



blairtummock housing association

# NEWSLETTER

at the heart of our community

Autumn 2020

## Message from our Chairperson



Welcome to our Autumn newsletter. I hope this finds you all safe and well. Times continue to be strange for us all with the COVID 19 pandemic and the constant changes to our lives as the Government try to deal with increases in cases within particular areas.

As you are aware, the office has been closed since March and staff have been working remotely in order to keep the majority of our services running. As Housing Associations are non-essential workers, we have had to follow the Government guidelines regarding returning to the office and this will be in phase 4, which many of you will know has been delayed and will be reviewed on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

However, I am glad to say we have kept up telephone and email communications with all tenants/applicants who wish to speak with us. We are also able to offer remote video services. If this is something, you would prefer – just telephone the office and a meeting can be arranged.

We have also managed to keep to our cycle of committee meetings by using video links and

this has worked well, we also had our first AGM on Zoom, which was very different. We have also completed all the necessary returns to our Regulator.

You will have seen that our estate caretakers (Blairtummock & Rogerfield Opportunities) are working as normal and I am grateful to them for all the excellent work. A great deal of their time has been spent on dealing with fly tipping and bulk refuse, could I ask that if you can you take these items to the council facilities.

Following the AGM I have been voted Chairperson for another year and the Management Committee members are:

- Gary Wood – *Chairperson*
- Margaret Pirrie – *Secretary*
- Donna Miller – *Treasurer*
- Catherine Black – *Committee Member*
- Lynn Blackwood – *Committee Member*
- Yvonne Crockert – *Committee Member*
- Catriona Jamieson – *Committee Member*
- Tracy Slaven – *Committee Member*
- Paula Sweeney – *Committee Member*
- John Wilkie – *Committee Member*

We always welcome new members and if you are interested, please contact the office and we can make arrangement to discuss this further.

*Gary Wood – Chairperson*



Blairtummock & Rogerfield Opportunities, our estate caretakers

# Message from the Director



As many of you are aware, we cannot return to the office until the Government permits non-essential workers to do so and you will notice some differences when we do return. The main differences, which will affect you, are:

- When we open, it will be by appointment only;
- You will be asked to use hand sanitiser and encouraged to use a face mask;
- There will be a cough screen at reception
- There will be signage to ensure physical distancing;
- Physical distancing rules when you meet staff around the area;

- Staff will be working between the office and remote working; this is to allow physical distance within the office.

This is strictly in keeping with government guidance and these measures are necessary to keep us all safe. As guidelines, change we will review and adapt our approaches but the safety of everyone will always be the most important factor in any changes. I trust you understand the situation and as we are all aware, we are living in unusual times.

I hope you are all keeping safe and please do not hesitate to contact the office if you have any questions.

*Jacqui O'Rourke - Director*

## Looking after your mental health during COVID 19

The Scottish Governments "clear your head" campaign highlights practical things you can do to look after your mental health and wellbeing while continuing to stay at home. Visit <https://clearyourhead.scot> for tips resources and support.

If you need to talk to someone about your mental health, you can contact:

- **NHS 24** on 111. – Monday – Sunday 6pm to 2am.
- **Breathing space** on 0800 83 85 87. Monday – Thursday 6pm to 2am. Weekends Friday 6pm – Monday 6am.
- **Samaritans** on 116 123, free from any phone. Open 24 hours a day 365 days a year.



# AIRGUNS

The Association recently became aware of one of our contractors being injured by an airgun shot from the window of one of our properties.

This was thankfully an isolated incident and the contractor suffered no serious injuries, however airguns are very dangerous and there have been several high profile cases in the UK in recent years where there have been fatal incidents involving them.

**If you use or own an air weapon, you need to license it.**

It is an offence to own or use an air weapon without the proper certificate or permit. This includes buying an air weapon, someone buying it for you or simply having an air weapon in your possession.

If you have any concerns over airguns, please contact Police Scotland on 101.



