

Milnbank Messenger

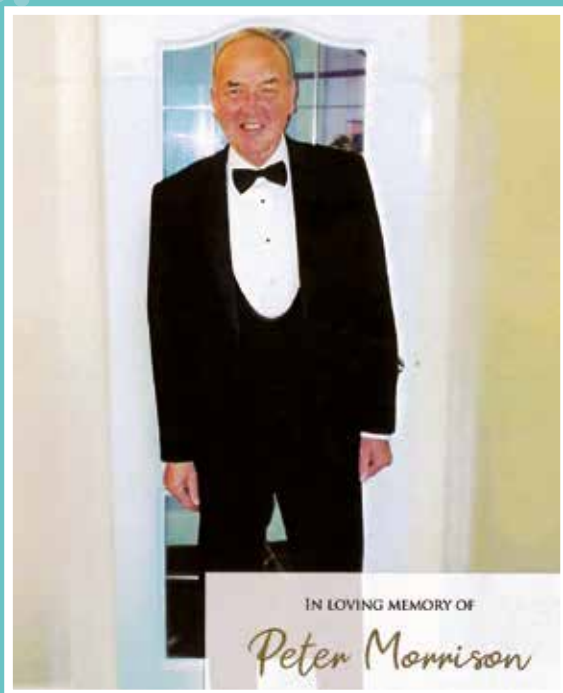
Community Counts
Milnbank
Housing Association

Edition 142, Winter 2020



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from the Management Committee and Staff of Milnbank Housing Association.

Honouring Peter Morrison



It was with deep sadness that we learned of the recent passing of Peter Morrison, the Association's Maintenance Officer for 13 years. Everyone admired and respected Peter's bravery in fighting his illness during the last few years.

To honour Peter's memory and his gallant fighting spirit, through the month of November the team at MHA continued the great fundraising legacy of our dear friend and colleague. With the permission of Peter's family, the team at MHA wanted to remember him in a way that Peter would approve of. MHA decided to raise money for the Beatson Cancer Charity and help bring a smile to people's faces, in these somewhat challenging times.

5 brave souls embarked on the Movember challenge to try and replicate Peter's trademark sophisticated moustache, they all failed at the sophisticated part, but did raise a fantastic £2,569. The amount of donations received from Peter's family, friends and colleagues was amazing and a fitting tribute to a man who inspired us all. Thank you to everyone who donated and took part and... **thanks for the memories Peter.**



Gas Servicing

GasSure
Warming the Heart of Scotland

Allowing access for your annual gas service is essential and MHA values the co-operation of all tenants in allowing first time access to Gas Sure (James Frew) to carry out this essential work. However, we recognise that the first appointment made may not be suitable, therefore, ask that when you receive your appointment letter, please contact MHA as soon as possible on 0141 551 8131 or email admin@milnbank.org.uk where we can rearrange an alternative appointment and specify whether James Frew will attend as a morning (8-12noon) or afternoon (12-5pm) call.

Prize Draw for 1st Time Access

To show our appreciation to tenants who allow access first time for gas servicing, MHA and James Frew enter those tenants into a prize draw. A total of 4 winners will be selected at random on an annual basis, and will each receive £50 vouchers for a supermarket of their choice. The winners of this year's prize draw for 1st time access were:

Miss Haxton (Great Eastern Duke Street),

Mr Forrester (Appin Road),

Mr Higgins (Armadale Path),

Mrs Cassidy (Walter Street).

WIN!

WIN FREE energy bills for a whole year

with Home Energy Scotland the free and impartial energy advice service! Read the quiz carefully, answer the questions, enter your details and you could be the lucky winner.

The winter advice quiz, which closes on 31.03.21, can be completed in a range of ways including calling Home Energy Scotland free on 0808 808 2282 or online using the following link: <https://www.homeenergyscotland.org/win-cash-towards-your-energy-bills/>

Rent Consultation 2021/2022

Your
views
matter!

As part of our annual rent setting process, the Association carries out a Rent Consultation each year.

