated from Stage 1 to Stage 2.

	1st stage	2nd stage
Complaints received	33	15
Complaints carried forward from previous year	2	2
All complaints received and carried forward	35	17
Number of complaints responded to in full	34	16

Of the total complaints received in the year to date and where investigations were complete at the year end, 42% have been upheld or partially upheld (47% at stage 1 and 31% at stage 2).

This is a reduction in comparison to last year, when 53% of all complaints received were upheld.

Of the total complaints received, 28% were about our factoring service and 42% of those were fully or partially upheld. 32% were around repairs timescale and quality and 43% of those were upheld either fully or partially. This is indicative of the length of time it has taken to get repairs completed which has been exacerbated by covid.

## Freedom of Information

**This was our first full year operating under the new Freedom of Information legislation and we received a total of five enquiries.**

Four of those enquiries were dealt under the Environmental Information Regulation (Scotland) Act 2004 and covered issues such as the number of complaints made against a contractor, number of repairs carried out on a front door, number of new build projects we are involved in and refusal of mutual exchanges.

The one Freedom of Information request we received asked for us to provide a copy of minutes from a Housing Services Sub Committee meeting in February 2020.

We continue to make committee minutes, key policies, reports, accounts and business plan available for download on the website. To access this information visit [Govanhillha.org/downloads](http://Govanhillha.org/downloads).

Of the five requests that we received this year, three were from tenants, one from an owner and one from a journalist.

## Subject Access Requests

We received four subject access requests in 2020/21 which is two fewer than in 2019/20.

# Tenant Involvement

**As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic tenant involvement this year has largely taken place online.**

In 2020 we transferred our 'Introduction to Housing Associations' training for aspiring management committee members to Zoom. We also used this platform to consult on bicycle storage and sustainability.

## **Merrylee Tenant and Residents Organisation (MRTO)**

have taken part in Keep Scotland Beautiful's 'It's Your Neighbourhood' project and have set up a Merrylee Gardeners Facebook page. They have also restarted their weekly coffee mornings on a Tuesday in Cathcart Bowling Club (for limited numbers in order to maintain social distancing)

## **Govanhill Community**

### **Garden**

have continued weeding, planting, and generally maintaining the garden to a very high standard. A children's sensory wall is an imaginative new addition. If you wish to volunteer at the garden, please visit on a Wednesday afternoon.



**The Minority Ethnic Residents Group (MERGE)** members have kept up a lively dialogue with each other on Whatsapp.

**Jamieson Court** have unfortunately not been able to meet formally as their common room did not allow enough space for social distancing.

## Customer Satisfaction

**A significant number of tenants who took part in our customer satisfaction survey expressed an interest in being more involved with the Association. Everyone has now been contacted by our Tenant Participation worker.**

Due to health & Safety restrictions, this work has not developed on the ground, but there is a sizeable email group of local residents who we consult with and share information with on a weekly basis. This is an open group – if you would like to be part of it, please contact [jferguson@govanhillha.org](mailto:jferguson@govanhillha.org) with your email address.

To get more involved please contact [jferguson@govanhillha.org](mailto:jferguson@govanhillha.org)

## WELFARE RIGHTS UPDATE

### Scottish Government Child Bridging Payment: New Benefit for Parents of Children over 6

**The Scottish Government currently pays Scottish Child Payment to parents/ guardians of children under the age of 6.**

For those children who are over the age of 6, a new payment has been introduced which will be paid quarterly in October and December. These payments are set at £160 per eligible child.

To qualify for these payments, parents/ guardians are required to claim free school

meals for each child. This can be done on-line through Glasgow City Council. In order to qualify you will need to be in receipt of a benefit such as Universal Credit, Income Support, or Job Seekers Allowance.