## BULK UPDATE

**Tenants should note that the bulk uplift service provided by Glasgow City Council is still suspended as a result of the COVID outbreak. GCC do not have a timescale as to when this will resume.**

Therefore, tenants should note that, in order to avoid a backlog of bulk in back courts or items being put on the street, the Association will provide a bulk uplift service for TENEMENT ONLY properties. Tenants in these properties should put their bulk out as normal for a Thursday morning collection and our Estate Caretakers BRO will take the bulk items to the council waste facility.

Please note however, that GCC Queenslie Waste Disposal site is open to residents and we would ask that, where possible, tenants take their own bulk to this facility. Please note that this site is open from 8am – 4pm for residents dropping off smaller items in cars.

Residents using vans can only attend between 8am – 11am and 1pm – 4pm.

If you have any symptoms of COVID-19, please do not attend this facility.

Tenants who live in our houses or 4 in a block properties should not put any items out for collection on the street as they will not be lifted.

If you wish to speak to the council's cleansing department about this matter, they can be contacted on 0141 287 9700.

Additionally, if you are unhappy with the current suspension of the service, you can contact your local councillors:

- Councillor Ruari Kelly (SNP) – 0141 287 4057
- Councillor Maureen Burke (Scottish Labour Party) – 0141 287 5865
- Councillor Mandy Morgan (SNP) – 0141 287 5269





# IMPORTANT CHANGES TO TENANT'S RIGHTS

The Association wrote to all tenants in October of last year advising of the introduction of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 and the impact that this has on your tenancy rights.

We must again remind you that, from 1 November 2019, there is a 12-month qualifying period before you can apply for permission to make any substantial changes to your tenancy. This applies to your rights with regards to assignation, subletting, applying for joint tenancy and succession of tenancy.

Please note that this 12-month qualifying period only begins on the day that we receive written notification from you of any changes. Therefore, to ensure that your tenancy rights are protected it is very important to ensure that you advise us in writing of any changes to your household.

**If you are unsure about whether or not you have told us someone has moved into your home, please contact our office and we can review who is detailed as living in your household.**

## EVICTION AFTER DRUGS CONVICTION

**A Blairtummock tenant was recently evicted having been found guilty at court on drug charges.**

The tenant was convicted under the Misuse of Drugs Act and the Association raised a civil case for repossession of the property. The Sheriff granted an eviction order as the tenant had breached the tenancy agreement by using the property for illegal or immoral purposes.

Drug dealing/cultivation will not be tolerated by Blairtummock Housing Association.

The Association has a policy of considering legal action in all cases where tenants have been convicted of drugs offences within the tenancy or in the locality of the tenancy. This also applies to drugs offences within or in the locality of the property by persons other than the tenant e.g. friends or relations being convicted of

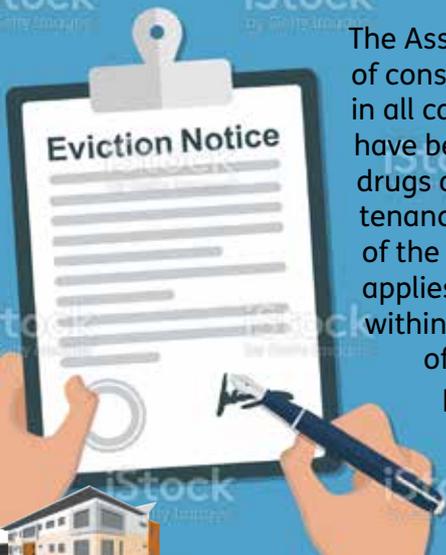
drugs offences within the tenancy address.

Tenants should also be aware of the new streamlined eviction process which was introduced in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014) and came into effect on 1 May 2019. This new provision gives landlords the flexibility to use a streamlined process for eviction where a tenant (or any one of joint tenants), a person living in or lodging in the house, a subtenant or a person visiting the house has been convicted of an offence punishable by imprisonment within the previous 12 months.

The Association will always consider legal action as a last resort however, the new streamlined eviction process could, in effect, make it simpler for landlords to evict tenants in anti-social behaviour or drug cases where their guilt has already been proven in court.