The Association is fully aware of the difficulties our community is suffering as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In view of this, we've conducted a survey of our tenants about how the pandemic has affected tenants and their families. The information received will allow MHA to make more informed decisions about delivering services, adapt to the circumstances of the pandemic and what we need to do to plan for the future.

The information received from the survey will also help us to formulate the Rent Consultation exercise for 2021/2022.

The Association has four established principles when deciding rent charges. They are;

Principle 1

Ensure rent charges generate enough income to allow services to continue at the current level or improve them.

Principle 2

Monetary Increases are applied rather than across the board percentage increases.

Principle 3

MHA is committed to not applying a rent charge above the Scottish average for the social housing sector.

Principle 4

The Strategy adopted by the Association is to keep rents affordable for tenants in low income employment.

In the current climate the Association aims to ensure that these principles are maintained. The Association takes this opportunity to thank tenants for the high level of engagement with staff during this difficult time and would encourage all tenants to participate in the Rent Consultation process.

Please note the formal Rent Consultation is scheduled to take place between 4 - 15 January 2021.

Welfare Benefit Update

Scottish child payment

New applications for Scottish Child Payment can now be made. This provides an extra £10, per child, per week for low-income families with children under 6 who receive the qualifying benefit with the payments being made in February. **For more information, please visit: mygov.scot/benefits.**

Mixed aged couples retirement age

All mixed age couples where one is reaching retirement age are urged to seek advice from MHA before claiming their state pension payment.

Tenant hardship loan fund

If you have accumulated rent arrears from January 2020, you can apply for financial support via a re-payable loan that could clear your arrears and assist with a maximum of 3 month future rent payments. The loan is interest free, can be deferred for 6 months, and must be re-paid within 60 months. To be eligible an affordability and credit check will be assessed on application.

For assistance on claiming any of the above, or any other support, please contact:

Sylvia Pollock on **07493-868790** or
s.pollock@milnbank.org.uk


Patricia McDonald on **07990-572222** or
p.mcdonald@milnbank.org.uk

**If you are struggling to pay your rent -
PLEASE contact the Association on
0141 551 8131 for assistance**

Landlord Report

2019/20

The attached Scottish Housing Regulator's Landlord Report from April 2019 to March 2020 shows MHA's continued strong performance in delivering our services. The Report measures MHA outcomes against the Scottish average in key areas including homes and rent, quality and maintenance, neighbourhoods, tenant satisfaction and value for money. This enables tenants to see how their landlord performed against the Scottish average for indicators in each of these areas.



Landlord report – Milnbank Housing Association Ltd
How your landlord told us it performed in 2019/20

Our role is to protect the interests of tenants and other people who use the services of social landlords. The Scottish Social Housing Charter sets out the standards and outcomes that landlords should achieve. Each year, we require your landlord to report on its performance against the Charter. We asked tenants to tell us what matters most when it comes to their landlords performance. Here is how your landlord performed in those areas in 2019/2020.

Homes and rents

At 31 March 2020 your landlord owned 1,669 homes. The total rent due to your landlord for the year was £5,531,847. Your landlord increased its weekly rent on average by 3.6% from the previous year.

Size of home	Number of homes owned	This landlord	Scottish average	Difference from Scottish average
1 apartment	41	£51.19	£73.47	-30.3%
2 apartment	566	£58.38	£78.65	-25.8%
3 apartment	811	£66.55	£82.26	-19.1%
4 apartment	244	£77.00	£89.76	-14.2%
5 apartment	7	£81.69	£98.69	-17.2%

Of the tenants who responded to your landlords most recent **Tenant satisfaction survey**:

- 93.9% said they were satisfied with the **overall service** it provided, compared to the Scottish average of 89.2%.
- 95.7% felt that your landlord was good at **keeping them informed** about its services and outcomes compared to the Scottish average of 92%.
- 97.2% of tenants were satisfied with the **opportunities to participate** in your landlords decision making, compared to the Scottish average of 87.2%.

