2011... The year that was

Join us to look over some of the Association's highlights during the year
JANUARY 2011

This month started off, as usual, with heavy snow causing major disruptions.

...At Milnbank, 89% of tenants reported that the Association provided an ‘Excellent/Very Good’ repairs service with a number of you commending our Out of Hours Emergency repair service.

...After, what seemed like a lifetime, serious work began on MHA working towards the Second Stage Transfer (SST) where the Association was seeking to take over neighbouring stock from Glasgow Housing Association.

The Association received its first Benchmarking report from the Scottish Housing Best Value Network which consists of a number of Housing Associations similar to MHA and measures performance in a number of outcomes against each other.

MHA performed well in the delivery of its repairs service and factoring, and we are looking to improve on managing rent arrears and the allocation of void properties.

FEBRUARY 2011

The ballot period for the SST began with staff and a consultant canvassing to gain the support of GHA tenants.
FEBRUARY 2011

...The Association reviewed its policies during this month for Factoring, Managing Debts, Expenses, Redundancy, Equal Opportunities, and Treasury Management.

Did you know that all the Association’s policies and strategies can be viewed on the website under General Information ‘News & Events’ section?

Moving to MARCH 2011

The Association:

♦ Was successful in the SST as 75.6% of GHA tenants voted YES to transfer over to MHA

♦ Achieved 79% of the targets set for 2010/11

♦ The Management Committee were presented with the Factotum Trophy at the annual SHARE Conference. This trophy, is awarded, annually to the Housing Association who scores the highest points in a general housing knowledge training session

♦ The Lone Working Policy, which is aimed at protecting staff safety, was reviewed.

APRIL 2011

...April is the start of the new financial year for the Association and this means setting a budget. In recognition of the current economic climate, the Management Committee took the decision not to impose a rent increase for 2011/12 and to reduce running costs within the office by 10%.
APRIL 2011

...Our subsidiary company, Milnbank Property Services Ltd, was proving very popular with owners within the wider Dennistoun area.

During April, we took over the ownership of 20 Eastercraigs and all the properties within the Princess Court area.

...The Association’s other subsidiary company, Milnbank Community Enterprises, also did well in this month as the sum of £206,760 was awarded from an organisation called the Climate Challenge Fund.

This grant was to cover 4 projects:

♦ Carbon Reduction Programme
♦ Cycling Initiatives
♦ Carbon Footprint
♦ Gardens/allotments

Satisfaction levels for our repairs service remained high with over 90% of tenants surveyed stating the service was “Excellent or Very Good” and our Window Cleaning service also received positive feedback with 81% of residents who pay for this service stating they thought it was ‘Excellent’.

...As an organisation receiving public funding, the Association is obliged to publicly advise all customers, that a Complaints Policy is in operation.

During the financial year 2010/11, a total of 4 complaints were received about our service; thankfully all were quickly resolved to the residents’ satisfaction.

...The buildings insurance premium for owners was reduced from £98 to £66 per annum.
MAY 2011

The month of May at MHA means one thing...GALA DAY!
This year our 13th Gala Day was themed Film & TV Characters and as usual, good fun was had by all.

Thank you to all organisations and local shops, who donated to this day. Thanks also to Milnbank Community Enterprises who provided the £1265 shortfall being their contribution to the community.

Hall Hire Policy

For those of you who are familiar with the Association, you will be aware that the Community Hall is available to hire for social functions and training.

All lets are made on the basis of the Hall Hire Policy which is reviewed annually by Milnbank Community Enterprises Board members.

Work Experience

The Association prides itself in working with a wide range of local organisations for the benefit of the community. In May, we hosted our annual work experience for 4th Year pupils from Whitehill School which involved pupils working with our plumber, joiner and painters.

Repairs Service

A 96% satisfaction rate was achieved for those tenants surveyed during May.

Digital TV Switchover

Thankfully, due to preparatory work, the Association’s residents were prepared for the Digital TV Switchover in May. The Association’s staff received training on this in order to assist residents.
As a Community Based Housing Association, Milnbank actively gets involved in wider housing issues when they arise.

One such issue was when the Government changed the funding which enabled Housing Associations to make adaptations (eg walk-in showers) to those tenants who require such work.

As this change was detrimental to tenants, the Association joined other similar Housing Associations in objecting to this and resulted in the current funding remaining with a further review planned for April next year.

Dennistoun/Haghill Credit Union

In addition to the Association facilitating the above, the Climate Challenge Advisor now provides assistance on a Wednesday morning to assist with collecting cash.

### JUNE 2011

**WE DID IT!** After lots of hard work by staff and the Management Committee, the ex-GHA stock of 857 tenants finally transferred to MHA on 3rd June.

Seven staff also transferred from GHA to MHA under TUPE Regulations. A number of events took place to mark this occasion, these included: an Open Day for new MHA tenants; special newsletters and a tree planting ceremony by pupils from Haghill Primary school.

In addition to stock transferring, MHA also acquired garage lock-up units which are available to rent. If you are interested in finding out more, please contact the office.

To celebrate our achievement, The Re-Gen, the local newspaper carried a feature on the Association.
...On the PR side, MCE provided a donation to all primary and secondary schools within the area to assist with their end of term activities, and Laura Maciver, Customer Services Assistant, was selected to promote the Commonwealth Games by participating in the Parade along the Royal Mile in Edinburgh.

...The challenge was on us, as the number of repairs increased dramatically as a result of the SST, however, the high standard continued as 90% of tenants surveyed stated that the service was ‘Excellent/Very Good!’

...The Association takes the training and development of its employees and Management Committee members seriously and this is demonstrated in the revised Training & Development Policy and associated documentation.

...Another wider housing issue was the Government’s paper on their proposals for Welfare Reform whereby, the aim is to strengthen work incentives and simplify the tax and benefits system.

