

RCHA NEWS



The Newsletter of Rutherglen & Cambuslang Housing Association

Spring 2023



OUR OFFICE OPENING TIMES

Monday to Thursday 9.00am to 4.30pm

Friday 9.00am to 3.30pm

The office will be closed on the last Wednesday morning of each month for Staff Training.

Committee & Senior Staff hold their 2nd Joint Strategy Planning Day



→ **Members of the Management committee and senior staff team gave up a Saturday in February to discuss the future of Rutherglen and Cambuslang Housing Association.**

The day focused on ensuring the Association was ready to face the challenges ahead and discussion centred around key topics such as;

- Ensuring the Association met all of its obligations and responsibilities, especially around tenant and resident safety.
- Opportunities for building more affordable rented housing.
- How to achieve the best value for money for our tenants.

We also looked at the risks facing the Association in the immediate future – and there were many!

The cost-of-living crisis and how to best support our tenants dominated discussions. However, difficulties in recruiting high calibre staff, the demanding new housing standards, the targets for achieving 'net zero' and the rising costs of material and labour were also recognised as being challenges for us in the years ahead.

However, both staff and the Committee members were absolutely committed to putting in the work to successfully tackling these challenges for the good of the organisation and, ultimately, for the benefit of our tenants and other customers.

Even after the formal event was over, members sat on "talking shop" and sharing thoughts and ideas.

Although hard work, everyone agreed that the day had been very interesting, useful and maybe even 'fun'.

Thank you to everyone that gave up their precious Saturday to participate and ensure that Rutherglen and Cambuslang Housing Association remains a successful and well-respected provider of the highest quality housing and services.

Have you thought about joining the Management Committee?

→ **It's not as demanding – or boring – as you might think, and you would be directly involved in developing services and activities that you and your neighbours need and want.**

All our Committee members are volunteers and live locally so have a real interest in making sure the Association is working for the good of all its residents and communities.

You could be part of that. You don't need to be an expert or have any previous experience of being on a committee. What you will bring is your local knowledge, an understanding of living in your area and an awareness of what is needed in your own community.

Although the Committee deals with some very important and complex matters, there is a great deal of support from staff and other Committee members, and we try to make everything understandable and – dare I say – enjoyable.

It's not just you that will benefit from being a member of the Management Committee – it will also benefit the Association and the wider community. Some of the recognised benefits are;



To You

Gain confidence, build a sense of achievement, improve your self esteem and have a new sense of purpose. Develop your understanding, skills and knowledge, add to your CV, and potentially open new career paths.

Be involved in a stimulating and mutually supportive environment where your views are heard.

Meet new people, develop friendships, and socialise with others with a shared commitment.

Attend social & networking events, as well as training courses, to build up your skills.

Open up opportunities to apply to serve on important national/regional bodies in the housing sector.

Become a part of one of the most important and effective movements for physical and social improvement that has happened in Scotland over the last 40 years.

Get personal satisfaction from giving something back to the local community whilst making a real difference.

Broaden your horizons and have fun along the way.

To the Community

You'll help to raise awareness of the Association's work both within the local community and beyond.

The time and energy you commit to the Association will directly contribute to its work in improving the quality of life for tenants and the wider community.

You can help to ensure good quality housing and services.

As a voluntary committee member you'll join hundreds of local people and other volunteers who play such a crucial role in taking forward the work of community controlled housing associations in Scotland.




You don't even have to leave your house!

The Management Committee meets once a month for 2 hours, and members can come into the office or we can provide you with the equipment to allow you to join the meeting remotely.

We also have some training nights and members can attend conferences and events that give them a chance to meet people from other Associations and do a bit of networking over some nice food and a couple of drinks.

You don't have to be tenant of the association to join the Committee, but you do need to have membership. If you are

not a member already, joining the Association is simple to do and only costs £1.

If you have a few hours a month to spare and have an interest in the work the Association does and how you can influence our activities, please give some thought to joining the Management Committee.

More information on joining the Association and/or becoming a Committee member is available on the Association's website or from the office.

**MAKE A GENUINE DIFFERENCE AND JOIN US
YOU KNOW YOU WANT TO.**

Rent Increase Below Inflation

→ In February we wrote to all our tenants confirming that the Association's rents would increase by 5% from 28th March 2023. This decision was only made after many difficult discussions at Management Committee meetings as members tried to balance the need to ensure the Association had sufficient income to meet all its financial responsibilities with the sincere desire to support tenants through these difficult times and the cost of living crisis.