Quality and maintenance of homes

- 90% of your landlords homes met the **Scottish Housing Quality Standard** compared to the Scottish average of 94.4%.
- The average time your landlord took to complete **emergency repairs** was **2.5 hours**, compared to the Scottish average of 3.6 hours.
- The average time your landlord took to complete **non-emergency repairs** was **2.9 days**, compared to the Scottish average of 6.4 days.
- Your landlord completed **98.4% of reactive repairs right first time** compared to the Scottish average of 92.4%.
- 92.6% of tenants who had repairs or maintenance carried out were **satisfied with the service** they received, compared to the Scottish average of 91.3%.

Neighbourhoods

- 94.0% of anti-social behaviour cases relating to this landlord were resolved, compared to the Scottish average of 94.1%.

Value for money

- The amount of money your landlord collected for current and past rent was equal to **96.6% of the total rent** it was due in the year, compared to the Scottish average of 99.3%.
- It did not collect **0.6% of rent** due because **homes were empty**, compared to the Scottish average of 1.2%.
- It took an average of **33.6 days** to **re-let homes**, compared to the Scottish average of 31.8 days.

Annual Assurance Statement

A legislative requirement is that all registered housing providers are required to provide an Annual Assurance Statement each year to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR). The aim of this is for the Management Committee to provide confirmation on MHA's level of compliance in all relevant legislative duties including:

- All relevant standards & outcomes in the Scottish Social Housing Charter
- The Regulatory Standards of Governance & Financial Management
- The Regulatory Framework, Standard 3

Full details of MHA's Annual Assurance Statement 2020 can be viewed on our website.

Annual General Meeting

- lockdown style!



The Association held its Annual General Meeting on 17 September 2020. It was attended by 82 Members and took place on-line using the procedures introduced as a result of Covid-19. We are extremely grateful to those who attended the AGM thereby allowing MHA to comply with its Constitutional requirements.

The AGM was advised by the Chair of the arrangements that have been put in place to ensure essential services were maintained during lockdown and how MHA intends to reintroduce a full range of services. Also, the Annual Accounts were presented by the Auditor and details were given of the Management Committee for the coming year. The meeting was advised that for the coming year, the Association will have a full

complement of Management Committee Members. The following information can be viewed on our website:

- The draft Minutes of the AGM
- MHAs Group accounts for financial year 2019/2020
- Guidelines followed to convene an on-line AGM
- The Management Committee 2020/21

What's it all about - Milnbank!

Residents will be aware that we regularly make reference to our Management Committee Members, provide details about joining one of our Scrutiny or Focus Groups or becoming a Member of the Association. As part of our new Business Plan, the Management Committee agreed our updated Succession Planning Strategy. As well as making future provision for staff, it also includes thinking of our future Management Committee Members. So...

This is where members of our community come into it! During the course of next year, the Association plan to embark on a series of promoting committee membership. This will include a Special Messenger early in 2021 followed by a series of road shows (social distancing permitted). Watch this space! In the meantime, please find below an Application for Membership of Milnbank Housing Association.

Membership qualifications: must be a resident within MHA's area of operation, and be aged 18. The exception is for MHA Tenants who can become a member at 16. To become a Member, individuals purchase a £1 share in MHA, which entitles attendance and voting at General Meetings and to stand for election to the Management Committee. MHA is community owned and being a Member means that you will always have a say in the future direction of MHA. It is essential, therefore, that local people become Members to ensure that our community owned assets are protected.

I hereby apply for membership of Milnbank Housing Association and enclose £1.00 for one share.

Signed:

(Print Full Name):

.....

Address:.....

.....

Telephone:





Our commu

As everyone is still trying to come to terms with the 'new normal', MHA continues to make a positive effort to maintain delivering our range of services with a key focus on supporting our more vulnerable residents in response to the Covid pandemic.

Despite the on-going restrictions that we all experience, the Management Committee and staff have learnt how to work differently.

Our committee meetings are held virtually and staff have identified and implemented new processes and revised working practises. Despite the restraints, staff have managed to engage with a range of residents and feedback indicates that MHA residents are very satisfied with the service and support that we are providing.