The Management Committee have had discussions on the potential implications on the Association and continue to monitor this.

...Milnbank’s 1st Registered Tenants Organisation (RTO) is established for the tenants within the Great Eastern Development.

**JULY 2011**

...The Association marked its 15th year in the current offices and, due to the majority of GHA owners voting for MHA to provide a factoring service, the Association now manages a stock of 2419 units. This is a far cry from the total 504 units managed away back in 1979!

...With the arrival of summer, a Children’s Summer Club started in the Community Hall and a very popular Glasgow East Parks Festival Day, which MHA participated in, was held in Alexandra Park.

...In terms of MCE, a Scottish Office Minister visited the office and Alexandra Park to find out more about the Climate Challenge Funding and the contractors went on site for the Sustainable Nursery.

...The Association carried out a tendering process for the selection of their external auditors and the current auditors, Scott Moncrieff, were successful in being re-appointed.

...Milnbank Property Services Ltd took over the management of 10 Kennyhill Square
AUGUST 2011

...Following the successful SST, the Scottish Housing Regulator deemed MHA to be a ‘low engagement’ organization which means that the Regulator does not have any major concerns in the way that MHA is run.

...A near perfect 100% was achieved in the Customer Care Survey conducted on how residents were treated when they come into or telephone the office.

...After the finances of the original MHA and the ex-GHA stock were combined, the Association had an operating surplus of £1,148,232 at this date.

...The window cleaning service was extended to cover washing the inside of windows.

in addition to external windows.

...MHA registers for the Healthy Working Lives accreditation in an attempt to promote positive health within the office and wider area.

...Both subsidiary companies provided a Gift Aid to MHA. MCE £7,417 and MPS £37,944.

...The Association’s revised Risk Management Strategy was endorsed by the Scottish Housing Regulator and the Health & Safety Policy was reviewed and endorsed by our Employment Advisors.

Moving to SEPTEMBER 2011

The Association’s 34th AGM was held in Wood Street with John O’Donnell re-elected as Chairman. John is the 9th Chairperson of the Association. Also at the AGM, Joanne Leggat the Property Services Manager, achieved 25 years service with MHA and was acknowledged with the presentation of a gift.

...The Cycle Track in Alexandra Park was opened by the Minister for Sport and the Commonwealth Games. This was followed by a Cycling Gala held later in the month.
...The Association assisted in holding a Football Festival in Whitehill School to mark the opening of their new pitches

...On the campaigning front, MHA supported the ‘Stop the closure of Lightburn Hospital’ campaign by participating in a rally

...GEMAP (Greater Easterhouse Money Advice Project) free financial advice service was introduced whereby tenants come into the office for financial assistance regarding debt problems

...All change for Bulk Uplift! From the end of September, residents are required to leave bulk items at the rear of their property at the bin store and phone Glasgow City Council to request an uplift

...The Associations’ approved Contractors List was reviewed and updated by the Management Committee. This ensures that all tradesmen who carry out work in your home or common areas are fully compliant and hold all the relevant operating certificates

...The Association’s website was reviewed, please visit on www.milnbank.org.uk

...A selection of shared equity flats went on sale at the Great Eastern development. There are still some flats remaining, please contact the office if you are interested in finding out more details

...It was with great delight that we welcomed Peter Morrison back to work following his illness.

**OCTOBER 2011**

...**Communication:** As part of the review of our strategy, the Association started a survey to gauge residents preferred methods of communication, we hope to complete this survey by the end of the year. The Customer Care Policy was also reviewed as part of this work.

...**PAC Meetings:** The Association was happy to provide a venue for representatives of Strathclyde Police to hold police meetings to give residents an opportunity to discuss any policing concerns. It is planned that these meetings will be held on a regular basis.

...**The Climate Challenge Project:** Provided financial assistance to Wester craigs Nursery to develop their Community Garden.

...**The Thursday morning Breakfast Club** opened: this Club is held weekly from 9.30am and provides a healthy breakfast for the sum of 50p
NOVEMBER 2011

- The stair cleaning service is extended to all residents. With the employment of the stair cleaners and the SST, the Association’s staff compliment is now 68.

- In terms of our partnership working—the Association provided a work experience placement to the child of a local tenant who is studying at John Wheatley College and made a financial contribution towards St Denis’ Christmas Fayre.

- Our records demonstrate that as at the end of November, 42% of our 750 owner occupied flats are privately let.

- Policies covering Data Protection and Disclosure of Interest were reviewed by the Management Committee.

- On the wider housing front, MHA responded to government papers on the proposed Social Housing Charter and Scottish Housing Regulator Governance Review.

- The Management Committee undertake training sessions on managing and overseeing performance and financial Business Planning.

...And finally DECEMBER 2011

- The 113th edition of the Milnbank Messenger is printed.

- The Association responds to the government proposal on The Private Rented Housing Scotland Act 2011.

- GHeat provide a presentation to MCE Board on looking at best tariffs and fuel poverty for MHA residents.

- In terms of PR, the Association facilitated work with St Mungo Academy and Strathclyde University and we also participated in a hugely successful Winter Festival held in Alexandra Park.
As usual the Association will have a busy and challenging year ahead, here are a few of the areas that we will be focusing on:

- Reprofiling our Major Repairs Programme to look at renewing kitchens, windows, etc
- The opening of our sustainable eco nursery in Duke Street
- Providing feedback to residents on cost effective energy tariffs, energy saving proposals and the outcomes of our survey work regarding communication and the community café
- Looking at working with Glasgow City Council on developing our proposal to manage bulk uplift
- Investigating possible development areas (eg Haghill Primary school)
Wishing all our residents a happy & healthy New Year (...and Thank You for your continued support)