Further information on this can be found in our Neighbour Dispute & Anti-Social Behaviour Policy which is available on the Association's website.

Anti-social behaviour and drugs can seriously affect the quality of life of our residents and communities. We believe that our tenants should expect and be able to live peacefully and safely in their homes and community.



# Lockdown – Community Spirit



**The COVID-19 lockdown and continuing restrictions have brought a lot of challenges for everyone in the local area.**

However, it is times like these where you see a real community pull together and the Association would like to thank all tenants for their patience and understanding during this difficult time. Staff have been working from home but still providing a comprehensive service to all tenants, including linking in with a range of agencies to provide as much assistance as possible to tenants.

During lockdown the Association contacted every tenant aged over 65 to ensure that they had help and support and offered practical assistance where appropriate.

We have continued to refer tenants affected by furlough, unemployment or any other financial issue to GEMAP or our new in-house welfare benefits officer to ensure that they

continued to receive excellent advice on their finances and to assist them to deal with any changes in their circumstances.

Our **'Rainbow Fund'** has made a total of 278 payments to 142 households, totalling £6,975 in the Blairtummock Community.

Some of the feedback we have received from tenants has shown us how vital the Rainbow Fund has been over recent months:

*"I'm honestly very grateful. That will make a difference, thank you all so much"*

*'Thanks, this will take a lot of pressure off - You're amazing'*

*'I can't thank you enough for everything you have done for me'*

The fund is available to assist those tenants most affected by the current economic situation. If you would like further information on how to apply, please contact our office.

A total of 44 tenants have been referred for assistance with energy costs. Home Energy Scotland provide impartial advice on energy supply/tariffs and can also supply for fuel vouchers for some tenants who are struggling to top up their meters (pre-payment meters only). If you would like to be referred to Home Energy Scotland, please contact us at the office and we can do this on your behalf.

Up until early September, **FARE** provided food parcels to many people throughout the Easterhouse area, including many Blairtummock tenants. Connect Community Trust continue to provide food parcels, please contact our office to request assistance.

We also worked with **Connect Community Trust** and made 86 referrals for energy grants via Connect Community Trust, unfortunately this grant has now ended.

**The Association would like to thank all of our partner agencies for their hard work and invaluable support within the local community and would like to encourage any tenant encountering hardship as a result of COVID-19 to contact us for assistance.**

**We are here to help.**



# COMPLIMENTS

Our staff have been working hard to continue to provide an excellent service to our residents. We would love to share some of the kind words and feedback we have received recently:

Phoned to thank staff for all we are doing at this difficult time (COVID 19). Thanked Sharon for organising food parcel for her Mum.

Said that Amanda was very helpful and took away a lot of the stress from the situation he found himself in with finances due to COVID. Was very thankful for her assistance.

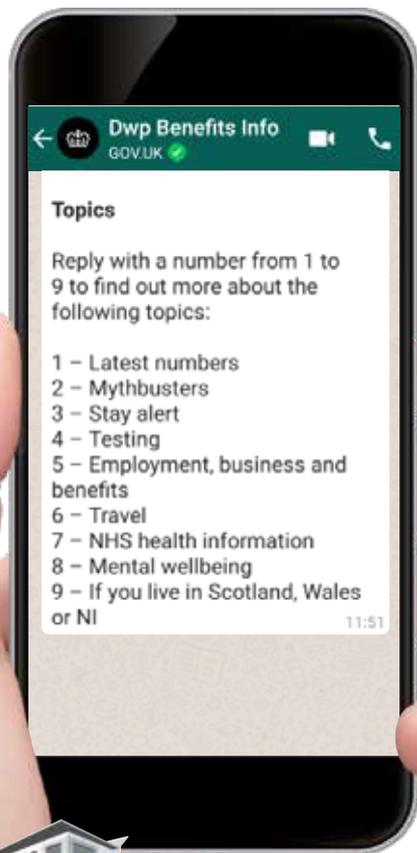
'I can't thank you enough for everything you have done for me.'