*David the Joiner
done a great job,
thanks for this.*

(Tenant, Armadale Place)

*Hi Patricia,
Thanks very much for
getting my shopping, I
really appreciate it.*

(Tenant, Aberfoyle Street)

The current government restrictions dictate that our office can operate on an appointments based system only. Due to social distancing measures, our community halls remain closed. The following is a reminder of what residents can expect from MHA:

Communication

Staff are working between home and the office on a rotational basis. Residents will see some staff out and about in the area when required. Please feel free to talk to our staff about any of MHA services. A recent satisfaction survey found 94% of residents who made contact with the office during lockdown were satisfied with the service provided.

Rent

This is a difficult time financially for a number of people. If you are having difficulties paying your rent, we urge you to contact our Income Maximisation Team or our Housing Services Officers.

Repairs service

Due to current Scottish Government guidelines, MHA are only permitted to attend to urgent repairs. When this restriction is lifted, our normal routine repairs service will resume.

Stair cleaning, bulk uplift & estate services

are unchanged.

Allocations

MHA continues to let houses and you can speak to a Housing Services Officer if you have a housing need.

Neighbour complaints

MHA continues to respond to neighbour complaints and, where necessary, work with Police Scotland.



nity counts

Supporting communities during covid

MHA was successful in securing £45,000 from the Scottish Government's Supporting Communities fund. This enabled us to work, during lockdown, in partnership with local voluntary organisations to deliver the outcomes set out in the application to the Supporting Communities Fund. The Grant received was used to assist local households in a variety of different ways covering all age groups and housing tenures. Examples include:

- Partnership with Achieve More Scotland (food supply),
- Urban Fox (activity packs for children),
- Friends of Alexandra Park (community activities e.g. afternoon teas, fruit & vegetable packs).

MHAs in-house Community Engagement Team assisted with the provision of practical support including assistance with gas/electric supply, utility bills, mental health support, everyday essentials and community transport.

Thanks to the team for the grass cutting during lockdown

(Tenant, Todd Street)



Shame about AGM arrangements because I so enjoyed last year's meeting and hearing how the association was going from strength to strength. Reading the annual report was a real tonic in the middle of the current political mayhem and uncertainty. It's so heartening to be part of a community that is doing it's best to treat it's members with care and compassion. I am so pleased the income maximisation service exists and will be there for the future whatever that holds. It is essential. Thank you Joanne for all you do.

(Owner, Wood Street)



Lord Provost & Local Councillor Elaine McDougall helping to distribute Christmas gifts to the community

Fairshare Food Pantry

As many residents are aware, MHA is a member of the above charitable organisation which provide good quality and nutritious surplus food to community groups.

A group of MHA volunteers operate the Food Pantry every Wednesday from 1-3pm at the Culloden Street and Bluevale community halls. The cost is £1 membership fee and £2.50 per visit. Since starting this during lockdown, there are now more than 200 members. Thank you to our volunteers (some of whom are pictured here). **Everyone Welcome!**



The Scottish Welfare fund

MHA's Income Maximisation Team work in partnership with the Scottish Welfare Fund to provide support to families and people within our local community who are on low incomes. Eligible applicants to the Fund can apply for the following:

Crisis Grant

If you're in crisis as a result of a disaster (like a fire or flood), or an emergency (like losing your money or job, or an unexpected expense).

Self-Isolation Support Grant

If you've been asked to self-isolate by Test and Protect because of Covid-19 and will lose income as a result of this.

Community Care Grant

To help you or someone you care for to start to live, or to carry on living, a settled life within the community.

Since April 2020, the Income Maximisation Team have submitted 19 applications to the Scottish Welfare Fund on behalf of MHA residents. To date, 15 applications have been approved with a combined total of £10,357 in Financial Gains received.