As part of their deliberations, Committee members took into account the feedback from the rent increase consultation that was carried out at the end of last year. The consultation offered 2 options;

OPTION 1	An assumed rent increase of 5% with limited investment in the stock during 2023/2024
OPTION 2	A higher rent increase (either 7% or 9%) to allow more investment in the stock

Almost 68% of those that responded voted for option 2 with some commenting favourably on a 5%. Understandably some other comments were not so positive.

“We think 5% is too high also and why do we have no rewards or rent breaks like other housing associations that families are tenants with”

“I think in order to keep the properties in good condition it is vital to keep renovations/repairs going”

“Reluctantly The cost of living is higher already”

“With the current inflation being so high, gas and electricity through the roof too, I am having to count for every penny. So keeping the rent increase as low as possible this year would be a good option for me. Thank you for giving us a vote in some form”

Despite the challenges facing the Committee, the decision to raise rents by 5% ensured that the increase was more than half the current rate of inflation which, in the current economic climate is an achievement.

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to participate in the consultation and to give us their thoughts and opinions.

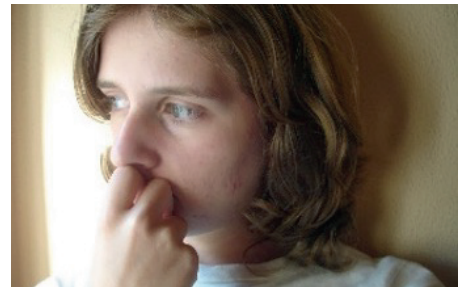
Struggling to pay your rent



→ In our recent satisfaction survey 51% of respondents reported that they found making their rent payments just about affordable with 10% saying they found it difficult.

If you are experiencing financial problems which are affecting your rent payments, please call our Housing Management team urgently for advice. Housing Management staff have successfully assisted several tenants in recent weeks to access help and financial support to manage their finances and clear their arrears.

We can also make referrals to the weekly advice surgeries run by the Citizens Advice Bureau that are held in the Association's office every Tuesday and Wednesday where you can have a confidential discussion about debt, money management, benefits etc.



If you would like to speak to an adviser

Please – if you are struggling don't do it alone. We can help.

Social Security Scotland's Benefits

→ Social Security Scotland was set up by the Scottish Government to deliver a number of devolved benefits. These benefits will be introduced in stages. Once all of these benefits have been introduced, they will be delivered to families on low incomes, people who need help paying for a funeral, disabled people, carers, young people entering the workplace and to help people heat their homes. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and local authorities will also continue to deliver some benefits.

There are currently 12 benefits for eligible households living in Scotland;

- ### Carer's Allowance Supplement

An extra payment of £245.70 to people who get full or partial Carer's Allowance from the Department for Work and Pensions on certain qualifying dates. This is paid automatically to eligible carers every six months.
- ### Best Start Grant Pregnancy & Baby Payment

A payment for people getting tax credits or certain benefits to help with expenses in pregnancy or having a new child. It pays £642.35 for a first child, and £321.20 for other children. There is an extra £321.20 for a multiple birth.
- ### Best Start Grant Early Learning Payment

Best Start Grant Early Learning Payment A £267.65 payment for people getting tax credits or certain benefits made when a child is between the ages of two and three years and six months.
- ### Best Start Grant School Age Payment

Best Start Grant School Age Payment A £267.65 payment for people getting tax credits or certain benefits made around the time a child normally starts Primary 1.

5



Best Start Foods

Money every four weeks on a pre-paid card to help families on tax credits or certain benefits to buy healthy foods.

6



Funeral Support Payment

Money for people getting tax credits or certain benefits who are responsible for paying for a funeral. It is a one-off payment to cover some of the costs.

7



Young Carer Grant

A yearly payment of £326.65 for young carers aged 16, 17 and 18 who care for someone who is getting a disability benefit.

8



Job Start Payment

£267.65 to help people aged 16-24 who are returning to work after a period of six months unemployment. People with children will get £428.25.

9



Scottish Child Payment

A payment of £100 every 4 weeks for each eligible child under the age of 16.