Thanked us for our efforts dealing with a neighbour complaint, and taking the time to call back to check if things were still ok.

"I felt ashamed and scared to call the housing as my circumstances had changed so much since lock down and being furloughed from my job and I have received such a great response and understanding of the difficulty I am facing. Can't thank Blairtummock Housing enough to be honest, I've had the best service and staff have always been very helpful and approachable."

We aim to learn from what you tell us we're doing well and if you have a concern or a complaint, we aim to learn from your feedback. We understand that we do not always get it right and we also want to hear where you feel we can improve our service or if we haven't met your expectations. Please don't hesitate to let us know by completing the comments slip included within the newsletter, calling 0141 773 0202 or emailing us [enquires@blairtummock.org.uk](mailto:enquires@blairtummock.org.uk)

## Benefits & COVID-19 information available via WhatsApp



**People can now access the most up-to-date benefits and support information via their smart phones using WhatsApp.**

The automated "chatbot" service, which can be accessed by sending 'Hi' in a WhatsApp message to 07860 064 422, has been launched to help combat the spread of incorrect information and to make the correct information easily accessible.

For employment, business and benefit information you should select option 5. Please note the service is for information only, your messages will be answered by an automated chatbot. If you need to contact DWP you should do so using the usual method of contact.

DWP is one of the first government departments to provide information via the WhatsApp service which includes information on benefits support available, how to check if you are eligible and how to apply.

Further information can be found by visiting:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-coronavirus-information-service-on-whatsapp>

### Useful support link

Citizen's Advice Helpline Scotland – 0800 028 1456 Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland/about-us/get-advice-s/>



# FINANCIAL WORRIES

We recognise that we are in a period of great uncertainty and many of our tenants may be struggling with lost income. Our Money Advice Service is available for anyone who requires support to claim benefits during these times. Please contact us to request a phone appointment.

If you are worried about paying rent, it is important that you contact us as soon as possible. Our staff have been contacting tenants to check if there is any

assistance we can offer and reviewing paying arrangements, however where tenants have not responded to us, we will proceed with our procedures for rent arrears.

We would urge anyone concerned about financial difficulties to get in touch as soon as possible by calling us on 0141 773 0202 or email [enquiries@blairtummock.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@blairtummock.org.uk)

Please don't panic, we are here to help.



# MAKE A STAND AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE

Millions of people experience domestic abuse every year, with two women being killed by their partner or ex-partner every week. Housing organisations house and employ millions of people across the UK, and that means we house and employ many thousands of people affected by domestic abuse.

By signing the pledge, Blairtummock HA has become part of that collective effort and we have put the following four commitments in place.

1. Put in place and embed a policy to support residents who are affected by domestic abuse – please see our website for details of our new policy.
2. Make information about national and local domestic abuse support services available on your website and in other appropriate places so that they are easily accessible for residents and staff.

3. Put in place a HR policy, or amend an existing policy, to support members of staff who may be experiencing domestic abuse.
4. Appoint a champion at a senior level in your organisation to own the activity you are doing to support people experiencing domestic abuse. Our member of staff appointed is Gillian Bell.

More information can be found at [cih.org/makeastand](http://cih.org/makeastand).

Information on support services can be found on our website under the Housing Services section or you can call our office for assistance and advice.



# WELFARE BENEFITS ADVICE

**We understand that tenant's financial circumstances may have been affected by the pandemic.**

Did you know that we have Welfare Benefits Advisers available for phone appointments on Wednesday, Thursday (pm) and Friday?

Nick provides a service via GEMAP and is available

on a Wednesday for Blairtummock HA tenants.

We are also delighted to introduce our new Adviser, Elaine, who provides a service via Connect on a Thursday afternoon and all day Friday.

Please contact our office on 0141 773 0202 and we will be happy to arrange an appointment for you.