MHA's Welfare Fund

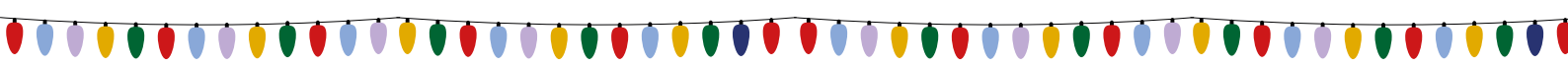
On occasions where applications to the Scottish Welfare Fund are rejected, MHA have their own Welfare Fund which is deemed an appropriate method of safeguarding residents who are in crisis. The Welfare Fund offers a range of assistance, dependent on individual circumstances, such as:

- **A voucher to purchase groceries and/or gas/ electricity**
- **Household furnishing items that are not available from MHA's Recycling Centre**
- **Basic white goods**
- **Window/Floor coverings**
- **Subsistence for Universal Credit shortfalls/payment delays**
- **Vouchers for Millie's Café etc.**

In order to be considered for access to MHA's Welfare Fund, you must make an appointment to speak to a Member of the Income Maximisation Team to discuss your circumstances to ascertain if there are any unclaimed financial entitlements, in the first instance. The team can be contacted on 0141 551 8131 or 07493 868790 (Sylvia) and 07990 572222 (Patricia). Since April this year, 22 referrals have been made to MHA's Welfare Fund, all of which were accepted and residents have received support equating to £2,182.

Come
and ask us,
we are happy
to help





Resident consultation

During lockdown we continued to consult with residents on our range of services. From April to November, 874 residents participated with an average satisfaction level of 98.8%. The services covered to date are:

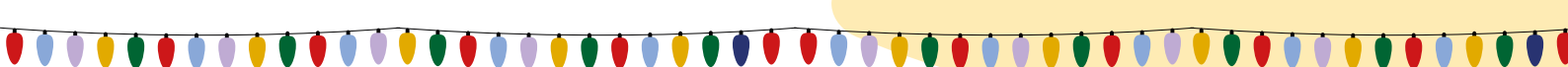
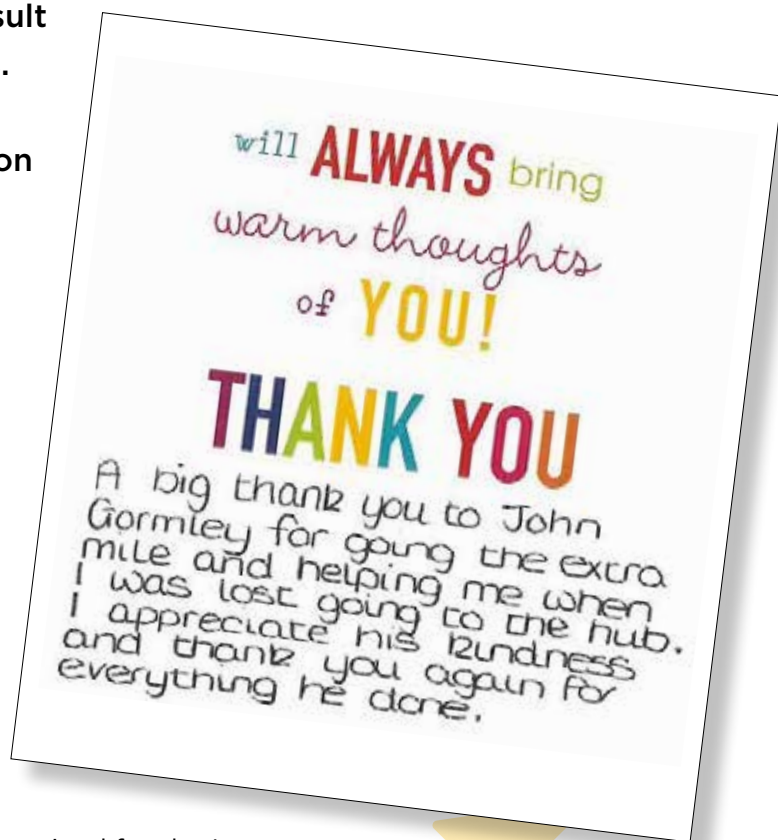
- Our main Tenants Satisfaction Survey was undertaken by an external consultant and involved 650 tenants who provided their views on MHA's range of services and on our role in providing non-housing activities as a community anchor organisation. This demonstrated 93.8% level of satisfaction.
- Excellent feedback was received regarding the range of activities that are provided at the Sports Hub. For more details please visit our Facebook page at: "Alexandra Park Sports Hub Glasgow" or our Twitter page at: "AllyParkHub"
- As with past survey's, 100% satisfaction was received for the Income Maximisation Service. Comments received included "The two staff members are always very helpful" and "Hope this supportive service continues in the future"
- A house visit is carried out to all new tenants when they move into their new home. An external validation of our Post Allocation Visits demonstrated a high satisfaction level with the standard of their new home. A tenant commented 'I love the standard of my new home' (Tenant, Meadowpark St)
- Customer Care consultation asked the participants to review our Customer Care Charter to ensure that it remains fit for purpose. Participants were also asked to list the main 3 aspects of customer care they expect from MHA, these were:

