

The Newsletter of Yorkhill Housing Association Ltd

Yorkhill and you *looking after your home together*

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Welcome to our Spring newsletter!

We are approaching the end of our financial year 2023/24 and it has been a challenging, but rewarding, year for the Association. With new staff joining and some moving on it has been excellent to see such high standards being maintained for our tenants, owners, and residents.

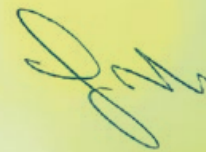
While the past 12 months have brought new challenges, particularly relating to inflation and the effects of this on our expenditure, we remain in a strong position thanks to good forward planning.

We consulted on a rent increase of 7.7% which we recognised was high, but thankfully due to improving market conditions we have been able to reduce this to 5.6%. We also took on board the feedback from our tenants, and the cost of living crisis in making this decision.

It is very difficult to guess what the future will bring, but we will continue to put value for money at the heart of our decision-making processes. It is this careful planning which has led Yorkhill Housing Association to have among the lowest rents in the West End of Glasgow, while still being able to provide good quality homes and services.

I hope you find this newsletter interesting. We would like to hear your thoughts on its contents, and if you have any suggestions for future editions. You will find details of a survey at the back page, and I would urge you to have your say. The Senior Management Team and Management Committee will read every response.

Kind regards,



Tony Mallaghan
Chief Executive



Chair's Remarks

As we move into the financial year 2024/25, we have, inevitably, many challenges to face. The Scottish Government's reduction in housing expenditure is a major blow to the sector overall, impacting on its ability to provide social housing across the country. We and other housing agencies will continue to apply pressure to the Scottish Government to reconsider its position in this matter.

Yorkhill itself has been fortunate to have been able to purchase several properties in the area and, with the assistance of funding from Glasgow City Council, we are expecting to have acquired upwards of ten flats, meaning we can provide more affordable housing in the area for tenants.

In some cases these purchases have enabled us to have control over the factoring in these buildings, which should signify a considerable improvement in maintenance and repairs, ensuring that the building is compliant with all relevant legislation.

We are also working hard to upgrade the Overnewton Centre, with a view to widening provision of community services in the area. An extensive survey of tenants and other local residents was undertaken to establish what services people would like to see here, and we are using this feedback to channel our efforts in a direction which works for the community.

There are some significant staff changes taking place during the next two or three months, when we will sadly be saying goodbye to experienced team members through retiral, however we are confident that our new team set-up will ensure that the changes are managed smoothly, and that our work continues to be efficient and effective.

I would like to personally thank the entire staff team for their very hard work in maintaining a strong tenancy service, while juggling the ever-growing demands of the Scottish Government and other agencies aimed at ensuring we are compliant with all relevant policies and procedures.

We plan soon to open a customer portal on our website which will make it easier and more convenient for tenants and factored owners to communicate effectively with us.

We continue with planned upgrades to properties across our estate and wish to assure all of you that your interests are at the core of what we do.

Regards



Yvonne Alexis
Chair of Yorkhill Housing
Association



Emergency Repairs Contact Details



From 2nd April 2024 we will be moving to a new out-of-hours telephone service, run by Saltire Facilities Management Ltd.

From this date if you have any emergency repairs when our office is closed please call Saltire on **01698 743612** who will arrange for our usual contractors to attend if required.

Please keep a hold of this number in the event of an emergency, and please do not use any old numbers you have for emergency repairs.



We are changing our opening hours from April 2024. From this date the office will open at 10am, and will close for lunch

from 12.30pm each day. The office will re-open at 1.30pm before closing again at 4pm, except on a Wednesday where the office will remain closed from lunchtime.

Our telephones will open at 9am, and close at 5pm each day with an earlier close of 4pm on Friday. The telephones will also be closed during lunch periods of 12.30pm-1.30pm each day. On a Wednesday the telephones will remain closed from 12.30pm.

Staff will continue to work their normal contracted hours, and will use the periods where the office is closed to attend training, work on complex tasks, and meet as a whole staff team. If you have any questions on this change please get in touch.

Day	Telephones Open	Office Opening Hours
Monday	9am – 12.30pm / 1.30pm – 5pm	10am – 12.30pm / 1.30pm – 4pm
Tuesday	9am – 12.30pm / 1.30pm – 5pm	10am – 12.30pm / 1.30pm – 4pm
Wednesday	9am – 12.30pm / Closed	10am – 12.30pm / Closed
Thursday	9am – 12.30pm / 1.30pm – 5pm	10am – 12.30pm / 1.30pm – 4pm
Friday	9am – 12.30pm / 1.30pm – 4pm	10am – 12.30pm / 1.30pm – 4pm

Staff Changes



Welcome to **Calum Davidson** who joins the Association as a Governance Assistant.