*I am Elaine McIntyre and I am the Income Advisor for Blairtummock Housing Association and this is a free, independent, confidential service for their tenants. I am available on a Thursday afternoon and all day on a Friday for*

*appointments. Please note that at present due to the ongoing Coronavirus Restrictions this service is by telephone appointment only.*

*I have been working in the advice sector since 2008 helping people with all types of benefit and money advice queries, including making a claim, appealing a benefit decision, universal credit, budgeting, income maximisation, utility issues.*

*Many people do not know that they could be entitled to any benefits at all and most think*

*I won't bother with that as it probably doesn't apply to me. I often find that people are not claiming all the benefits that they are entitled to and this can add up to a large amount of missed out income that most people would greatly benefit from.*

*I would ask all tenants to make an appointment to see me to have a benefit check carried out so I can be sure that you are getting everything that you could be entitled to for instance disability benefits, premiums included in your benefit income, entitlement to additional help with housing costs for under occupancy charges or non-dependent deductions. There are all manner of benefits that you could be missing out on and even if you are not currently on benefits but are working and on a low income you could be entitled to top up benefits to help boost your income or help with housing costs.*

*I look forward to speaking with you.*

## KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH YOU

**Due to the recent lockdown we have had to adapt to new ways of working, ensuring we continue to provide a great service to our residents.**

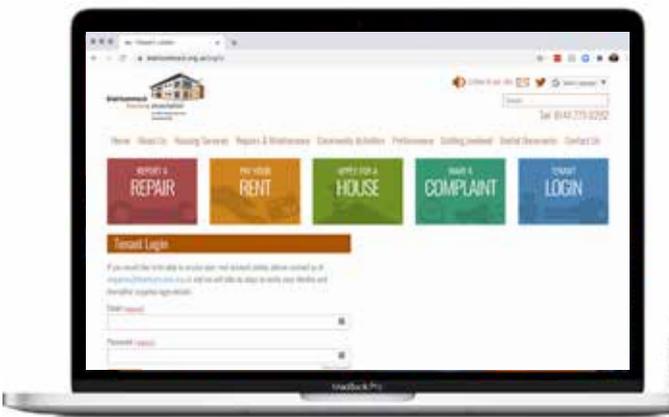
We have found that keeping in touch with residents via email and text message has been particularly effective during lockdown. Don't worry if you are not comfortable with technology, we still use our more traditional methods for communication such as letters but if you are happy for us to get in touch or send letters via email, please contact us on [enquiries@blairtummock.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@blairtummock.org.uk) to provide your email address and mobile number

to ensure you can receive emails, text message updates and reminders from us.

You can even receive our newsletters via email, providing a great read online, whilst being environmentally friendly – win win!

We are looking for ways to keep in touch and communicate with you all during COVID 19 as we can't hold drop in sessions. If we don't have an up to day telephone number or email address on file for you, we would be much obliged if you could please forward this to [enquiries@blairtummock.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@blairtummock.org.uk)

