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# focus

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF QUEENS CROSS HOUSING ASSOCIATION

SPRING 2021



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Vision 2025**  
*The next five years* **P4-5**

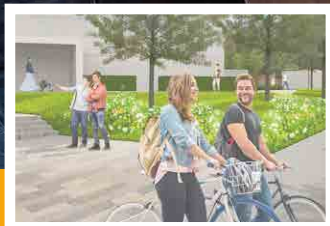
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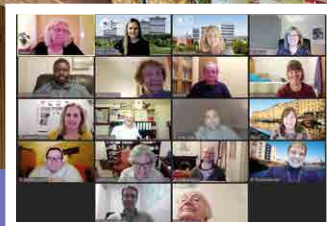
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# Our five year vision

**W**elcome to our spring Focus magazine. It's been a very busy few months for the Association as we look ahead to the future.

## Business Plan Launch

An £80m investment in quality homes forms a cornerstone of the Association's new plan to make the area a better place to live and work over the next five years.

Our vision for 2025 was developed alongside tenants, staff and partners and has at its heart improving digital services, tackling poverty and improving health and wellbeing - alongside ambitious plans for existing and new housing.

See all of our plans for the next five years on **page 4 & 5**.

## Courtyard Pantry opening

We've been amazed at the success of the Courtyard Pantry since it opened its doors in March.

The Pantry, located at the Courtyard Café on Westercommon Drive, is a partnership between the Association and mental health charity Flourish House.

Residents can become member of the Pantry for £1. Spending £2.50 per visit, customers will typically receive between £10-£15 worth of food and essential items.

Have a look on **page 7** to find out how you can become a member.

## Cedar UK award win

We were delighted to see the Cedar flats, three of Glasgow's most recognisable high-rise tower



blocks, win a major UK architecture award for their energy efficient refurbishment.

The multi-storeys picked up an Architects' Journal Retrofit Award in the housing category following the £16m improvements. Overall the refurbishment has achieved an 80% reduction in energy demand. Find out more on **page 26**.

We hope you're all keeping safe and well during these tough times.

*Shona Stephen*

**Chief Executive**

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# Instagram account coming soon



**L**ooking to find out the latest news and information, delve into the history of North Glasgow, or just see a nice picture of the Forth & Clyde Canal? We've got it all covered.

We'll be launching our very own association Instagram account soon.

Find out what's happening in your area and keep up-to-date with the latest news and events.

We'll also dig into the archives and look at Maryhill through a lens throughout the ages.

Follow our Facebook and Twitter pages to find out when we're going live.



[www.facebook.com/QueensCrossHousing/](http://www.facebook.com/QueensCrossHousing/)



[twitter.com/QueensCrossHA](https://twitter.com/QueensCrossHA)



We'll be featuring some of the best photos of the area

**Have any good or historic photos of the area? Send them in and we'll credit you and feature them on our page.**

Get in touch with Jordan Ruddy, Communications Officer, at [JRuddy@qcha.org.uk](mailto:JRuddy@qcha.org.uk).



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# £80m investment drive outlined in new five-year plan

**A**n £80m investment in quality homes forms a cornerstone of the Association's new plan to make the area a better place to live and work over the next five years.

The vision for 2025 was developed alongside tenants, staff and partners and has at its heart improving digital services, tackling poverty and improving health and wellbeing - alongside ambitious plans for existing and new housing.

'As the pandemic and economic downturn are hitting tenants harder than ever, we must do more than we've done before to help improve lives,' said chief executive, Shona Stephen.



'We know only too well the challenges tenants face and have the tools, the knowledge, the connections and the will to help tackle them head-on.'

Over the next five years the association will target resources at building and sustaining better neighbourhoods, creating greater life opportunities for local people and developing greener spaces and healthier communities.

Queens Cross believes providing safe, attractive neighbourhoods with well-designed and well managed homes is the cornerstone of any community.

To sustain this the plan is to invest £30m in existing homes to ensure they are modern and easy to heat





along with completing over half of the 600 planned new homes at Hamiltonhill. Hamiltonhill is one of the biggest social housing projects the city has seen in recent years with half of the total homes being built for social rent.

'Poverty continues to be a real and growing issue for far too many people living in Queens Cross. Our last household survey told us that many tenants find it difficult to pay for their basic necessities and some were already making hard choices about whether to eat or heat their home before the pandemic hit,' said Shona.

To help lift people's income levels the Association offers free, independent advice on money, benefits, debt and energy costs, is delivering a new Communities Opportunities project to target child poverty, and is working to increase internet access and skills across the community.

'Unfortunately research tells us the health of local people is still poorer than many other areas of the city and we need to use the levers we have available to do something about this,' Shona added.

'Over the past five years we have made a fantastic start in the transformation of Queens Cross. By 2025 we want to finish the job and make our neighbourhoods places people are choosing to live and work.'

As part of the new Hamiltonhill development Queens Cross will incorporate a new park, along with two new public squares and a community garden and in Woodside new planting, play spaces and streetscaping are planned.

To help people live more independently for longer, the association is planning to expand its support for older tenants through its Wellbeing Service.

A full version of 'Vision 2025'



is on the Association's website or or watch our 'Queens Cross Vision 2025' video on YouTube.

# COVID-19

## AN UPDATE ON TENANT SERVICES

**W**e hope you're staying safe and well. We want to reassure you that though some of our services are affected by the pandemic and the new lockdown, our staff are still working.

This leaflet tells you about the services available to you and how we can help with food, online activities and money, benefits and energy advice.

### GETTING IN TOUCH

Our offices remain closed so we can't meet you in person but we can talk face-to-face using smart phones or online.

You can get in touch with us **Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm** by:  
Calling **0808 143 2002** or emailing **contactus@qcha.org.uk**.

You can also use the QCHA app to stay in touch, this provides lots of options including checking and paying your rent, reporting essential repairs and updating the information we hold on you.

Download it from the App Store or Google Play. You'll need your tenancy number to set up an account but, if you don't know it, call us, we're happy to help.



### HOUSING SERVICES

Our housing teams are working and available should you want to discuss your Association tenancy, your rent payments or neighbourhood issues.

### REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

Current restrictions mean we can only carry out emergency or essential repairs and maintenance in homes where there is a risk to a household's health or safety.

### INSPECTIONS

Gas safety inspections continue. All other home inspections are postponed until further notice.

### HELP US AND YOURSELF TO STAY SAFE

Our staff follow Covid guidelines when they're in our tenants' homes for essential or emergency work.

Please help protect them and yourself and them by wearing a mask and adhering to social distancing measures when they visit.

## SUPPORT SERVICES

### ENERGY ADVICE

Looking for advice on reducing gas and electricity costs? We can provide support and advice on reducing fuel bills, managing fuel debt, switching supplier or applying for a fuel crisis payment.

Call us on **0808 143 2002** or email **energyadvice@qcha.org.uk**.

### FOOD DELIVERY SERVICE

We're working with local partners to deliver weekly food and essential supplies to those in need. More than 900 meals are being delivered to homes every week.

Call us on **0808 143 2002** to find out more.

### RENT AND MONEY ADVICE

If you're having difficulties paying your rent, it's important you contact our housing team as soon as you know there's a problem.

We can talk to you about paying your rent arrears in instalments, benefits you may be entitled to and support from our benefits and money advice services.