10



Child Winter Heating Assistance

A yearly payment of £214.10 for families of children getting the highest rate care component of Disability Living Allowance for children. This money is to help them heat their home.

11



Child Disability Payment

A payment every 4 weeks to help with the extra costs of caring for children with a disability, illness or health condition.

12



Adult Disability Payment

Financial support for people if they are aged between 16 and state pension age, and are disabled, have a long-term health condition or have a terminal illness.



You can apply for any of these benefits by contacting Social Security Scotland; www.mygov.scot/benefits to apply online



Calling the freephone helpline on **0800 182 2222** to complete an application over the phone, to request a paper application form or to book an appointment with a specially trained adviser to get face-to-face support



Text Relay Service: **18001 +0300 244 4000** (for the hard of hearing)



British Sign Language users: www.contactsotland-bsl.org



Webchat: www.chat.socialsecurity.gov.scot

More information and support for families is available on the Scottish Government's new cost of living website at www.gov.scot/costoflivingsupport



Do you know what's going on in your Community Centre?

➔ If you are a youngster living in Cambuslang and looking for something to do, did you know of the clubs held in the Caledonian Centre at 50 Birch Drive.



YOUTH CLUB – Tuesdays 6.15pm – 7.30pm

TEENAGE DROP IN NIGHT - Fridays 7pm – 8.30pm

COMING SOON... DANCE BY AYLIAH

Local lass Ayliah is starting a dance class in the centre on Wednesday evenings from 6.30pm – 8.30pm.

If you are interested give her a call on **07590 233503** but **BE QUICK** – places are going quickly.

Could you hold classes or events for your community?

The Caledonian Centre can be made available at nights and weekends for anyone looking to start classes for local people living in Cambuslang. It could be;

- Martial Arts - Karate, Judo
- Singing Groups
- Play Sessions
- Brownies, Scouts, Guides Groups
- Arts & Crafts Classes

The centre also has a fully equipped kitchen and large hall that can be hired for events such as;

- Birthday Parties
- Community Parties
- Pensioner Drop Ins
- Parent & Child Groups

If you are interested in using the centre for an event or for starting classes for the people in your community contact either Wilma or Sophie at the Association on 0141 647 4917.





Staffing News

One out ...

After nearly 40 years of working with the Association, John McNulty has retired from his position as Maintenance Manager.

Many of you will know John as he was always out and about, making sure your homes were maintained to the highest standards and were kept up to modern days standards. He also had a key role in our new developments over the years and, in part due to all of his efforts, Rutherglen and Cambuslang Housing Association has grown to become a well respected landlord and service provider within the area.

John was not only committed to everything to do with the Association – the tenants, the stock, the Committee and his colleagues alike – he also contributed to discussions and consultations within the housing association sector that helped influence government policies and strategies on housing.

Few would argue that John could be grumpy at times, but he could also charm the birds from the trees if he needed to and there have been many occasions when his dry sense of humour has made us all laugh.

There is no doubt John has left big shoes to be filled but he has made sure his colleagues are well equipped to carry on his legacy and we know that Mandy, Robert and Donna are well up for the challenge.

We hope John enjoys his retirement and fills his days with time on the golf course, travelling and spending time with his family, especially his wee granddaughter, and we wish him all the best as he starts this next chapter of his life.



And one in ...

We are delighted to welcome Robert Murray to the Rutherglen and Cambuslang 'family'. After working with the Association on a temporary contract, Robert successfully applied for the post as permanent Maintenance Officer.

Robert has worked in the housing sector for a number of years, firstly with a private property management company and latterly

in housing associations as diverse and far apart as Paisley, Clydebank and Drumchapel. This has given him a sound understanding of the different types of stock and the challenges of keeping them well maintained.

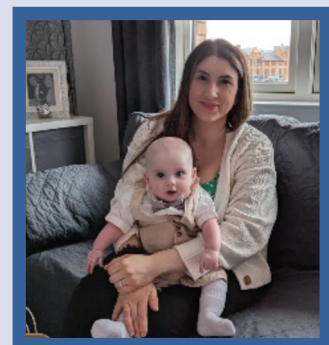
Robert has already established himself as a valuable member of the team and we are looking forward to many years of working with him.



And Baby Makes 3 ...