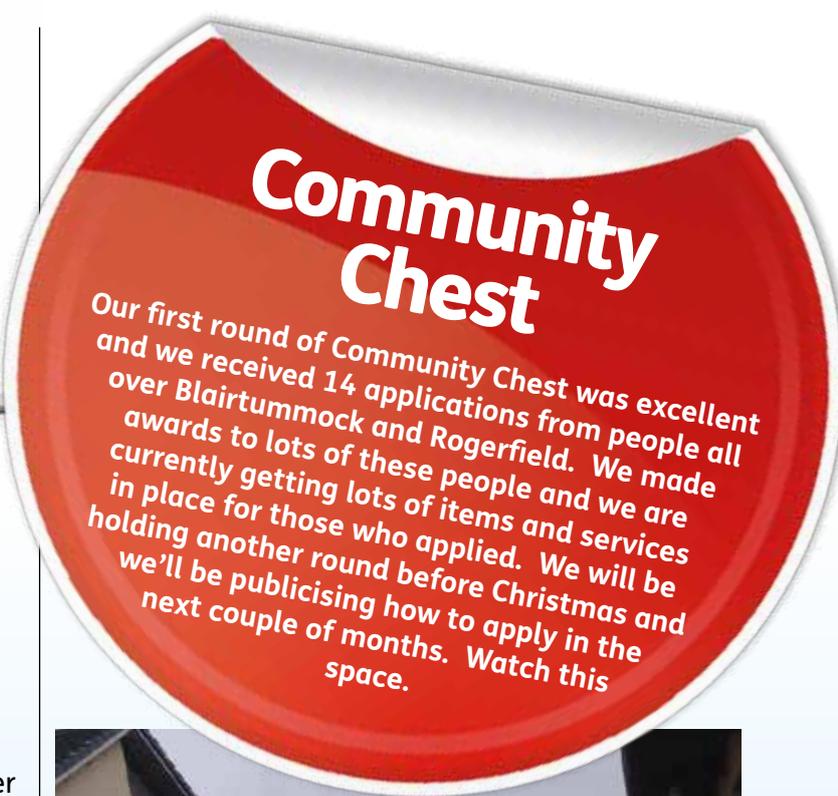




## TENANT LOGIN AREA

Did you know you can now access your rent account and recent repairs history through the Association's website?

If you would like to be able to access your online account, please contact our office on **0141 773 0202** or [enquiries@blairtummock.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@blairtummock.org.uk) and we will take steps to verify your identity and thereafter organise login details for you.



## Community Chest

Our first round of Community Chest was excellent and we received 14 applications from people all over Blairtummock and Rogerfield. We made awards to lots of these people and we are currently getting lots of items and services in place for those who applied. We will be holding another round before Christmas and we'll be publicising how to apply in the next couple of months. Watch this space.

## GAS SERVICING

The Association understands the concerns that people have during this difficult time in allowing access to gas engineers, while shielding/self-isolating for the gas safety check to be carried out.

During these times, The Association still has to meet its commitment in keeping everyone and their families safe.

We would like to take this opportunity to say Thank You and let you know that your assistance in allowing access to our gas engineers from City Technical Services (UK) Ltd is much appreciated.



## Nursery Garden at Thistle Childcare

The garden has been improved greatly with the installation of lots of great new play resources for the Children in Thistle. The Association would like to thank all of the volunteers that got involved and helped Thistle to create an excellent new space. This greatly compliments the investment BHA and Stepping Stones for Families have put into the garden.



# Our Blairtummock LOCKDOWN HEROES



We asked you to nominate the local heroes of lockdown, someone who has gone above and beyond to brighten others days. We received a number of nominations and were delighted to surprise them all with a small gift and certificate to recognise their invaluable support during lockdown.

Our thanks and congratulations go to:

- Betty O'Neil
- Anne MacRae
- Andrea McLachlan
- Donna Miller
- Catherine Blake
- Debbie McMahon (Easterhouse Parish Church)
- Linda (Daffodil Club)
- FARE

*We were inspired by some of the comments and wanted to share these with you:*

*"She deserves a little bit of recognition for everything she does for me."*

*"I'm hoping she gets recognised for the great neighbour that she is."*

*"She is an absolute credit to our community."*

*"Always pulls the community together....she really is amazing."*



*Congratulations to our winners, you are all superstars!*





# MUSIC MAKERS PROGRAMME



Our new music makers programme will encourage young people in the drop in sessions to learn new skills through music. Nicola will work with them to teach them to play instruments, songwrite and have fun in 1-2-1 tuition and musical workshops. Here is some info below on Nicola who is running these workshops.



**Peer wellbeing Project:** Hi everyone! My name is Shauna and I am a new face joining The Pavillion (Greater Easterhouse) family! I am the peer wellbeing Coordinator and will be running the Peer wellbeing programme in The Pavillion on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

I have worked with young people for years across summer camps, support groups and respite homes and I can't wait to get involved in the Easterhouse community. In my spare time I love spending time with my friends and family, doing anything from paddle boarding to board game nights. I love having a laugh, meeting new people and trying new things. I am passionate about encouraging mental health conversations and I can't wait to support so many of you who have been so resilient during this COVID crisis.