### WELLBEING ACTIVITIES

We're running lots of wellbeing activities for adults and children online. From cooking to fitness; yoga to mindfulness to free books from the Dolly Parton Library.

For information, visit the QCHA Social Regeneration Facebook page, call the team on **0808 143 2002** or email **socialregeneration@qcha.org.uk**

*Thank you and please stay safe*





# Courtyard Pantry opens to the community

**A** new food pantry aiming to help residents access healthy and affordable food has opened its doors in Westercommon.

The Courtyard Pantry, located at the Courtyard Café on Westercommon Drive, is a partnership between the Association and mental health charity Flourish House.

Residents can become member of the Pantry for £1. Spending £2.50 per visit, customers will typically receive between £10-£15 worth of food and essential items.

Dale Todd, pantry co-ordinator, said: "The response we've had so far from people in the shop has been overwhelmingly positive.

"People coming in have been really encouraging but also surprised at the quality of food we are offering.

"We want to make sure that no one is left out so the memberships are available to anyone, regardless of their situation."

The stock in the shop is made up of surplus food from supermarkets and other stores, where the food would normally be sent to landfill.

Dale continued: "We recognised that there was a demand for good quality food.

"After we got funding through our partnership with Queens Cross, we realised the food pantry model made the most sense for the way we were working and what was needed in the area."

The Courtyard Café still exists within the pantry but is currently only open for takeaway due to the pandemic.

"The cafe was really a great way for people to come in and have a chat.

"What is lovely about the pantry opening though is that you are seeing people queuing up but having a chat with people that they maybe haven't seen in several months.

"I think it shows the need for that interaction."



# INTRODUCING OUR NEW FAMILY WELLBEING PROJECT

**W**e've received funding from the Scottish Government Homelessness Prevention Fund to work with young families who are at higher risk of homelessness. There are many reasons why people may be at higher risk of homelessness and we know how hard Covid-19 has been on families.

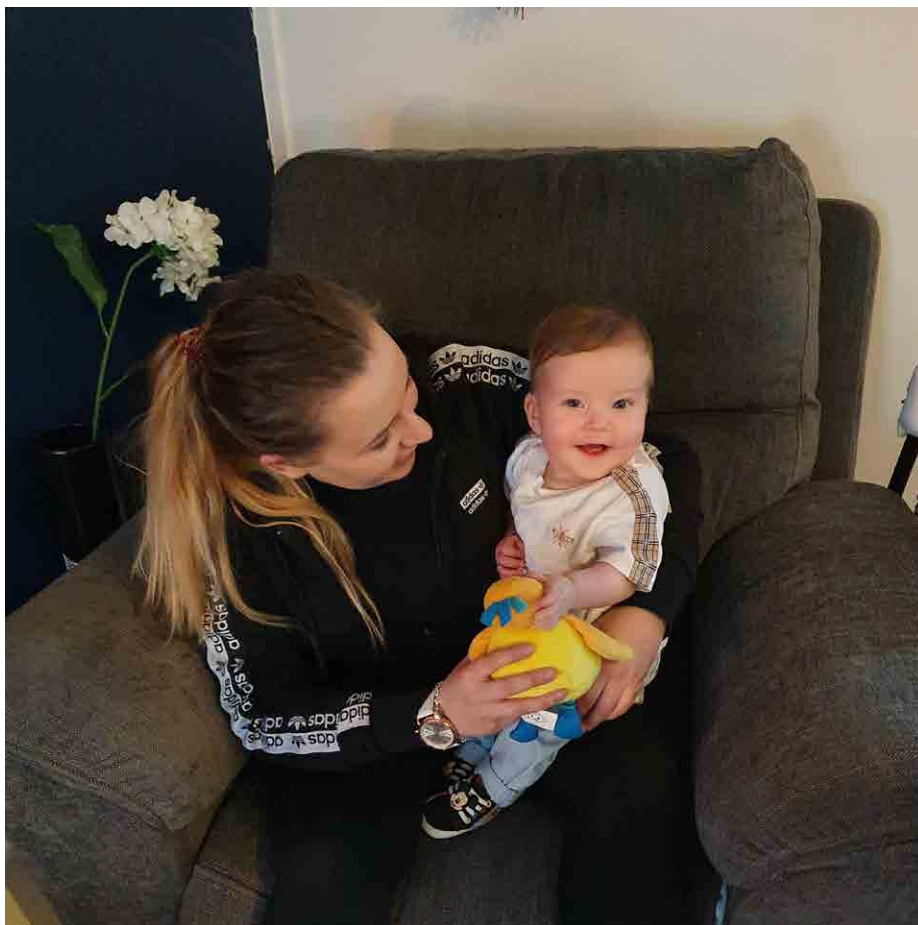
We are already working with several families and supporting them with the challenges they are facing. This has included maximising their income and accessing grants to help clear debts. We also help with purchasing essential household items, identifying more suitable accommodation and linking in with other services including schools and health.

Here's what some of the families that we are supporting think of the service:

"Our living condition was stressful and causing added stresses that we didn't need. Alana [Family Wellbeing Project Manager] helped us deal with issues which we find difficult like housing issues, setting up payment plans, help accessing grants and looking into moving flat. We also were grateful to receive a tablet which allows us to have video calls with health professionals and linking in with zoom community activities."

"I put off dealing with phone calls and letters in relation to debt. Having someone to go through this with me and help make these calls has made such a difference to getting my financial difficulties under control."

"My literacy is poor which affects my confidence. Having help dealing



with letters and phone calls has allowed me to feel more able to deal with this."

"I like that the contact can be flexible, I can text or call to arrange to meet or sometimes just have a chat about something over the phone. I know if I need advice I just get in contact."

If you think our Family Wellbeing service is something that would benefit you or you would like more information get in contact with

Alana Stewart, our Family Wellbeing Project Manager- [familywellbeing@qcha.org.uk](mailto:familywellbeing@qcha.org.uk) or phone 0808 143 2002.



We have also launched our own dedicated Twitter page. Follow 'QCHA Family Wellbeing @FamilyQCHA' to keep up-to-date with the project



# Funding secured for Wellbeing 60+ Intervention Service



**G**lasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership have confirmed another year's funding for the Association's Wellbeing 60+ Intervention service.

The team have continued to work in the frontline over the last year, delivering the intervention service to 623 people in their own homes.

Typically working with people

for 4- 6 weeks, the team have been taking people home from hospital, providing tailored one-to-one support to improve mobility and helping build confidence and independence.

They have also been providing personal care to people with multiple health and life limiting conditions.

The service has also managed to

support 33 people move into new wellbeing 60+ homes during the last year.

The Intervention Service is free and open to everyone living in North West Glasgow (not just Queens Cross tenants).

To find out more, call us on **0141 945 4371** or email at **contactus@qcha.org.uk**.

Crossword answers for page 30 - **don't look if you haven't done it yet!**

**Across:** 1 Applaud, 5 Pastor, 9 Advantage, 10 Undue, 11 Mats, 12 Dumping, 15 Sultana, 16 Israel, 17 Tic, 19 Twillit, 21 Easiest, 24 Haymaker, 25 Etna, 28 Drive, 29 Rembrandt, 30 Beat up, 31 Shortly.  
**Down:** 1 Alarmist, 2 Pivotal, 3 Anna, 4 Dean, 5 Prejudiced, 6 Sculptress, 7 Old-time, 8 Reign, 13 Parliament, 14 Rattletrap, 18 Stealthy, 20 Wayside, 22 Extinct, 23 Shady, 26 Xmas, 27 Thio.