1) Be welcomed by friendly & helpful reception staff.

2) Enquiries being dealt with in a courteous & professional manner.

3) A tidy, comfortable & accessible reception office.

A tenant (Ballindalloch Drive) commented *"I'm grateful for all the help that MHA provided this year."*



Business plan 2020/23 – half year review

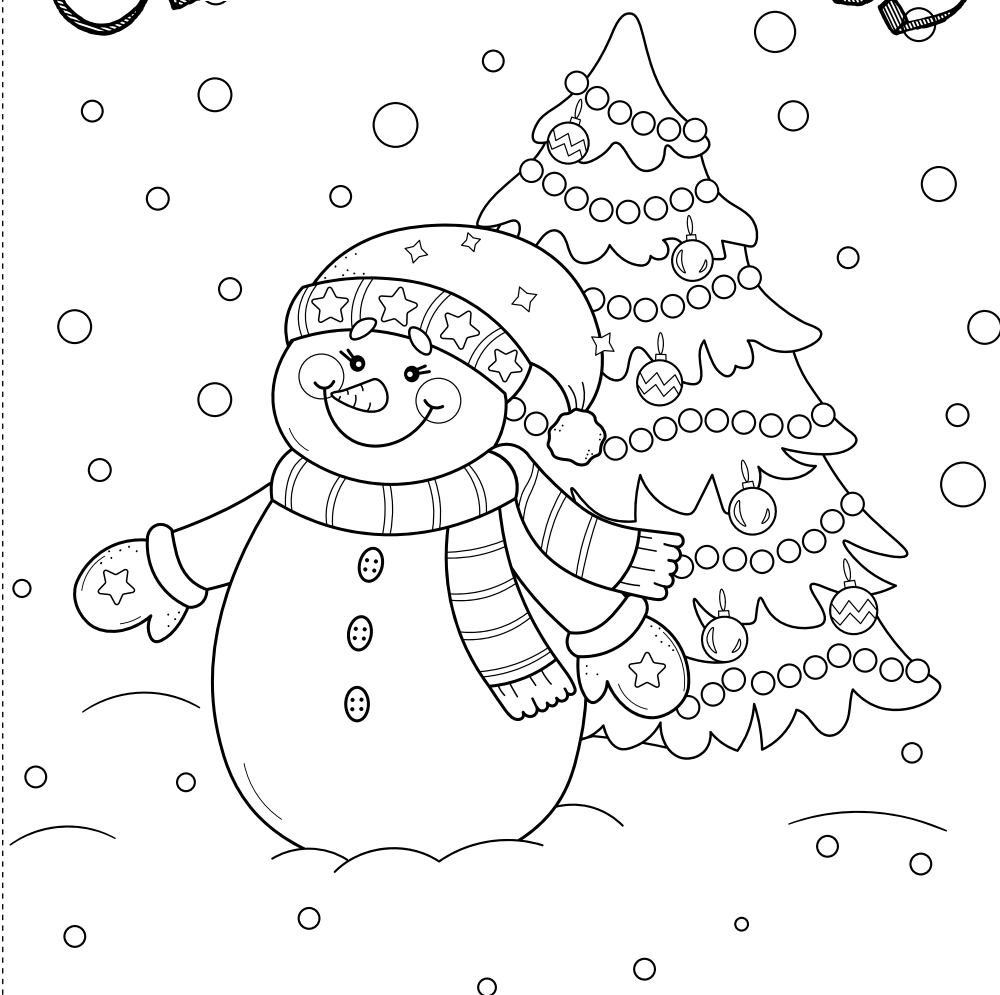


Action	Performance Update December 2020
Governance & Organisational Management	
Covid-19: ensure MHA's resilience, & support our tenants whenever we can.	On-going
Ensure business continuity & staff wellbeing during Covid-19.	On-going
Conduct 2020 AGM, consistent with legal advice.	Achieved 17.09.20
Continue Committee recruitment/succession planning activities.	On-going
Continue to develop succession planning framework for senior staff retirements.	Achieved 10.11.20
Achieve SHR sign off of MHA completed Governance Action Plan.	On-going
Managing Risks & Financial Resilience	
Ensure there is a strong focus from Committee & staff on Risk Management.	Achieved 06.10.20
Manage current External Risks: Covid-19, UC & economy outlook due to Covid.	On-going
Establish post Covid-19 future fund to support cash flows & ensure MHA can provide tenants with level of services & investment needed.	Achieved 31.07.20
Housing Services	
Minimise rent arrears increases where within our control.	On-going
Continue to provide added value services to achieve VFM & high tenant satisfaction.	On-going (April 2020, 93.8% satisfaction rate)
Commission rent restructuring review.	Achieved 16.06.20
Continue to shape services in response to high risk factors (UC & Covid-19).	On-going
Continue to engage with GCC on homeless referrals & targets.	On-going. Rep. met Committee 24.11.20
Decide MHA's future role in supported accommodation based on the final terms proposed by GCC & the HSCP.	On-going. Committee Session 27.10.20.
Asset Management	