Congratulations to our colleague Jade McGowan, who gave birth to a beautiful baby boy in September last year named Zander.

Jade took to motherhood like a duck to water and says that although it has been hard work, she has enjoyed spending the last 6 months with Zander. She will be returning to her post as Administration Assistant at the end of June.



Then 2 Becomes 1

Our very own Allocations Officer, Shakeela Savage, is getting married.

Next month, Shakeela will walk down the aisle and marry her long term partner Laurent to proudly become Mrs Jean.

We know everyone loves a wedding so watch out for pictures of Shakeela in all her finery in the next newsletter.

New Office Phone System

➡ If you have called our office recently you may have noticed that the phone message we use has changed and advises that calls to the office are now all recorded.

Calls and information recorded by the Association is confidential and will only be referred to and used in exceptional circumstances.



Recording of calls is primarily intended for training purposes to help the Association improve our services and the quality of information we give. Recorded calls may also be used to resolve complaints or disputes about what has been said or agreed during telephone conversations with staff. On very rare occasions recordings may be referred to where the Association is considering taking action against callers that have been abusive or threatening towards staff. We are fortunate that these types of calls are very rare but it is important that we make it clear that the Association will not tolerate unacceptable behaviour towards staff.

Staff have the right to terminate conversations where they are being subjected to such behaviour and, in extreme cases, the Association will consider taking further action including only dealing with individuals via a third party to in writing, restricting access to services, treating such behaviour as a breach of the tenancy agreement or reporting very serious incidents to the Police.

When dealing with you, all of the Association's staff aim to be as helpful as possible and are expected to deal with you with courtesy and respect. In return, we only ask that you treat staff in the same way and allow them to do their job without being shouted or sworn at, threatened or intimidated. Observing these basic standards we will ensure staff can quickly and effectively help you and provide you with the best service possible.

Wordsearch Winner

➡ Congratulation to Mr George Aslett, the winner of the Autumn Newsletter Word Search Competition was Mr George Aslett.

Pictured here picking up his prize from Beth McPhillimy, one of our Administration Assistants, he was delighted with his £50 gift voucher which he said was very welcome in these difficult times.

We hope he used his prize to treat himself.



Modernising how we contact you

→ We are all very aware of the impact the cost-of-living crisis is having not only on individual households but also on businesses and organisations. The Association is not immune to these rising costs and, like everyone, is constantly looking at ways to save money and provide our services in a way that provides value for money for both our tenants and the Association.

Every year we post out letters and publications to tenants, owners and applicants for housing including newsletters, rent increase notifications, consultations and reports. However, posting these is one of the most expensive ways to communicate with our service users. It is also probably the most inefficient and slowest way to get information to you.

We are therefore starting to communicate with our customers via email and texts wherever possible.

By doing so the Association;

- Will save money not only in postage but also in printing and stationary costs
- Becomes more eco-friendly and greener
- Provide you with a more modern service
- Can get information to you quicker

The benefits for you are that you can;

- Respond to emails at a time that suits you
- Save and access your emails easily
- Participate in surveys and consultation exercise quickly and easily



Email Communication

Although we want to move to using emails for communicating with you for cost saving and efficiency, we understand that this may not suit everyone.

If we have an email address for you, we will be writing to you over the next few months to let you know when we will be starting to send you information by email.

However, if you would rather to continue to receive correspondence from the Association by post, you will have the option to 'opt out'.

Where we don't have an email address for you we will write to you asking that you provide one.

If you don't have an email address we can help you get advice and support to set one up.



Texts

The vast majority of our customers now have a mobile phone. One of the quickest and most efficient ways to contact our service users is by phone call or texts.

We will increasingly be using texts message to;

- Remind you of contractor appointments, thereby avoiding no access recharges
- Issue quick service specific surveys such as your satisfaction with the repairs service
- Issue consultations exercises such as the annual rent increase
- Let you know that publications such as newsletters, performance reports etc have been emailed to you
- Advise you when news that may be of interest to you are on the website

When we write to you about starting email communication we will also let you know what mobile number we hold for you. If that number is not correct please let us know.

Remember – These changes are being made to benefit you and reduce the Association's cost and by doing so, help keep down your rent.

SO PLEASE – HELP US, HELP YOU.