# New Energy Advice Service launched

**A**fter a successful joint bid between Queens Cross and Maryhill Housing Association, we now have an Energy Advice service running across the two organisations. Jacquie Flannery joined our Financial Inclusion Team as an Energy Advisor from November 2020, just in time for the cold spell!

Jacquie has years of experience working in the sector and has already been incredibly busy helping our tenants with their various energy enquiries and issues.

## Helping you save money

One of the first tenants Jacquie helped was referred to her from our Wellbeing team. After establishing that he was paying too much for his energy bills, our energy advice service helped him switch supplier, saving him £85 a year.

The team also found that he was eligible for the Winter Fuel Payment and the Warm Home Discount scheme. Totalling £340, this has allowed him to keep his home warmer for longer and manage his bills.

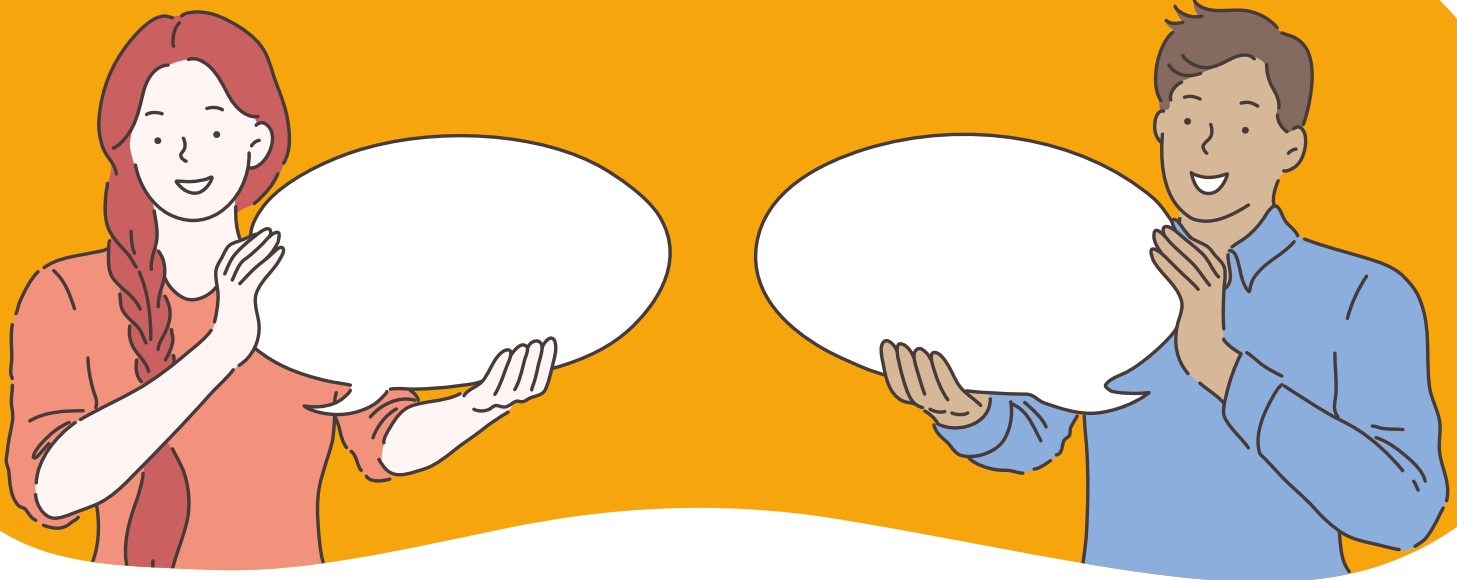
## Get in touch with us

There are a lot of things we can do to help you with your energy, whether it is looking at options in how to manage any fuel debt that you have accumulated, switching supplier, useful tips and guides to ensure that you are getting the best out of your heating, or just making sure you're getting all the financial support that is available to you with regard to heating costs.

If you would like a phone appointment please call the Contact Centre on **0808 143 2002**.

The improvements at Cedar have saved residents money on their energy bills





# BREAKING LANGUAGE BARRIERS IN THE COMMUNITY

**Our Language for All project has helped many tenants in the community where English isn't their first language.**

As an Association we knew that a number of our tenants and factored owners don't speak English as their primary language, and were not getting the help they needed.

Through offering the support of interpreters and translation services, we have helped bridge that gap.

We recently supported a Sudanese tenant who found herself isolated in her local community due to her lack of confidence speaking English. By working with the Language for All team, we helped her apply for a carers allowance and renew her disability living allowance for one of her children.

We also supported her in applying for our Community Chest fund which helped her access items for her five children.

We have worked with tenants from multiple backgrounds including Polish, Arabic, Urdu, Farsi, Kurdish, Cantonese and Mandarin. We ensure that appointment slots are long enough so that the right conversations can be had so we can help you, whether that is applying for a new benefit or getting help from one of our other services, such

as energy advice.

Inclusion is a key word for us, not just within Financial Inclusion Service, but within Queens Cross Housing Association. Our Language for All project is part of this aim to be as inclusive as possible. If there is anything else that we could be doing, that we aren't, then please let us know.

## What is Language for All?

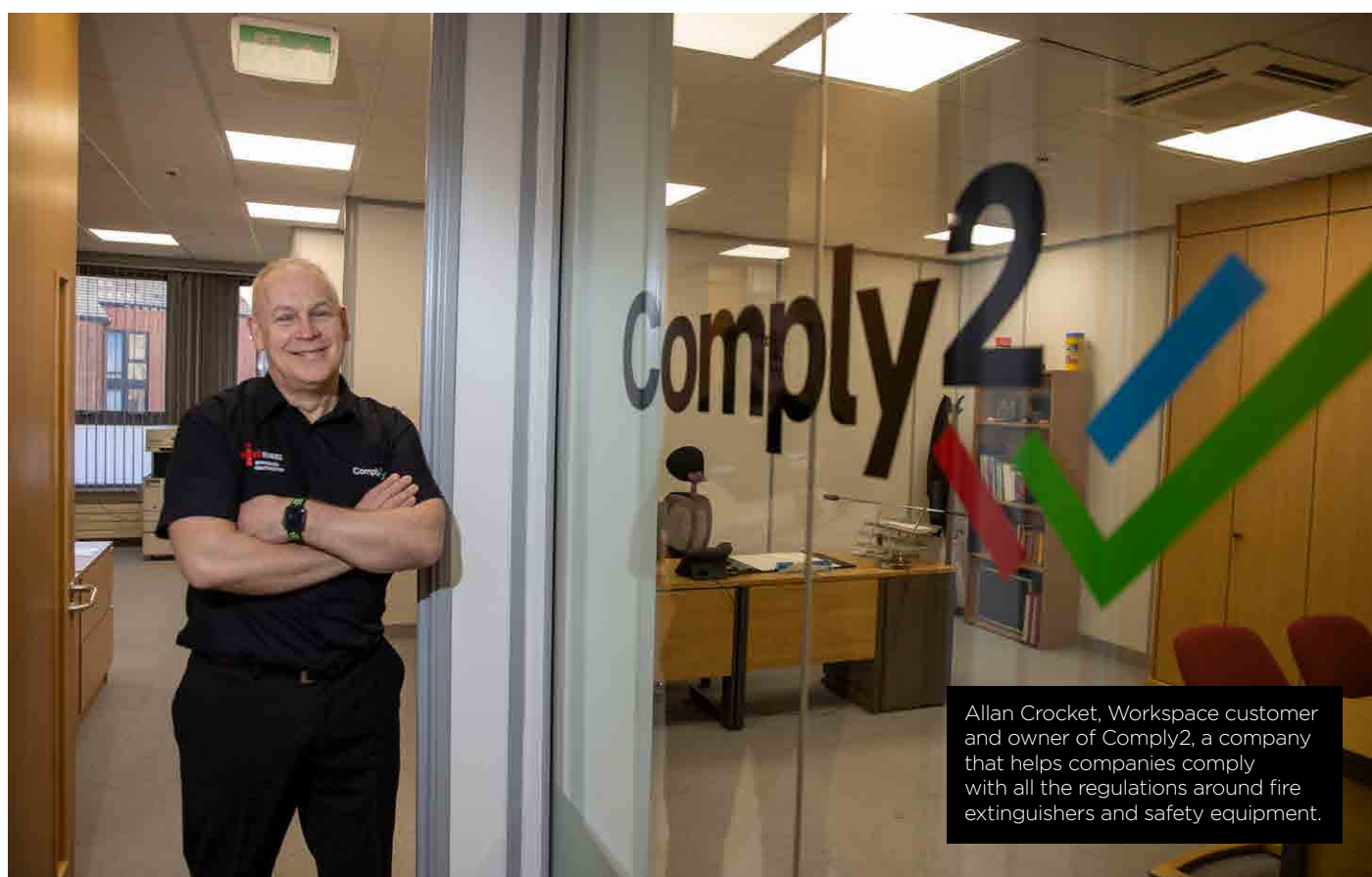
Language for All is a project that has been delivered by our Financial Inclusion service since October 2020. Its aim is simple; to ensure that, whatever your first language is, you can access help to our benefits and money advice service.

