West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative September 2013 Newsletter



West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative is mourning the loss of Phil Welsh MBE who tragically passed away on 12th July 2013. Phil was a founder member of WWHC and the

Housing Co-operative's first Chairperson, back in 1989.

Phil is survived by his loving family, wife Sadie, son Phil, granddaughter Lauren and sister Elizabeth. Phil's other sister Nora died some years ago.

> In the late 80s it was clear Whitlawburn was rapidly going downhill. Sadie, Phil's wife, encouraged Phil to

get involved with the Tenants Association, and since then Whitlawburn has improved beyond recognition. Phil was instrumental in the successful tenants' ballot to transfer the housing stock from Glasgow City Council to the community owned West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative. Phil said at the time the first cheque he ever signed in his life was for £2.2m to buy the houses on behalf of WWHC, while he only had ten pence in his pocket, such was his humility.

> The stunning transformation of the West Whitlawburn estate is all due to the vision, determination and sheer hard work of Phil and his colleagues who established the Housing Co-operative in 1989.

Phil's leadership, drive and selflessness were essential in making the Housing Cooperative such an outstanding success.

Phil was awarded the MBE in 1996 for his services to voluntary housing. Phil was hiahlv intelligent with a tremendous human touch. Phil was 'Oor Santa' at WWHC staff Christmas parties and delivered his role with wit. repartee and warm generosity.

Paul Farrell, Director of WWHC said:

"Our staff, committee and the community as a whole, is stunned by Phil's loss. Phil was a visionary, WWHC will ensure that Phil's vision continues to be realised and that we continue our very important work."

Susan Anderson, WWHC Chairperson said: *"Phil really was a one-off. Phil's contribution to WWHC has been outstanding, he remains an inspiration to us"*

James Kelly MSP said: *"This is really sad news. Phil was a great character who always spoke his mind and always gave us all a smile"*

Phil's family and WWHC have established **The Phil Welsh Welfare Fund** to help alleviate poverty and hardship locally, and help provide food parcels to those in greatest need.

Details are available on the WWHC website at www.wwhc.org.uk

Phil's life, work and success will remain as an enormous inspiration to the many

people who were touched by Phil's huge personality, his warmth, his generosity and his caring wisdom.

'The Heart of the Community'

1942 - 2013

Disability Living Allowance is changing- are you ready?

Form June 2013, Personal Independence Payment (PIP) will replace Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for all new claims from people aged 16 - 64 years. To qualify for PIP, you're likely to be asked to attend a medical assessment. From October 2013 until 2015 people will need to move onto PIP– if they qualify– when they are due to renew their DLA.





If you currently receive DLA, you won't automatically qualify for PIP, so you need to know how you will be affected. For further information visit **www.gov.uk/pip**



Reduce your energy bills

Whitlawburn Community Energy Project, is a project funded by Climate Challenge Fund and is based out of the Whitlawburn Community Resource Centre. We have had a very successful year so far but we want to continue our efforts. We are here to reduce your energy bills and save you money while doing it!

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hallenge

Since the beginning of 2013 we have visited 42 households, savings made to households per week; An average £3.50 a week

A minimum of £1.37

Our biggest saving was £5.47

We are eager to hear from anyone in Whitlawburn to see if we can save you money and reduce your electricity bills. On average a home spends £76 a year on unused electricity. There is always ways to get potential savings and keep your money instead of giving it to the energy providers.

If you want to join in and try to save some money get in touch with us via; **Telephone**; 07791470806 / 07791471124 **Email**; energy@whitlawburncrc.org.uk

Or drop on by the Whitlawburn Community Resource Centre Mondays, Wednesdays or Thursdays

Bonus ball Out of School Care is under new management

The Bonus Ball Out of School Care Service has been under new management from the end of the school term.



Daily fees are:

£4.00 for breakfast club £12.00 Term time £15.00 primary 1's 12:00pm-6:30pm £22.00 for summer holiday cover

Opening times are:

8am till 9am in the mornings 3pm till 6:30pm in the evenings 8am till 6:30pm during summer holiday

If there is a need for additional services, Wainz World may open slightly earlier in the morning and later in the evening and would look to open Monday –Saturday if parents need this service

If you are interested in a place for your child/children or require further information please feel free to text or call 07564913467 or you can email maryf183@gmail.com



Are you confused about rent, bedroom tax, universal credit, bills? Contact us, we are here to help!