Spring is in the air (hopefully)

➔ It's that time of year when thoughts turn to nicer weather and for those with green fingers, working in the garden.

A nice garden brings joy to everyone that sees it and helps keep your neighbourhood a pleasant place to live.

On the other side of the street – if not regularly cut and treated, long grass, weeds and hedges can start encroaching into nearby gardens. An unkept, overgrown garden brings down the look of the whole area. (psst – it's also a breach of your tenancy agreement and could lead to action being taken against you)

If you are one of the fortunate tenants that have a garden that they can enjoy, please take the time to keep it tidy and well maintained. You don't have to have a show garden. Just cutting the grass and treating the weeds regularly will keep it in order and means you can sit in your garden enjoying the sunny days when they come.



Garden Maintenance Scheme

➔ For those tenants with a garden that are unable to maintain it themselves due to a disability or infirmity, the Association does offer a free Garden Maintenance Scheme.



The scheme is only available to tenants who do not have anyone over the age of 16 living with them **and** meet one of the following criteria;

- Over 70 years of age and not have anyone over the age of 16 living with them **OR**
- Over 65 and in receipt of Attendance allowance or in receipt of a War pension **or** can provide a medical letter

OR

Tenants under pensionable age that have no one in the household capable of doing the garden will be eligible if they are;

- Registered Blind
- In receipt of Disabled Living Allowance/PIP
- Have a Blue badge in their name
- In receipt of a medical letter for at least one of the following illness – Stroke, MS, Rheumatoid Arthritis, recent Heart Surgery, Kidney Disease requiring dialysis
- On oxygen for Respiratory Disease

If you were on the scheme last year you will have recently been sent a reminder letter to make a new application for 2023. Please remember to return your application as soon as possible to ensure you are on the list.

If you think you may be eligible and would like to apply for the scheme, please contact a member of the housing management team for more information.

Satisfaction Survey Highlights

At the start of this year, a full tenant satisfaction survey was carried out by Research Resources on behalf of the Association.

Over 500 of our tenants participated and answered a range of questions covering our services and activities including;

- Their Priorities
- Methods of Communications
- Opportunities to Participate in the Association's Decision-making Processes
- The Repairs Service
- The Quality of their Home
- The Management of the Neighbourhood
- Value for Money



Below are the key results from the survey;

SATISFACTION LEVELS

	2017	2020	2023	Change 2020-2023	
Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall service provided by RCHA (% very/fairly satisfied)	97%	94%	91%	-3%	↓
How good or poor do you feel RCHA is at keeping you informed about their services and decisions? (% very/fairly good)	98%	99%	98%	-1%	→
How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the opportunities given to you to participate in RCHA's decision making process? (% very/fairly satisfied)	94%	96%	97%	+1%	→
Thinking about the last time you had repairs carried out, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the repairs and maintenance service provided by RCHA? (% very/fairly satisfied)	94%	94%	90%	-4%	↓
Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of your home? (% very/fairly satisfied)	98%	92%	87%	-5%	↓
Taking into account the accommodation and services RCHA provides, to what extent do you think that the rent for this property represents good value for money? (% very/fairly good)	87%	83%	82%	-1%	→
Overall how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with RCHA's management of the neighbourhood you live in? (% very/fairly satisfied)	98%	96%	94%	-2%	→

98% said they were satisfied with the customer care provided by RCHA

Affordability

➡ 38% of those who make a rent payment said they find it very or fairly easy to afford their rent payments, 51% just about affordable and 10% difficult to afford.

13% said they find it very or fairly easy to afford the cost of their fuel bills, 53% just about affordable and 34% difficult to afford (68% found their fuel bills easy to afford in 2020).

36% have chosen not to put their heating on because they couldn't afford to (up from 18% in 2020).



Priorities

The overall quality of your home

89%

Repairs and maintenance

86%

Keeping you informed about services and decisions

50%

Management of the neighbourhood

26%

Value for money for rent

24%

The three years since the last survey was carried out have, without doubt, been difficult and, like many Associations, we have seen drop in some of the levels of satisfaction reported by our tenants.

The Management Committee and staff team will be looking into the results in more detail and developing action plans and strategies to address those areas where satisfaction levels have dropped.

Although we are disappointed when we don't deliver our services to the best standard, we are not downhearted. Instead, we are more motivated to continue to strive for performance improvements.