We offer three way appointments between you, a member of our Financial Inclusion team and a dedicated interpreter, allowing you to discuss your finances, carry out a benefit calculation and apply for any additional income that you may be missing out on. We ensure that any subsequent paperwork is given to you in your preferred language. This service is also available with our Energy Advisor as well.

# Queens Cross Workspace



*- WORKING HARD FOR BUSINESS GROWTH*



Allan Crocket, Workspace customer and owner of Comply2, a company that helps companies comply with all the regulations around fire extinguishers and safety equipment.

**T**he new Queens Cross Workspace Business Plan is about to launch.

Setting out its vision to the year 2025, Workspace continues its mission to build and support the local economy.

By providing local employment opportunities and skills development, underpinned by providing a wide range of affordable business premises, Workspace will promote community enterprise and play a key role in creating thriving, dynamic neighbourhoods.

As part of the Queens Cross Group of companies, it will contribute to building a wellbeing economy in the Queens Cross area with the ultimate goal of creating a fairer, more sustainable, society.

For Queens Cross Workspace, this means that the business plan to 2025 has a particular focus on nurturing small businesses and community-focussed enterprise.

**If you're interested in finding out more about Workspace and our business premises, call us on 0141 576 0210, email [info@qcgroup.co.uk](mailto:info@qcgroup.co.uk) or visit [www.qcgroup.co.uk](http://www.qcgroup.co.uk)**



# Spring start anticipated for Hamiltonhill first phase



**D**espite the difficulties of the past year, the Association has continued to make progress with the development at Hamiltonhill.

With completion of the advanced grouting works to the north area sites, work on the first phase of housing is expected to start in spring 2021. This phase will cover the street blocks bounded by Bardowie Street, Carbeth Street, Stonyhurst Street and Hobart Street.

Taking three years to complete, this work will provide 178 flats and houses for rent, with a further 30 houses for private sale.

Strict procedures and traffic management protocols will be put in place to minimise disruption to residents and more details will be provided to local residents closer to the anticipated start date.



## Parks and open spaces



**P**reparation work on the area of the new parks and open spaces will begin later this year, with a plan to start constructing the new parks in spring 2022.

The parks and open spaces are planned to be completed by spring 2023, coinciding with the first of the new homes available for use.

We're currently consulting with local residents on the play areas of the parks. Keep an eye on our social media channels to have your say on the proposals.

We've also updated our website to give a more detailed look at the plans for Hamiltonhill. Have a look for yourself at [qcha.org.uk](http://qcha.org.uk).

# RENT & SERVICE CHARGE INCREASE 2021/22



**T**hank you to everyone who took part in the Association's rent consultation at the end of 2020.

The number of tenants who responded was lower than last year. This wasn't too surprising as we weren't able to arrange events or sit down with tenants as we would normally do, to discuss the proposed rent increase, because of Covid-19 restrictions.

**But we did receive more than 400 returns so I and other Board members felt we had enough feedback on which to make a decision and to confirm the rent increase at 0.7%.**

We consulted on a single figure this year because we know the pandemic and economic downturn are hitting our tenants harder than ever. Many Board members are tenants themselves and know only too well the challenges local people are facing.

The small increase proposed will allow us to continue to deliver existing services alongside

an ambitious investment and development programme. Our new business plan for 2020-25, Choose to Live Here, Choose to Work Here, outlines how we intend to spend £80m over the next five years improving our homes and the local environment and building new homes.

Sadly our research tells us the health of local people is still poorer than many other areas of the city. We also know that poor health and low incomes often go hand in hand. More than 30 people asked us to get in touch with money and benefits advice through the rent consultation survey.

If you are struggling to pay your rent or other bills, our Financial Inclusion Team provide free, independent advice on debt and energy costs as well as money and benefits.

We also work with local partners on a number of food support programmes so please do call us if you want to find out about any of these services.

Although the first months of 2021 have brought more challenges to all of us in getting through the Covid-19 pandemic, the

Association Board is completely committed to doing everything it can to support the local community now and to deliver a programme that gives our young people hope for the future.

Take care of yourselves and thank you for your continued support.



**Marilyn Clewes**  
Chair

## WHAT TENANTS TOLD US ABOUT THE RENT INCREASE PROPOSAL

This year **405 tenants** responded to the rent increase consultation.

*What you told us:*

**247 people  
(64%) voted  
for the 0.7%  
increase**

**88 people  
(22%) voted  
against the  
0.7% increase**

**56 people  
(14%) voted  
'Don't Know'  
for the 0.7%  
increase**



# We're changing the way we let our houses

**T**his summer we are working on a new way to let our houses to make applying for a house easier.

The new system is Choice Based Letting and will be called 'Find My Home'. All of our empty houses will be advertised and applicants will be able to note their interest for the properties that they would like to be considered for. We're planning to introduce this new model by September 2021.

The benefits of our new system will be:

- Increased visibility – you can see what properties are available
- Increased choice – you choose what properties to apply for
- Increased flexibility – you can apply and make changes to your application online

We're also changing how we award levels of priority to make the process easier to understand:

- Every applicant will be awarded a priority band based on their housing circumstances
- There are 4 priority bands
- Points will no longer be awarded

## Next Steps

We will continue to update our customers over the coming months. Please check our website or speak to your Housing Officer for further information.

In the coming months we will be contacting all applicants. We will provide further information about what you need to do to change over to the new system.

## Help & Assistance

Many people will welcome the convenience and flexibility of an online system. However we recognise that some of our customers will require help with this. Our staff will be available to provide advice and when required we will complete the form on your behalf.