We are here to help with various aspects of you tenancy, so please contact us if you are struggling in any way.

Our Housing Office is open from 9:15am - 4:45pm Monday to Friday. We offer late appointments on Thursdays so please call 01416418628 to arrange these.

If you are on partial Housing Benefit and are struggling to pay your rent, do you know you could be entitled to a Discretionary Housing Payment?

What are Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP's)?

Discretionary Housing Payments are extra payments made by councils to help people on Housing Benefit who receive less than full Housing Benefit and are experiencing some difficulty paying their rent. As the name suggests, payments are made entirely at the discretion of the council and can only be made to help with housing costs and are normally only for a limited time period to allow you to overcome the difficulty you are or have experienced.

What are DHP's used for?

- To provide a weekly top up amount to assist tenants who have had their Housing Benefit reduced due to under-occupation penalties, commonly known as the Bedroom Tax. Tenants affected by the Benefits Cap
- If you have Non-dependents in the home who are struggling or unwilling to pay their contribution to the rent
- Your earnings from work have been constantly changing, causing frequent alterations to housing benefit that has made it difficult for you to manage budgeting;
- The costs associated with you working have increased causing you hardship
- You need to move home but don't have the means to pay a private rent deposit or offer rent-inadvance to the prospective private sector landlord.

The above are simply examples of the help available and should not be considered an exhaustive list

Who can get a Discretionary Housing Payment?

You can apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment if you are entitled to Housing Benefit and you are experiencing financial hardship.

Once an application is completed with all the supporting evidence the council will normally act quickly, usually within 2 days you should receive an acknowledgement and within a further 10 days a council decision.

How does the council decide if it can pay a Discretionary Housing Payment?

Each case is considered individually. But to succeed you need to demonstrate your need for assistance is in some way exceptional. The more unusual and deserving your case is the more likely a payment will be made.

To make it easier for the council to decide in your favour, try and give as much information as possible to help with the assessment of your application. You might be asked to provide the following information to support your application:

- your total income;
- your total outgoings;
- whether you have any savings;
- whether anyone else in the household is able to help you financially
- whether you have any loans or debts
- whether you could rearrange your finances to ease your situation
- whether you or your family have any special circumstances such as ill health or disability
- whether your home has been adapted for severe disability
- whether you are subject to welfare reform changes

These are just examples of the information you might be asked to provide. If additional information or clarification on any aspect of your claim is needed, you will be contacted quickly.

How much help might I get and for how long?

How much you get and how long this is provided really depends on your overall circumstances both at the time you apply and what happens afterwards. A change in your circumstances could increase or reduce the award being made.

If your request is successful how will the Council pay the DHP?

If you are awarded a DHP to help pay your rent South Lanarkshire Council will usually pay it by the same method and timescale you are currently paid your Housing Benefit.

What if I disagree with the amount or period of the Discretionary Housing Payment?

As this is a purely discretionary scheme there is no formal external appeal procedure. However, if you disagree with the decision, you should write to South Lanarkshire Council within a month of the original decision explaining why you feel they should reconsider. The Council should pass the responsibility for this review to a completely different officer to ensure independence and objectivity and should notify you on the outcome of the review normally within 10 working days.

What if your circumstances change?

You must tell the council about any changes in your or your partner's income, investments, savings, benefits, as well as changes in your rent paid. They will also need to know if anyone leaves or joins your household. You should tell the Council as soon as any of these types of events occur so it can reassess the original award.

How do I apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment?

You can make an application online at <u>www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk</u>. If you need assistance making an online application you should contact the office and we will arrange an appointment to come in and make the application. We also have paper copies of the form if you would prefer to apply this way.

Do you need to hand in documents to Q&A to support your Housing Benefit claim?