Plan for & implement resumption of reactive repairs & void services.	Achieved 17.11.20. Routine repairs backlog completed. Voids operational with improved turnaround times. High satisfaction levels
Complete review of asset base & new asset management strategy.	Achieved 29.09.20.
Conduct VFM review of the asset function, & demonstrate VFM in upcoming procurements.	Scheduled February 2021.
Develop new 5-year planned maintenance programme, effective from 2021/22.	Scheduled February 2021 (subject to Covid. restrictions).
Complete review & follow-up actions from health & safety reviews.	Findings prioritised and either completed or working through.

Children's Colouring Competition

A chance to win a £30 voucher of your choice. All entries will be displayed in the office and receive a small gift.

MERRY CHRISTMAS



Name Age

Address

Winner will be selected on 31 December 2020.



...and finally,
we thought we would share this coronavirus Christmas tree, which is located on the common grass area at Harcourt Drive/Roebank Street. Hope it brings a smile to your face!



Emergency Numbers

Milnbank Housing Association:
0141 551 8131

**Scottish Power
(Electricity Failures):**
0800 0929 290 or 105

Scottish Gas Networks (SGN):
0800 111 999

Scottish Water (Emergencies):
0800 0778 778

Street Lighting: 0800 373 635

Close Lighting: 0800 595 595

Police Scotland: 999

NB:

- These numbers should be used for emergencies only.
- Repairs during office hours should be reported to the Association office on 0141 551 8131.
- Please keep this list handy.

Office Closure During the Festive Period

The office will close at: **12pm on Thursday 24 December 2020** and will re-open on **Tuesday 5 January 2021.**

Please note that our emergency call out service can be contacted on **0141 551 8131** during the above dates. A member of staff will always be available to answer your call.

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A Massive Thank You

A massive Thank You to all the residents for your kind messages and ongoing support during this really challenging year.