# WOODSIDE LIBRARY CONSULTATION HELD AHEAD OF £1.9M INVESTMENT

**L**ocal residents were given the chance to have their say on what improvements they would like to see for Woodside library.

Charity Glasgow Life, who run the library, launched the consultation in January, with the library set to receive a £1.9m investment thanks to Glasgow City Council's Community Asset Fund.

One of Glasgow's Carnegie libraries, Woodside Library has served the people of the city since 1905. Refurbishment works will see the original dome restored and heating systems renewed.

You can keep up-to-date with the findings of the consultation online by visiting [glasgowlife.org.uk](http://glasgowlife.org.uk).



## Cycle stores installed at Woodside

**T**wo new cycle stores have been installed at Woodside thanks to funding from Cycling Scotland and Glasgow City Council.

The lockable shelters at Raglan Street and Braid Square can securely hold up to 44 bicycles, making it easier for residents to safely own a bike when storage at their own home isn't an option.

Lack of space for secure cycle storage was highlighted as a barrier to bicycle use in the area.

It costs £12 per year to store your bike in one of the cycle shelters. Get in touch with us on **0808 143 2002** or [contactus@qcha.org.uk](mailto:contactus@qcha.org.uk) to enquire about booking a place.







## SUCCESSFUL CONSULTATION ON WOODSIDE TRANSFORMATION PLANS

**P**lans to transform the landscape of Woodside have moved a step closer after the Association held successful consultation events with local residents.

Over 100 people had their say on detailed designs drawn up by Woodside Making Places for the future of the area.

Residents had the chance to share their views online, by telephone and through virtual 'town hall' events held by the Association on Zoom.

The next steps will see Queens Cross submit a planning application to Glasgow City Council in April, with the long-term aim that work will begin on site in January 2022.

The ambitious vision will transform the streets of



Woodside, creating attractive green-spaces, play areas and courtyards.

The project will also work in conjunction with Connecting Woodside and see new cycle

routes installed in the area towards the city centre.

To see the full range of detailed designs for Woodside, have a look on the dedicated website at [woodsidemakingplaces.org.uk](http://woodsidemakingplaces.org.uk).

# Association Board

## 'INNOVATIVE AND EFFECTIVE'

**G**uidance and advice offered by the Association's Board is 'innovative and effective' according to a leading industry accreditation scheme.

The Board has been recognised for its positive approach in its own development by Remarkable, the business consultancy that delivers the internationally recognised **We Invest In People** accreditation.

Remarkable worked with Board members on successfully developing and assessing its suitability for its **Developing Remarkable Boards** certification.

'The passion and commitment of Queens Cross Board members is clear in how they have created a culture that goes beyond effective controls and decision making.

'Collaboration and creativity are now firmly at the forefront of the Board's thinking and they should be commended for their innovative and effective approaches to delivering the best for Queens Cross tenants and the wider community,' said Remarkable's chief executive, Bonnie Clarke.

Organisations awarded Remarkable Board status must demonstrate effective direction in building an organisation's capability, performance, productivity, motivation and morale.

Association Chair, Marilyn Clewes said:

'The Board is hugely important in guiding the overall direction of the association. Not only in making sure that we do the day-to-day job of giving the best possible service to our tenants, but how we work to



realise the vision of making Queens Cross one of the best places to live and work in the city.

'This award is a great endorsement and recognition of the invaluable role Board members play in providing guidance and advice to the management team, enabling us to continue to transform the area for the better.'

The Specialist assessor particularly liked the Board's approach to

recruiting younger people with the offer of a bursary to help with studies, tied to a period of Board service to help with their vocational development.

They were also very complementary of Queens Cross's commitment to continual learning and development to increase Board members' knowledge and understanding of the role a Board plays in the third sector.





# Green light for plans at Burnbank Gardens

**P**lans by Queens Cross and Glasgow West Housing Association to deliver a new social housing development in Burnbank Gardens have been granted planning approval.

The two housing associations have been given permission to build 48 one and two-bedroom flats specifically suited to older people.

Situated just off St George's Cross, Burnbank Gardens is a crescent of Victorian townhouses and tenements set around a communal garden, and is part of the Glasgow West Conservation Area.

Designed by architectural company Anderson Bell + Christie, the new development will replace a derelict hostel built in 1961 and

currently owned by Glasgow City Council.

Each upper floor of the block will have a sun-deck and balconies for residents to socialise in the fresh air, whilst the ground floor has a communal landscaped garden. The six-storey building will be designed using blonde sandstone material at the front that will blend in with the Conservation Area character, and facing brick at the rear.

"We are delighted that planning permission has now been granted for this development. This is a popular area so it is great news that we will be able to bring some much needed new social housing to a derelict site," said Queens Cross Housing Association's director of property,



enterprise and regeneration, Rona Anderson.

"With an emphasis on building housing particularly suited for older people we and our partner Glasgow West Housing Association will be meeting a demand that is only likely to grow in future."

The completed flats will be divided equally between the housing associations.

# Rent an electric vehicle with Co-Wheels Car Club

**L**ooking for a cheaper alternative to owning a car? Hire an electric vehicle from Co-Wheels today!

The Association are continuing to work in partnership with Co-Wheels Car Club to provide residents with access to a vehicle without the costs of car ownership.

Two cars, one based at 45 Firhill Road and one at The Courtyard at Westercommon, can be rented by tenants, residents, staff and local businesses for as long or as little as you need.

Visit [co-wheels.org.uk](http://co-wheels.org.uk) to get started.



## Keeping you safe during the pandemic

**T**o keep residents safe, we're taking extra measures to make sure our vehicles are Covid safe before every journey.

As well as continuing with our existing internal procedures, we are following the latest guidance set out by the UK Government to ensure the highest level of cleanliness for all of our members.

Each Co-wheels vehicle is professionally cleaned regularly. Our professional cleaning team

has been supplied with microshield anti-bacterial solution which is used as part of their usual routine.

Our cleaning team is paying extra attention to high contact areas within each vehicle such as door handles, switch gear and the steering wheel.

Any vehicles where members have reported they are suspected to be positive for COVID-19 are closed down for 7-days and deep cleaned.



### Pay As You Go Car Hire

Queens Cross are working with Co-Wheels to provide car hire to local residents and businesses.

Find out more at [www.co-wheels.org.uk](http://www.co-wheels.org.uk)





Libby's our Garscube charity patron and community force to be reckoned with

# LIBBY MCARTHUR

Our columnist and charity patron.

## LOCH DOON

**H**ere we are one year later and still on our staycation at Loch Doon. If only it felt like a holiday instead of a worry. Seems to me the first-time round there was a sense of a reawakening about the stuff that really mattered. Extended family, friends, hugs were never to be taken for granted again. That and a spirit of the Blitz. I'd be at my door hollering a Woo-hoo and banging pot lids together come a Thursday night. Now though, it feels like to hope for any kind of return to normal feels naive.

I never thought I'd ever say the words, thank God for Universal Credit but at first Covid took away all my ways to earn. Recently though I've been working with 'Streetcones' doing drama. The project is called 'The Road to Change' as it's always under construction! These workshops are with folk who have been served 'Community Pay Back Orders' for debt related crimes. Hard to imagine during the pandemic folk might be jailed for debt! Instead, this work offers the chance

for something redemptive and restorative, through learning from lived experience and constructing a path to change through self-expression.