If so, we can save you a journey to Cambuslang! All our Housing Management staff have now been trained by South Lanarkshire Council to accept and verify documents which means you no longer have to hand them into Q&A and can hand them into our offices.

Benefits are changing- be prepared!

Don't lose sleep over the bedroom tax, get the information and help you need, come along to the Whitlawburn Community Resource Centre Monday, Wednesday and Friday between 12-1pm and get your rent paid directly to WWHC, no hassle no worries. Now even easier access to your money at our new Rutherglen branch open Monday– Friday 9:15am- 4pm and 6pm on a Thursday.

Start saving now! It's now easier to access your money at the new Blantyre and South Lanarkshire Credit Union, open Monday - Friday 9:15-4pm and 6pm on a Thursday.



Performance reports

Corporate Services - Finance Revenue Income & Expenditure for the period April 2012 to March 2013

Revenue Income			Revenue Expenditure			
	Budget	Actual		Budget	Actual	
Net Rents Receivable	635,802	638,913	Management Costs & Maint Overheads	350,626	333,164	
Other Income	0	0	Planned Maintenance - Direct Costs	25,163	33,956	
Bank Interest Received	75	1,383	Reactive\Voids - Direct Costs	134,540	133,935	
			Property Depreciation	57,254	57,254	
			Other Costs	18,953	18,403	
			Bad debt written off	0	0	
			Private Finance Loan Repayments	41,301	41,301	
Totals	635,877	640,296		628,837	618,013	
			Budgeted Surplus for the period		7,040	
Outturn Summary		Actual Surplus for the period		22,283		
			Variance\Surplus for the period		+15,243	

Operations					
Quarterly Repair Performance					
	ltem	April 2013 to June 2013			
	Instructed	519 (176 voids)			
Of the 83 emergency jobs completed, two were outwith target. One required parts and was completed 43 minutes over the 24hour time period allowed for emergencies. The other looks to be an IT input issue where the wrong date has been inserted	Emergency	83			
Of the 59 urgent jobs completed, three were outwith target. All were either due to parts being ordered or return visits arranged to suit tenants.	Urgent	59			
Of the 377 routine jobs completed 18 were outwith target. 6 were due to the requirement to obtain a platform for access purposes. 8 were due to parts on order. 1 was due to additional work being re- quired. 1 was due to specific access arrangements taking the job outwith target and the other 2 have no specific reason.	Routine	377			

Tenancy Services

Turnover and Allocations

At the end of July 2013, there were 193 applicants on the waiting list and 109 on the transfer list.

Since April 2013 the turnover was 7% with 45 properties being re-let.

The average void time for each property was 22 days which is improved from 25 days in 2012/13, but is still above our target of 21 days and we are working to improve this.

	2012/13	Apr – July
		13
Re-lets	94	75
Direct applications	46%	49%
Transfers	18%	20%
SLC referrals	36%	31%

2012/12

Apr July

Rent Collection and Arrears

Arrears	2012/13	July 13	During this financial year so far we collected 96% of the rent due, compared with 98.6% during
Current Tenants			2012/13
Target	4.6%	4.0%	
Actual	4.0%	4.3%	If you need any help or advice please contact
Former Tenants			your Housing Officer.
Target	0.9%	1.0%	
Actual	1.9%	2.5%	
Estate Management	t		

Housing Management and Concierge staff work

closely together and with other agencies to resolve neighbour and estate difficulties as quickly as possible.

Concierge staff also manage the housing alarm service and respond to calls through the system and all officer are first aid trained. Since April, 14 of the calls required emergency action.

	2012/13	July 12
Abandoned tenancies	17	12
Anti social behaviour	3	3
Estate management	115	50
Concierge incident report	117	40
Housing alarm calls	353	185

Complaints

The Co-operative takes complaints seriously and makes every effort to resolve them as soon as possible. We have been operating the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman RSL Complaints Handling Procedure since October 2012 and will be reporting outcomes to members quarterly. Table below is from 01.04.13 to 30.06.13.