Maintenance News

➔ Despite all the challenges of rising costs and shortages of labour and materials, the Association continues to invest in its stock

Over the past few months we have spent £447,742 maintaining our properties to the highest standards we can.



Landscape Maintenance Contract

➔ It's not just individual gardens that need to be looked after and properly maintained. Many of the grassed areas, shrub beds, trees, public pathways and fence lines within our areas are maintained by the Association.

Every year this has been a source of complaints and dissatisfaction amongst our tenants due to areas not being cut, grass not getting picked up, shrubs not being cut back etc.

This year the Association carried out a full tendering exercise with more detailed drawings and specifications and the landscape maintenance contract was awarded to Caledonian Maintenance Ltd.

We have also increased the number of inspections of the landscaping works that are carried out from 1 per month to one every 2 weeks. This will allow any issues to be quickly identified and sorted and, hopefully, ensure a better service is provided that keeps our neighbourhoods attractive.



Kitchen Replacements

➔ As part of the planned maintenance programme 34 new kitchens were installed in properties in Hamilton Road, Gallowflat Street, Main Street and around Rutherglen.

We were delighted to work with Royal Strathclyde Blindcraft Industries (RSBi) who manufactured the kitchen units for the main contractor, MCN (Scotland). RSBi is one of the country's leading examples of social enterprise and is committed to providing opportunities to people with disabilities and to helping towards the economic regeneration of local communities.

We look forward to working with RSBi again in the future and to supporting their worthy objectives.

Thanks to everyone involved in the contract and to the tenants involved for their co-operation and patience while the works were being carried out.

If you were one of the tenants involved and have any outstanding repairs and adjustments that are need in your kitchen, please contact Robert Murray, Maintenance Officer, at the office.



External screens at Greystone Gardens

➔ Due to weather damage over the years, the external front screen at 12 Greystone Gardens was badly damaged and looked unsightly.

A new screen was manufactured and installed by our contractor Goldseal to make the screen watertight and a more attractive entrance to the building.



Medical Adaptations

➔ The Association is committed to helping our tenants remain living in their homes safely for as long as they wish to. We therefore carry out adaptations to properties such as fitting;

- * Walk in or low level showers
- * Wet floor bathrooms
- * Grab handles
- * Support rails
- * Lever taps

Unfortunately we are restricted on the number of adaptations we can carry out each year as we receive a limited amount of funding for approved works. This year however, we were able to fit 8 showers to properties where tenants, or a member of their household, could not safely get in and out of a bath due to disability or infirmity.

If you are struggling or feel you would benefit from some adaptations to your home, speak to your doctor, social worker or hospital consultant as the Association needs a referral from them before we can carry out adaptations.





Who are they?

The Scottish Housing Regulator was established in 2011 as a non-ministerial department to, as the name suggests, oversee, monitor and regulate the activities of all social landlords in Scotland, including housing associations and co-operatives and local authorities that provide housing and homelessness services.

What do they do?

The Regulator has the statutory objective to safeguard and promote the interests of;

- Current and Future tenants of social landlords
- People who are or may become homeless
- Gypsy/Travellers
- Factored owners
- Others that use the housing services provided by social landlords

How do they Regulate?

There are a number of regulatory requirements that landlords, like the Association, are expected to meet to ensure that it is well-run, financially healthy and delivers good quality homes and services to its tenants and service users.

To assess how each Association achieves these standards the Regulator;

- Gathers information on how the Association is performing and holds it to account where it is not performing well
- Gets annual assurance from the Association that it is meeting the standards expected and, where its not, what it will to fix it
- Will use its legal powers to take action where required to protect the interests of tenants
- Carry out thematic work to look at specific areas of work such as the delivery of the repairs service

The Regulator uses the information it gathers from each landlord to determine if it is complying with all of the regulatory standards and requirements or if it needs to intervene to protect the interests of the tenants and service users. An Engagement Plan for every landlord is published each year that states if it is compliant and, if not, why the Regulator is engaging with the landlord, what the landlord needs to do and the information it needs to send to the Regulator.

How Does the Regulator Keep You Informed

Information on every social landlord in Scotland is published on the Regulator's website. The information given allows service users to compare their landlord's performance and hold it to account.

Want to Know More?