I've got a pal who is a veteran of the criminal justice system. He claims that when a youngster ends up in the dock, is that not proof that they've suffered enough? He says, 'Change for the better needs to be felt no' telt'.

I've done some time inside. That is, I've taken drama workshops into various prisons. I was once involved in making a film in Cortonvale. I said to the lassies, to much scoffing, 'Acting is hard work by the end you'll all be knackered!'

When done filming at the WRAP party, the actor playing the lead role admitted, 'Libby was pure right by the way, at the end of it, all I wanted tae dae, was to get back to ma cell'.

We all feel like we've done a bit of time here at Loch Doon. I've been thinking about time recently not least because I'll be 60 soon. The other day, I flung the ball for

the dog, with one of these bendy scoop launcher thingies. It was a huge throw and from out of my side pocket went my mobile phone soaring into the air! I've been mobile-less for a week now. Being without it has been interesting. I've been able to see how often I'd be looking to it for my life!

Unexpectedly I started doing things I'd been putting off, painting, clearing, writing! All of it I could have done with my phone there, but it was as if the turnkey had opened the cell door and I was no longer 'dubbed up'.

I'm hoping to get my vaccine soon! I cannot wait to unite with me and mine, to break bread and raise our glasses to our connection to each other, this is the stuff of a life well lived!

**'It's not what we have done, but what we can become!'**

**[www.streetcones.org](http://www.streetcones.org)**

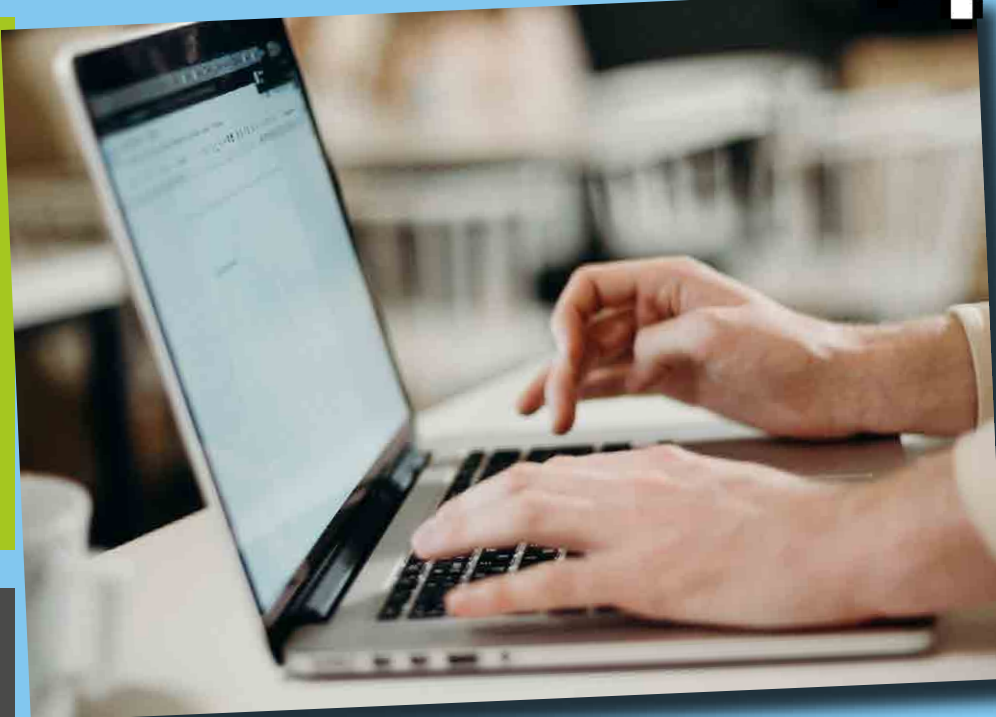
# Online events and weekly activities

## ONLINE COOKING CLASSES WITH VEG POWER

We're cooking up a feast with weekly cooking classes on Zoom!

Learn healthy, new recipes; from cauliflower and sweet potato curry to tasty veggie burgers. A great activity for all the family to try out.

Every Thursday from 1-3pm.



## ONLINE COMPUTER CAFÉ

Our Zoom classes focus on learning the basics of using computers, tablets and mobile phones.

We'll spend time learning and building your confidence to use you devices more effectively, helping you contact friends and family, save money online and improve your lockdown experience.

Get personalised help from the tutors and chat to others taking part.

Every Monday from 11.30am-2pm.

## ART THERAPY

Boost your skills and improve your health and wellbeing with our online art therapy classes.

All levels of experience welcome. Our classes are delivered by a trained artist using Zoom.

Free starter pack includes a sketch pad, pastels pencils, pallet and paints.

Every Wednesday from 2-3pm

To find out more about our full range of activities or book your place onto any of our classes, call our social regeneration team on **0808 143 2002**, visit our website at **[qcha.org.uk](http://qcha.org.uk)** or see our Facebook page 'QCHA Social Regeneration' to find out how you can take part.



# CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATION



Yan Shi playing the guqin, a traditional Chinese instrument



Our Chinese New Year event was a little different this year but proved a success with over 150 people joining in on our virtual celebration.

February's Zoom event saw a range of talented musicians and artists perform a mix of traditional Chinese music and dance.

Yan Shi, an art teacher at Glasgow Chinese School and an amateur performer, took part in the celebrations.

Miss the show? You can still watch on our YouTube channel. Just search for Queens Cross Housing Association to find it.



## CAFÉ CONVERSATIONS!


We will be running a series of virtual meet-ups this year to get your views on how we are doing and how we can all work together for a bright future for Queens Cross.

Stay tuned on our website and social media channels for updates and info on how to take part.

# Focused on Performance

We want to keep you up-to-date with how our services perform. Every three months we produce reports that show how we're doing against our yearly targets. Key Performance Indicators are reported to our Board members and here are some of the results we think you'll be most interested in.

## QUARTER 3: 1ST OCTOBER TO 31ST DECEMBER 2020



### Rent

Q3 Performance - Oct, Nov, December 2020


Unpaid Rent

1.9%

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Average number of days to re-let empty properties

38 days



### Repairs

Q3 Performance - Oct, Nov, December 2020

Repairs completed right first time

97%

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Routine repairs completed on time (within 5 working days)

100%

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Urgent repairs completed on time (within 2 working days)

99.9%

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Emergency repairs completed on time (within 4hrs)

100%



### Gas

Q3 Performance - Oct, Nov, December 2020

All gas safety checks were completed on or prior to their anniversary date which gives us 100% completion rate once again.

100%

All tenants have a responsibility to let us access their home so that we can carry out these vital safety checks.

**If you think your gas service is overdue, call us today on 0808 143 2002 and schedule an appointment.**



### Customer Satisfaction

Q3 Performance - Oct, Nov, December 2020

Satisfaction with Repairs service\*

92%

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Satisfaction with the Customer Contact Centre\*

80%

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic our average number of days to re-let empty properties is above target, however we have seen improvements in our performance from the previous quarter. We are currently experiencing challenges with energy providers and meter replacements, which has resulted in delays. We are monitoring our performance closely and staff are working hard to address issues and let properties as soon as they are available.

Thank you for the feedback you give us. Without it, we wouldn't know how our services are doing.



# Your services, **your say**

## Complaints

In October, November, and December 2020 we received **92** complaints. When you complain, we aim to investigate and then reply to you within **5 working days**.