Complaint Details	Stage 1 Frontline Resolution	Stage 2 Investigation	Referred to Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman
Repairs	0	0	1
Policy/Procedure	0	0	0
Staff Conduct	0	0	0
Communications	0	0	0
Service	6	0	0
Total	6	0	1



Parent Cafe

Healthy n Happy Community Development Trust continue to run the parent cafe in the local area. The setup of the cafe is very informal. The first part of the day is an opportunity to chat and meet new people with some refreshments. We will then learn new activities and songs to entertain your little ones. In the final hour we will have guest speakers running 'Taster Sessions', for which we depend on ideas from you as to what you would find most beneficial, interesting or just fun! The group meet on Wednesdays from 11.30am-1.30pm in Whitlawburn Community Resource Centre, Cambuslang.



Follow on Group

This group is for babies from 1 year old who are too old for the baby group. They have the opportunity to play, socially interact with other children of the same age, learn new skills such as making their own snack and generally having a lot of fun!! The group meet on Fridays from 10am-12noon in Whitlawburn Community Resource Centre, Belmont Road, Cambuslang. Everyone is welcome to come along, no booking necessary.

For further information on any of the cafes, please call Jan/Louise on 0141-646-0123, pop in for a cuppa and a chat or email jan@healthynhappy.org.uk



Fruit Barra

The Fruit Barra runs each week in Whitlawburn. Thursday 10:30am-2:30pm & Friday 5pm-7pm in Benmore Tower. The Fruit Barra is run by volunteers who provide a quality service for residents of Cambuslang and Rutherglen. They provide high quality, low cost fruit and get for sale, fruit baskets can be made to order and if you have a special request for more unusual fruit or vegetables, they will be happy to try and help. Pop along for a chat with Helen, Martha, Grace and Gail, and if you are interested in becoming a volunteer with the fruit Barra we would be happy to welcome you.

For further information please call Jan on 0141-646-0123

Whitlawburn Action Group

The Whitlawburn feedback event was a success with 57 residents taking part and showing clear interest in the future of their community. The vast majority of residents agreed with the findings of the consultation and were keen to be kept informed. An initial meeting took place between residents to discuss the consultation and what should happen next. The meeting was very positive. Similar issues were raised by all with various ideas shared to address them. More and more residents are now interested in the creation of a community action group. The next step for them is to arrange regular group meetings. If you're interested in getting involved and live in the Whitlawburn area, please get in touch with Kenny on 0141 646 0123 or email Kenny@healthynhappy.org.uk.



Thank you to Whitlawburn- from Jackie

As a student of HNC Community Development/Housing PDA from John Wheatley College, I began my placement at WWHC in November last year. Knowing that WWHC has been a supporter of the afore-mentioned courses for a number of years gave me some reassurance but I was still nervous, initially. Thanks to the welcome shown to me by staff and committee members, I soon, however, found my feet.

Gradually I also learned more about the community itself and more about its strength and spirit. Even the briefest look at West Whitlawburn's history shows that, when threatened with outside forces, residents stuck together and took control of both the housing stock and the general welfare of the community. This made me realise that one of the key strengths of the community has to be the ongoing opportunities tenants have to participate in the organisation and management of their housing and resources, whether that's within West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative or within Whitlawburn Resource Centre.

I was also particularly struck by the long-term commitment of people residing within the community and wish to express my admiration toward the management committee members of WWHC. This level of commitment can also be seen in campaigns on other issues such as the current community struggle to have a pharmacy. I was fortunate to become involved in this campaign which, for me, not only became a major focus for my college work but also enabled me to learn from the community's experience.



Any negative aspects to my placement were due to outside factors such as witnessing the effects of the "Bedroom Tax" upon the community but, even here, it has to be said, WWHC staff are doing their best to guide people through this, ensuring they have access to appropriate advice and support. If asked to talk to future students regarding potential placements, I could not recommend WWHC highly enough. The welcome and support of all those concerned will remain with me as I continue my studies, as will their strong spirit and belief in the community of Whitlawburn.

Jackie Fairweather





Pharmacy Update

As you will all know, the campaign for a pharmacy in Whitlawburn continues and, to this end the Pharmacy Action Group (PHAG) is continually seeking ways to further this cause. Pharmacists, David Dryden and Michael Balmer remain absolutely committed to their application. There was a further hearing by The Pharmacy Practices Committee which they recently heard back from and the application has been unsuccessful once again. We awake feedback as to what the reasons are for refusal.