*Hi I'm Nicola and here's a little about me, I'm a singer/ songwriter from Glasgow. I'm 29 years old. I studied music at James Watt College and achieved my Higher National Diploma in 2014. I got my Grade 8 Vocal certification in 2019 with Trinity College in London. I work at St Peter the Apostle High School as a freelance tutor and have done for 2 years. I write, produce and direct all my music and videos and work as a solo artist releasing my own music.*

*I will meet you all soon – in the meantime why not complete the wordsearch opposite and hand in your completed entry to The Pavillion to be in with a chance of winning some great prizes.*

 [Shaunapavillion](#)

## SHAUNA'S WORDSEARCH

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

## DROP IN SESSIONS

The Pavillion is open again and we are back running our drop in sessions. Here is some info for anyone wanting to sign up and the days and times of the sessions.

- **Monday/Wednesday/Friday:** Junior sessions (P4 – P7) 3pm to 5pm
- **Tuesday/Thursday:** Mini's sessions (P1 – P3) 3pm to 5pm
- **Monday/Wednesday/Friday:** Senior sessions (1st year – age 18) 6pm to 8.30pm
- **Tuesday/Thursday:** Peer wellbeing group sessions Times and dates TBC

PAVILLION  
GROUP WORK  
COMMUNITY  
MENTAL HEALTH

BODY IMAGE  
MINDFULNESS  
RESILIENCE  
STRESS

SUPPORT  
COPING  
FRIENDS  
STIGMA



# New outdoor area!

We recently received funding to refurbish our outdoors areas, we have built a new decking area and have been able to update the path around the building to make it nicer to spend time out there with our young people during outdoor youth sessions!

We also purchased some gazebos so no matter the weather we can make the most of our new areas. The young people helped us to brighten up our garden by planting lots of new plants by the front doors and some in hanging planters which we have put on the decking, thanks to our young people for the hard work! We also have plans to add an outdoor gym to our outdoor space, follow us on facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/pavillionyouthcafe/> to keep up to date.



## Glasgow East's NEW community car club

...on a street near you



LIMITED TIME  
**FREE**  
MEMBERSHIP  
+£40 DRIVING CREDIT

From  
**£4.75**  
an hour

GO TO: [co-wheels.org.uk/glasgoweast](http://co-wheels.org.uk/glasgoweast)

(If you don't have internet or need help with registering, contact one of our local partners overleaf)

## Pay-as-you-go car hire

A cleaner, greener & cheaper way to drive in Glasgow East...



Join



Book



Drive

Sign up using code 'connect' for £40 free driving credit & no joining fee

At a street near you with co-wheels' local partners...

**Connect Community Trust** 39 Wellhouse Crescent, Easterhouse G33 4HG

**FARE** 31 Drumlanrig Avenue, Easterhouse G34 0JF

**Provanhall Housing Association** 34 Conisborough Road, Easterhouse G34 9QG

**Blairtummock Housing Association** 45 Boyndie Street, Easterhouse G34 9JL

**FUSE** 1567-1573 Shettleston Rd, Shettleston G32 9AS



## Blairtummock Housing Association, 45 Boyndie Street, Glasgow, G34 9JL

Telephone: 0141 773 0202

Email: [enquiries@blairtummock.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@blairtummock.org.uk)

Web: [www.blairtummock.org.uk](http://www.blairtummock.org.uk)

Twitter: @BlairtummockHA

## E-MAIL

Would you like to receive future copies of Blairtummock News to your email address rather than by post? If so, please forward your name and address to [enquiries@blairtummock.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@blairtummock.org.uk) and we will arrange this.

### OUT OF HOURS NUMBER – EMERGENCIES ONLY

In the event of an emergency only, please contact our out of hours' contractor, City Technical Services on 0333 202 0708. Note this service is for Association tenants only, not sharing or factored owners.

Blairtummock Housing Association is an organisation committed to Equal Opportunities. If you require this newsletter in a different format, please contact the office on 0141 773 0202 where our staff will be happy to assist.