More information on what the Scottish Housing Regulator does is available in its leaflets;

How we regulate: A guide for tenants and service users

How we involve tenants and service users in our work

Both are available on the Regulator's website at www.housingregulator.gov.scot

RCHA's Engagement Plan 2023

➔ As mentioned, every year the Scottish Housing Regulator publishes an Engagement Plan for each landlord.

We are delighted that, once again, Rutherglen & Cambuslang Housing Association has been assessed as **FULLY COMPLIANT**.

The full Engagement Plan is available on both the Association's and the Regulator's websites.



Under 22's Bus Pass

Young people aged 5 to 21, who live in Scotland for at least 6 months a year, can apply for a free bus pass. You can use this to travel on most bus services in Scotland for free. Your Young Scot Card (Young Scot NEC) or other National Entitlement Card (NEC) will be your bus pass. You can either:

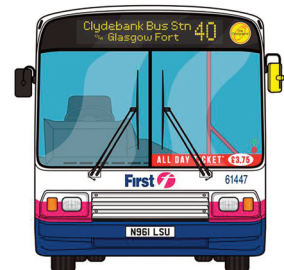
- update your existing Young Scot Card or other NEC
- apply for a new card online or through your local council

For more information about the under 22s bus pass scheme, visit freebus.scot.

What you need to apply

To apply, you'll need:

- a laptop, tablet, phone or other device with a camera
- proof of address, such as a bank statement or driving license
- proof of identity, such as a birth certificate or passport
- a photo of the young person, if they're 11 or older
- proof of relationship, if applying for someone else



How to use your bus pass

Your bus pass is an NEC smart card. This means it will be recognised automatically by the electronic card reader on the bus, if it has one. You do not need to tell the bus driver that you travel for free.

To use your bus pass:

1. get on the bus
2. tell the bus driver where you are going
3. tap your card on the electronic card reader

You do not need to tap your bus pass again when you leave the bus.



There are 2 ways to apply online:

- through Parentsportal if you're a parent, guardian or carer applying for a 5 to 15 year old whose school uses it
- at getyournec.scot

You can only apply for one bus pass at a time. If you're applying for more than one young person, you need to complete a separate application for each.

Beauty and THE BEAST

Oh No it wasn't. Oh Yes it was.

To help make the day even sweeter, each child was given a Christmas selection box which was very kindly donated by Heat Tech Maintenance Ltd. Once again we would like to thank Craig and his team for their ongoing support and generosity.

A Return to the Panto

After missing the past couple of years, the Association was delighted to be able to offer tenants the opportunity to take their kids to the local Christmas panto, Beauty and the Beast.

Over 100 children and their parents joined the evil witch, the cursed prince, the fairytale princess and a cast of enchanted characters and help love win the day and break the curse by booing the baddies, cheering the goodies and singing along.

A magical and fun filled time was had by all.

RCHA Donates to Local schools

Thanks to a former shop owner who ran their business from one of the Association's commercial lets, we were delighted to be able to help some local schools with donations of items of brand new school uniforms. Three local primary schools took boxes of items including blazers, skirts, tops and waterproof jackets to be distributed to pupils.

The principal teacher of St Marks Primary echoed the thoughts of the others, saying ...

"We are delighted to accept this generous donation of school uniforms. These will really help some of our families particularly at this difficult financial time. Thank-you again for donating these straight to the school, we are extremely grateful. They will be very much appreciated by our families."



Cheesy Chicken Bake

Prep: 10-15 mins, Cook: 45 mins Easy Serves 4

Ingredients

- 8 chicken thighs, skin on
- 85g garlic & herb soft cheese
- 500g new potato, halved
- 4 medium tomatoes, halved
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- large pinch caster sugar
- 6 thyme sprigs, leaves stripped from 4
- olive oil, to drizzle

Method

STEP 1

Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Carefully lift the skin on the chicken thighs and spread the soft cheese between the skin and flesh. Sit the chicken in a roasting tin, skin-side up, and surround with the potatoes and halved tomatoes, cut-side up.