As a result of his support for the Whitlawburn pharmacy campaign, James Kelly MSP secured a meeting with the Minister for Public Health, Michael Matheson on June 13th; Paul Farrell, Director of WWHC was also in attendance. The length of time applications and appeals take, lack of transparency and openness in the application and appeals process, as well as the level of frustration being expressed by community members were all matters which were discussed.

Minister for Public Health Michael Matheson stated,

"I welcomed the opportunity to meet with James Kelly and Paul Farrell of the Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative...We had a constructive meeting and discussed a wide range of issues around this important subject."

The Minister has further stated he will give the issues raised his full consideration. For example, he has promised to look into the possibility of providing local communities with reports on any information gained from the consultation period the NHS Boards are required to undertake when considering pharmacy applications, as well as giving consideration to how the reliability of submitted evidence can be checked. He also declared his intention to seek advice from the Boards regarding how they can best publicise pharmacy applications within the communities concerned.

Paul Farrell Director of WWHC said of his attendance at the meeting,

"We are pleased that the Minister is listening to the clear inadequacies in the current pharmacy application process and we are indebted to our MSP James Kelly for consistently highlighting the issue on our behalf."

Whitlawburn's pharmacy campaign continues and it would appear, from the above, there is every reason to feel positive about the direction it is taking.



<u>Good news : Whitlawburn Community Resource Centre</u> <u>remains open!</u>

The Whitlawburn Community Resource Centre in Belmont Road is staying open and will continue to provide much needed facilities and services for the area.

There have been significant funding problems caused by welfare benefit reforms and the departure of an anchor tenant, Healthy n Happy but the Management Committee has managed to put together a rescue package, although it has been a very difficult process and a considerable number of jobs have been lost.

Helen Anderson, Chairperson said "Against all the odds we have managed to keep the doors open. We are indebted to West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative for the tremendous support they have offered and provided to us.

It has been a difficult time for the Committee and more so for the staff. We have had to lose a considerable number of long serving and treasured staff due to this crisis. I feel very sad about this, but we had no option.

I must pay tribute to the staff for their resilience and understanding at this very difficult time. Hopefully we now have set firm foundations for the future sustainment and growth of the Centre." Sadly we have said farewell to:

Jackie McAllister; John Kenny; Liz Jamieson; Esther Fagan and Sharon McQueen We wish them well for the future and hope to keep in touch.

Zumba and Metafit classes at The Resource Centre

Zumba Fitness and Metafit Classes every Wednesday in the centre 7-8pm and 8-8.30pm Zumba- This high energy, calorie burning class will make you sweat and leave you feeling truly exhila-rated!! Have fun and ditch the workout, join the party!!!

Metafit - The 30 minute class that lasts 24 hours. An overall body blitz that TONES muscles BURNS fat and BOOSTS metabolism! Both classes suitable for Men & Women of all fitness levels!

The Performance Studio Glasgow

Classes are being held in the Resource Centre every Saturday from 10am the classes are as follows: 10am– Ballet for 3-6 years 11am– Musical Theatre for 4-11 years 12pm– Ballet for 7-11 years All classes are 50 minutes long at a cost of £4 per class. For more information please call Marianne Smith on 07792 453 273 or email dancedramaglasgow@gmail.co.uk

Marianne joined The Dance School of Scotland at 11. She passed advanced RAD ballet, advanced ISTD modern and tap and received the Associate Modern



teaching qualification with Distinction. She then trained at The Arts Educational Schools in London where she was awarded a diploma in Musical Theatre. After working in musicals in the West End, touring at home and abroad, playing Sandy in Grease, Annette and Stephanie in Saturday Night Fever and Audrey in Little Shop of Horrors she received a scholarship to train at the Academy of Live and Recorded Arts in London. Since then she has worked in Theatre and TV all over the UK.