If you're unhappy with the response we give you at this stage, we'll move your complaint on to the second stage (stage 2) and aim to reply within **20 working days**.

We always try to deal with your complaint quickly. However, if it is clear that the matter needs a detailed investigation, we may move to stage 2 in the first instance, but we'll tell you and make sure you're kept up-to-date.

### Complaints results

**48%**

43 complaints upheld

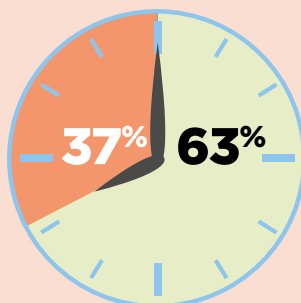
**21%**

19 complaints partially upheld

**33%**

30 complaints not upheld

### Complaints responded to within timescales



58 complaints responded to within timescale

34 complaints responded to outwith timescale

## Compliments

We received 51 compliments from customers from October- December 2020.

Here are some of the things customers said:

**"Thank you so much for your help. You cannot imagine how happy we are to receive a gift voucher from you. As you know that digital technology does come with a good cost, so I have invested vouchers in a good laptop and a top-up. My old device had very little storage to download further software. I can assure this will be used for good educational purposes! Once again thank you for your support."**

**"I've recently had assistance from the Financial Inclusion team. I'd like to pass my thanks and appreciation for their assistance; especially Stephen Craig who helped me enormously and is a credit to the team."**

**"Just wanted to say a big thank you to everyone. From the housing staff to the volunteers who have helped us over the years but especially throughout the last year, the support has been incredible, I really do appreciate it!"**

## Learning from complaints

Here are some improvements we've made as a result of the complaints we received:

**You said:** A carer called about an elderly tenant, who had fallen in their flat. There was a key in the lock on the inside so the carer could not get in. The caretaker who attended struggled to open the door and persevered when it would have been more appropriate to call for assistance.

**We did:** Apologised to the tenant and family for distress caused

Organised 'take access' training for staff who attended

Offered as a gesture of goodwill to fit a thumb turn lock (allowing security without the need for keys to be left in the door).

We are working hard to respond to complaints within timescale and seek resolutions that customers are happy with. If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please let us know what we can do to resolve it.

### Don't forget to tell us how we're doing

qcha.org.uk

queenscrosshousing @queenscrosssha

0808 143 2002

contactus@qcha.org.uk

45 Firhill Road, Glasgow, G20 7BE

# UK award for transformed Cedar flats

**T**hree of Glasgow's most recognisable high-rise tower blocks have won a major UK architecture award for their energy efficient refurbishment.

The Queens Cross Housing Association flats at St George's Cross picked up an Architects' Journal Retrofit Award in the housing category.

The development saw off a field of 83 entries from across the country to win the award. The Retrofit Awards celebrate the design expertise behind the renewal and repurposing of existing buildings.

The refit of the flats was designed and managed by Collective Architecture with a brief to make 314 homes as energy efficient as possible. Overall the refurbishment has achieved an 80% reduction in energy demand.

Project architect Rupert Daly said:

"We took a fabric first approach to radically reduce energy demand and associated carbon emissions. The energy savings would be locked into the building's fabric. By retrofitting rather than demolishing, the whole life carbon footprint of these buildings is likely to be closer to net zero than most new builds."

"We're delighted that the judges saw the value of our approach. Retaining and retrofitting an existing building

**WINNER**  
**AJ RETROFIT AWARDS 2021**

is always more sustainable and preferable to rebuilding one if at the same time the energy usage can be reduced through fabric improvement."

The £16 million project is the most ambitious Queens Cross has ever taken on.

All three blocks have improved low energy lighting, new insulation, modern controllable heating and hot water systems and triple glazed windows. In addition new lifts and refuse areas have been installed along with enclosed balconies and increased security systems.

"The overall impact of the refurbishment is significant for our residents and communities and we want to share our congratulations with Collective Architecture and our investment team for their work in transforming these homes.

"Our objective was to transform them in to some of our most desirable homes, to improve residents' lives and enhance the city skyline and our investment has paid off," said Queen's Cross's Director of Property, Enterprise & Regeneration, Rona Anderson.





# Queens Cross achieves Investors in People gold standard

**T**he Association is delighted to have reached the Investors in People gold level following a recent assessment.

The accreditation is based on employee feedback gathered through surveys and onsite staff interviews with an independent specialist.

The gold level award is a reflection of the hard work that staff at the association have put in to provide excellent services to tenants and customers.

“Achieving Investors in People (IIP) at gold level is a fantastic achievement for everyone at Queens Cross,” said Queens Cross Chief Executive, Shona Stephen.

“It’s an endorsement of the tremendous work of our employees, who create an engaging and inclusive

**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™**  
We invest in people Gold

workplace where talented people choose to work.

“By working together as a team, each one of our employees plays a role in making a positive difference to the lives of our tenants.

“Through measuring ourselves against a rigorous external framework, we ensure that our people are trained, developed and motivated to provide outstanding services.”

## JADE WINS INSPIRING YOUNG PROFESSIONAL AWARD

**Q**ueens Cross housing officer Jade Holbein has won the Inspiring Young Professional award at the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) Scotland Awards.

The accolade recognises Jade’s hard work as she approaches 10 years working at the Association.

Jade started her career in the housing industry by completing a business and administration modern apprenticeship run by the Glasgow North Regeneration Agency, before joining Queens Cross in 2011.

After working in the executive office, Jade progressed to the housing team where she currently manages a patch of approximately 270 houses.

From everyone at Queens Cross, well done Jade!





## Keep your contact details up-to-date

**I**t's important to keep your contact details updated. Keeping them up-to-date means you'll never miss call or text reminders for appointments and important updates from the association.

It also decreases the amount of post delivered to tenants, helping the environment by reducing our carbon footprint.

It's easy to change your details:

- Download our QC App



- Call us on **0808 143 2002** or email **contactus@qcha.org.uk**

# Christmas food hamper success

**Q**ueens Cross' Christmas food hamper appeal was a fantastic success with over 60 hampers delivered to tenants.

Thanks to the generosity of the association's contractors and Queens Cross staff, the food deliveries were able to bring some Christmas cheer to tenants in need.

OPC Energy contributed food, WA Building and Stone gave cash and P&D Scotland purchased, made up and delivered 25 hampers filled with non-perishable food and sweet treats directly to tenants.

P&D Scotland also very kindly donated 53 selection boxes which were included in children's Christmas stockings.

Thanks to everyone for their kind generosity over the festive season!



# Tribute to Bridget McGeechan

*Bridget McGeechan: 7 October 1938 - 1 February 2021*

**Q**ueens Cross would like to pay tribute to Bridget McGeechan, Chairperson of the Garscube Community Foundation, who sadly passed away in February. Bridget was a former board member of the Association and one of the founding members of The Garscube Community Foundation, which was established in 2004.

Bridget believed passionately about helping people and tackling poverty and inequality. In her position as Chairperson of the Garscube Community Foundation, Bridget gave her support to fundraising efforts that raised thousands of pounds for local community organisations and individuals looking to improve their lives.

Board members of the Community Foundation and Queens Cross staff will miss her dearly. During the pandemic Bridget continued to chair the Charity's meeting from home, joining the meetings on her tablet.

Bridget also volunteered at the Citizens Theatre and the Glasgow Film Theatre.