**For more information about this payment, or for other welfare rights advice please phone 0141 636 3686 or email [welfarerights@govanhillha.org](mailto:welfarerights@govanhillha.org)**

# Thriving Places Govanhill:

## stay informed and get involved

### Govanhill Updates

**There's always lots going on in Govanhill: community events, job vacancies, training opportunities, activities for young people, public consultations, and more.**

We compile all this information into a regular updates bulletin (which goes out about once a month) for residents and organisations working in the neighbourhood. If you want to stay up to date with what's happening locally, you can find our updates on **[www.govanhill.info](http://www.govanhill.info)**. You can also follow Thriving Places Govanhill on Facebook where we post the link to these updates when they're released. Alternatively, email **[mantoniak@govanhillha.org](mailto:mantoniak@govanhillha.org)** to be added to the mailing list.



**Govanhill Open Museum is a project working to bring a heritage trail to Govanhill's streets, celebrating the people and stories of our unique neighbourhood.**

The first artwork on the trail will be a mural, created in collaboration with an artist and local residents. Throughout the summer, we have held 8 sessions with different groups in the community where local people shared ideas for the mural, helped shape the future of the project, and exchanged treasured memories of their neighbourhood. Get involved! Sign up to join a focus group session by emailing [gom@govanhillha.org](mailto:gom@govanhillha.org). Share your ideas for the future of the project here: **[www.tinyurl.com/futureGOM](http://www.tinyurl.com/futureGOM)**. Find out more on **[www.govanhill.info](http://www.govanhill.info)** or visit Govanhill Open Museum on Facebook.

### Community Engagement and Information Strategy working group

**A group of residents and staff working locally have been meeting regularly to shape the Community Engagement and Information Strategy for Govanhill.**

The document will form part of the Locality Plan for Govanhill and can then be used to influence approaches to community engagement and making information accessible across services. The group meets bi-weekly on Thursday evenings and will continue their online sessions until early December.

If you'd like to get involved, please contact Marzanna Antoniuk, community connector for Govanhill at **[mantoniak@govanhillha.org](mailto:mantoniak@govanhillha.org)** or write to her at Samaritan House, 79 Coplaw St, Glasgow G42 7JG.

For more information about all our projects visit **[www.govanhill.info](http://www.govanhill.info)** or search Thriving Places Govanhill on Facebook.

# BONFIRE NIGHT SAFETY:

## Important Information from Police Scotland



**POLICE  
SCOTLAND**  
Keeping people safe

**With 5th November fast approaching, officers in Glasgow are turning their attention to planning for this year's bonfire events.**

**Following a number of incidents on bonfire night in the South East of Glasgow in recent years, Police Scotland is implementing a number of additional measures in an effort to make sure everyone can enjoy the evening safely and responsibly.**

This year, the focus on the lead up to bonfire night will be educational. From September until November, Police, working alongside their partners from the Scottish Fire Service and Trading Standards, will be travelling around local schools and community groups.

Officers will be distributing information around householders in the area to ensure that everyone is made aware of the potential dangers of fireworks being used dangerously and irresponsibly. They will also be visiting local shops to make sure that the strict rules which govern the sale of fireworks are

being kept. On the night itself, there will be additional specialist officers on duty in the area, working alongside the local community officers.

**The Police Scotland Local Area Commander for Glasgow South East, Chief Inspector Neil McLeod, said:**

“I want to make it clear that we are, and will be, working hard in advance of bonfire night to educate people and get across the message that fireworks are not always fun. When used irresponsibly, fireworks can be extremely dangerous. Anyone who does not take this message on board, and who decides to commit acts of disorder or anti-social behaviour on the lead up to 5th November, and on the night itself, will be dealt with robustly. I am committed to keeping Glasgow South East safe for everyone”.



**GOVANHILL**  
HOUSING ASSOCIATION

**Please Contact Us At:** Freepost Better Living

**General Enquiries:** 0141 636 3636

**Web:** [www.govanhillha.org](http://www.govanhillha.org) • **Email:** [checkin@govanhillha.org](mailto:checkin@govanhillha.org)

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