Spotlight Theatre & Dance

Spotlight Theatre & Dance - the school was established 21 years ago with highly qualified staff giving children from age of 2 through to teacher level a fantastic experience

in many styles of dance including Tap, Ballet, Jazz, Modern, Contemporary, Freestyle and Street.

Yearly examinations and stage shows take place in addition to regular assessments and showcases throughout the term for family and friends.

Classes can be used simply for fun and fitness or take part in all the events the school has to offer.

Regular timetable resumes Tuesday 30th July; 4.30pm for Junior School and 5.30pm for Senior School.



Concierge Services

Concierge services have been running now for 17 years and over the years we have seen some changes. Over the last 2 years in particular some of our long time employees have retired and we would take this opportunity to introduce you to our current Concierge teams. Sammy Smith joined our organisation in August 2012 and Peter Wells is our latest recruit to join Concierge which will enhance the service we already provide to our tenants.

Concierge teams are now as follows:

Team A Robert Porter (Senior Concierge) Dougie McIntosh and Peter Wells



Team B Alex Black (Senior Concierge) Danny Boland and Sammy Smith



Team C Stevie Blackwood (Senior Concierge) Billy Clark and Craig Crawford



Team D Alistair Morris (Senior Concierge) Martin Cunning and Davy Thomas.



Concierge are available 24 hours a day 365 days a year. Please feel free to contact Concierge to discuss any issues or call into the concierge station to see our current CCTV system in operation.

WWHC your Co-operative!

Q. Who owns WWHC?

A. <u>YOU DO</u>. All tenants/members jointly own the assets of WWHC.

Q. Who runs WWHC?

A. **YOU DO**. All tenants/members elect The Management Committee who run WWHC.

Q. Who employs the staff of WWHC?

A. <u>**YOU DO**</u>. All WWHC Staff, Office and Concierge are employed by you, the tenants/members.

Q. Who pays the staff's wages?

A. <u>YOU DO</u>. Salaries and wages are paid through rental income.

Q. Can I get more involved?

A. Of course you can. Why not think about joining The Management Committee. There are a few vacancies. Contact Paul Farrell at the Office

WWHC AGM 2013

The first call of the AGM on 26th August 2013 was inquorate and was reconvened on Monday 2nd September 2013 with 27 members attending along with Councillor Richard Tullett.

The AGM opened with a tribute to Phil Welsh MBE with a minutes applause ringing around the room as fitting tribute to Phil, a founder member of WWHC.

Councillor Tullett responded to a series of questions about local road traffic requirements which local people feel strongly about.

7 committee members were re-elected, Cheryl Burnett, Susan Stevely, Muriel Alcorn, William Hunter, Elizabeth Kerr, Sheila Jamieson and Kirsty McElholm. Continuing committee members are Susan Anderson, Anne Anderson, Helen Anderson, Louise Wilson and Andy Duffin. Patrick Byrne was elected as a new committee member.

Following the AGM, The management committee met to elect office bearers. Last year office bearers were returned unopposed.



Susan Anderson Chairperson



Anne Anderson Vice Chairperson



Cheryl Burnett Secretary



Muriel Alcorn Treasurer

A Fond Farewell to the Whitlawburn Tree

The Whitlawburn tree was situated at the top of the hill outside Roslin Tower. It was a tree that was been here for 77 years and many tenants seen it as a landmark to the area, it even features in the WWHC logo. We sadly had to get it taken down due to it being a danger to the public and also in critical state. We did however make use of woodchip which has now been spread around the millennium garden outside the office.



Useful Numbers- Keep me handy!

Community Resource Centre	0141 641 5005	Benefit Enquiries	0845 608 8645
Concierge	0141 646 1924	Cambuslang Q&A	0303 123 1012
East Whitlawburn TMC	0141 641 3484	Cambuslang Citizens Advice	0141 646 3191
Housing Benefit/Council Tax	0303 123 1011	Community Police	0141 207 4101
SLC Dog Fouling	0845 740 6080	Scottish Gas (Emergency)	0800 111 9999
NHS24	08454 24 24 24	Scottish Water	0845 601 8855
Tax Credits	0845 300 3900	SLC Land Services (Bulk uplifts)	0303 123 1020