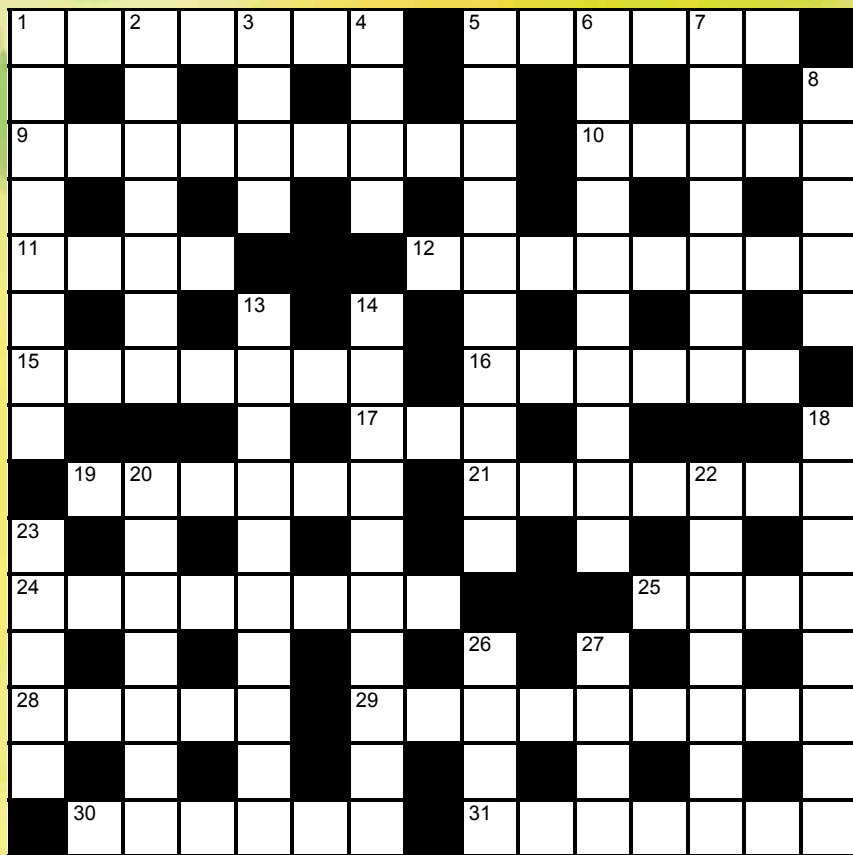
Bridget's family have requested that anyone wishing to make a donation can do so to the Garscube Community Foundation in Bridget's honour. Donations can be made via their JustGiving page - <https://www.justgiving.com/garscubecommunityfoundation>

Our thoughts and condolences are with her family and friends at this sad time.



# Feeling Puzzled?

## Crossword

**Across**

- 1 Clap (7)
- 5 Priest (6)
- 9 Benefit (9)
- 10 Unwarranted (5)
- 11 Floor coverings (4)
- 12 Rounded mass of steamed dough (8)
- 15 Seedless raisin (7)
- 16 East Mediterranean democracy (6)
- 17 Involuntary muscular contraction (3)
- 19 Dusky (6)
- 21 Least difficult (7)
- 24 Knockout punch (8)
- 25 Sicilian volcano (4)
- 28 Compel (5)
- 29 Dutch master (9)
- 30 Work over (4,2)
- 31 Soon (7)

**Down**

- 1 Scaremonger (8)
- 2 Crucial (7)
- 3 "Black Beauty" author --- Sewell (4)
- 4 Faculty head (4)
- 5 Biased (10)
- 6 Statue-maker (10)
- 7 Bygone (3-4)
- 8 Prevail (5)
- 13 Legislative assembly (10)
- 14 Rickety vehicle (10)
- 18 Furtive (8)
- 20 Edge of the road (7)
- 22 Permanently inactive (7)
- 23 Fly-by-night (5)
- 26 Yuletide (4)
- 27 Group of three (4)

**Sudoku**

			4		5		2	3
					9	1		
	7	6		2			9	8
				6			8	
2	5	4				7	3	6
	6			3				
6	4			9		8	1	
		8	2					
7	2		8		6			

**Spot 10 differences**



# Useful Contact Numbers

## ADVICE

Citizens Advice (Maryhill and Possilpark)  
0141 948 0204

## CITY COUNCIL

Anti-social behaviour 0800 0273 901  
Cleansing and recycling 0141 287 9700  
Roads and lighting faults 0800 37 36 35

## ENERGY

British Gas 0800 048 0202  
Scottish Water 0800 077 8778  
Scottish Power: 0800 027 0072

## HEALTH

NHS 24: 111  
Queen Elizabeth University Hospital: 0141 201 1100  
Woodside Health and Care Centre: 0141 201 5500

## FOODBANK

Glasgow NW Foodbank: 0141 959 9813

## POLICE AND EMERGENCY

Police/Fire/Accident Emergency: 999  
Police non-emergency: 101

## SCHOOLS

Dunard Primary: 0141 946 1417  
Oakgrove Primary: 0141 332 6210  
Saracen Primary: 0141 336 8428  
St Charles Primary: 0141 946 1391  
St Joseph's Primary: 0141 332 7836



# GET IN TOUCH

**Main Office**  
45 Firhill Road,  
Glasgow, G20 7BE

**The Courtyard**  
2 Westercommon Drive,  
Glasgow, G22 5PG

**Dundasvale  
Housing Office**  
2 Dundasvale Court,  
ground floor.  
Glasgow G4 0DF

**QC Factoring**  
45 Firhill Road,  
Glasgow, G20 7BE  
Tel: 0141 561 1105  
Email: [info@qcgroup.co.uk](mailto:info@qcgroup.co.uk)  
Website: [www.qcfactoring.co.uk](http://www.qcfactoring.co.uk)

For all our offices,  
call 0808 143 2002

Email:  
[contactus@qcha.org.uk](mailto:contactus@qcha.org.uk)

Website:  
[www.qcha.org.uk](http://www.qcha.org.uk)



## Report a repair Call us on 0808 143 2002\*

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

\*free from a BT landline - calls from mobile phones and other providers may be charged

### Emergencies

We provide an emergency repairs service. Call us on 0808 143 2002 if you need an emergency repair at weekends or Monday to Friday when our offices are closed.



### P&D Scotland

Our repairs service is provided by P&D Scotland Ltd. All staff carry identity badges so please ask to see their badge when they call at your home.

## EASTER HOLIDAYS

Our routine services will be closed on **Friday 2 and Monday 5 April** for the Easter holiday. For emergencies during this time, call us on **0808 143 2002**.



## YOUR LOCAL COUNCILLORS

### Ward 10: Anderston, Yorkhill, City

- Eva Bolander (SNP)
- Phillip Braat (Labour)
- Christy Mearns (Scottish Green)
- Angus Millar (SNP)

### Ward 11: Hillhead

- Ken Andrew (SNP)
- Hanzala Malik (Labour)
- Martha Wardrop (Scottish Green)

### Ward 16: Canal

- Allan Gow (SNP)
- Gary Gray (Labour)
- Jacqueline McLaren (SNP)
- Robert Mooney (Labour)

Councillors can be contacted at Glasgow City Council.  
Glasgow City Council, City Chambers, George Square, Glasgow, G2 1DU  
Tel No: 0141-287-2000 • Website: [www.glasgow.gov.uk](http://www.glasgow.gov.uk)