STEP 2

Scatter the tomatoes with the garlic and a light sprinkling of sugar (this helps to bring out their natural sweetness). Scatter the thyme leaves and sprigs over the tin, season and drizzle with oil. Roast for 45 mins until the chicken and potatoes are cooked through with crisp, golden skin



Sausage & Mushroom Ragu

Prep: 10mins, Cook: 25 mins Easy Serves 4

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 carrot, grated
- 3 spring onions, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, grated
- large handful of mushrooms, finely chopped or grated
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp fennel seeds
- 6 pork sausages, squeezed out of their skins
- 400g can chopped tomatoes
- 1 tbsp tomato ketchup
- mash, pasta or couscous, to serve

Method

STEP 1

Heat the oil in a saucepan over a medium heat and tip in the carrot, spring onions, garlic, mushrooms, oregano and fennel, along with a pinch of salt. Cook for about 5 mins.

STEP 2

Add the sausagemeat and cook until browned all over, then add the chopped tomatoes and ketchup, along with a pinch of salt and 100ml water. Reduce the heat to low, cover and cook until the sauce is thick, about 20 mins, stirring now and again. Season to taste, then serve with buttery mashed potato, pasta or couscous



Energy Hardship Fund – Fuel Vouchers for Tenants

The Energy Hardship Fund was set up to support social housing residents against the impacts of energy/fuel poverty. It is an overarching term that is being used for fuel funding raised through generous donations from a range of sources including the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, social housing providers, and the social housing supply chain. Additional sources of funding may be added to this fund over 2023.

Any tenant of Rutherglen & Cambuslang Housing Association that has accrued energy bill debts or are struggling to make their energy payments or they are experiencing difficulty paying their energy bills should contact our office on **0141 647 4917** to discuss eligibility so that we can apply for fuel vouchers on your behalf.

Rutherglen and Cambuslang Foodbank 07393 737 030

The foodbank operates using a voucher referral system. You can get this through RCHA, Citizens Advice, children's centres and health visitors



Unit 37
Rutherglen Exchange
Main Street
Rutherglen
G73 2LS

Spring Word Search Competition

Win a £25 voucher of your own choice

V V R K U K E F J N Y J R A I N B O W B Q O Q R
 I L E I B I R D S E H F E T A L O C O H C L Y K
 G U B Y D A L B O W H R U C Y E T I K P F H F C
 L B U N N Y L J H A L L E R B M U S P I C N I C
 R K B J P G G N I Z Z U B X Z F C A N D Y A S M
 G A O P A S T E L S Q L E A S T E R B T R P E E
 A H N L Z C M W Q S G M N S T S E N Q I X R E R
 L S N Z N G E A W M Z F J T O L X Y T B T I B S
 D Q E C L G O I R L O C A L I L Z M S B L L U W
 S Q T R S D E E S C V O V N B C V V H A D E P C
 E G Q A E K N N A B H I L R M Y X J O R O G Z J
 I V X W J J J I P A T V B B A K A U W G R G T G
 D R B F D B B H A K N J X R L T X M E Y O S G J
 O B O I A U L S F R U O X T A D W V R H D W F J
 O A F S F B O N E O H P O O U N W G S W O Z R P
 G S Y H F B S U P C G N S W P L T N Q X O T E C
 I K P T O L S S L L B S N E I I I B E B Z K V A
 D E F R D E O H A I Y I E R V P Y P Y P I E O R
 Y T Z I I A M F A L U P T S Z C V U S L X L L R
 Z H F L L N L I K Y S P R I N G B R E A K D D O
 K C S S A R G Y L F R E T T U B O C O A S D U T
 O C N M Z C Y A B I C F Z M P D V G S R V U D K
 H M U J X W N X I K G E Y A D I L O H K Y P O V
 C S L D G J C H I C K S R E W O L F O C G A S G

- vibrant
- seeds
- pastels
- lamb
- flowers
- chick
- bonnet
- umbrella
- tulips
- rainbow
- rain
- sunshine
- rabbit
- new
- ladybug
- eggs
- carrot
- blossom
- nest
- kite
- easter
- candy
- bloom
- may
- hunt
- duck
- buzzing
- birds
- spring
- puddle
- march
- holiday
- daffodil
- butterfly
- bees
- springbreak
- showers
- picnic
- peeps
- lily
- lilac
- grass
- goodies
- crawfish
- chocolate
- bunny
- bubble
- basket
- april

Name

Address

.....

Age Contact Number

All winning entries will be placed in a draw and the winner chosen at random.



Rutherglen & Cambuslang Housing Association

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