Calum will be working closely with the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, and with the Management Committee to ensure that we meet our regulatory obligations, and provide clear information to our stakeholders. You might also meet Calum at reception or on the phones!



Welcome also to **Scott Burke!** Scott will be taking over from Claire Findlay as the Association's Welfare Rights Officer. Scott will be working in our offices on a Wednesday, and is highly experienced in providing benefits and money advice. If you'd like an appointment with him please get in touch!

On a sadder note it is time to say goodbye to **Stewart Pattison**, who is the Association's Compliance Manager. Stewart has worked for the Association for a significant period of time in a few different roles but will soon be enjoying his well-earned retirement.

Following Stewart's retirement our Housing Services Manager, **Grant Kennedy**, has been promoted to the post of Deputy Chief Executive from April 2024. Grant will continue to lead the Housing Management team but will also take on governance and compliance tasks, and support our Chief Executive as part of his new role.



Are you interested in becoming a Management Committee member?

If you answer YES to any of the following questions, you should seriously consider becoming a Committee member at Yorkhill Housing Association Ltd.

- Do You live in Yorkhill?
- Do you have an interest in what happens in the Yorkhill area?
- Do you have a couple of spare evenings a month?
- Would you like your views to be represented in the decision-making process at Yorkhill Housing Association Ltd?
- Are you a Shareholder of Yorkhill Housing Association? (If not, it costs £1.00!)

Under the terms of the Association's Regulation Procedures there must be a minimum of 7 and

maximum of 15 full members on the Management Committee for the Association to legally function.

Places on the Management Committee are open to all residents (tenants and owners) who are shareholders of the Association. The current committee is made up of local residents, a local councillor and other professional members who have an interest in the future of housing and community interest in Yorkhill.

To achieve this effectively, we require a balanced mix of ages, strengths, knowledge, views and experience. This ensures the community continues to provide local control and effectively set, monitor and achieve our future strategic direction.

If you are interested in becoming a Management Committee member please get in touch!

**YOU DON'T NEED TO BE A Y.H.A. TENANT
HAVE A SAY, IN WHERE YOU STAY
YORKHILL HOUSING ASSOCIATION 0141 285 7910**

CLOSE PAINTING PROGRAMME

New Close Cleaning Contractor



As our tenants may know Caledonian Maintenance Services had carried out the Association's close cleaning last year. Following a thorough procurement process, with many strong submissions from contractors, it has been AL Scrubz Cleaning who have been appointed to carry out this work from 1st April 2024.

James Fitzpatrick, Managing Director of AL Scrubz, said "We are thrilled to announce our partnership with Yorkhill Housing Association to provide communal close cleaning services. Our goal isn't just to clean – it's to become part of the community. We'll be listening to residents' needs and working hard to keep everyone happy. We're committed to delivering top-notch cleaning services while building strong relationships with tenants".

AL Scrubz will be asking residents directly for their feedback on their services as they aim to deliver these to a high standard, however we would also like to invite residents to share their thoughts with us once they get started.

We are confident that AL Scrubz will provide an excellent service, however if any resident has any queries please contact the Association on 0141 285 7910.

Yorkhill News Spring 2024

As an association we are committed to continually improving our housing stock whether it be internal, external, or common areas of the buildings.

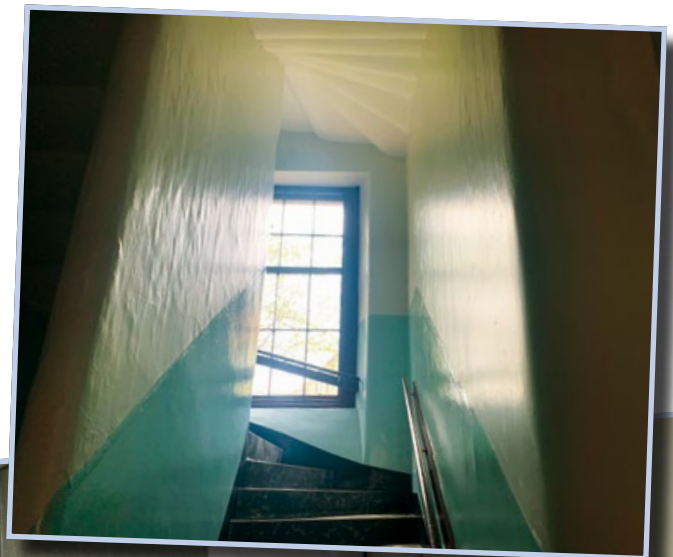
As part of our cyclical works programme the association carried out a survey of every common close with the view to carrying out close painting, including backcourts, at 10 properties per year - subject to residents' approval. This includes any plasterwork repairs to walls to try and ensure the best possible finish for residents.

The association is pleased to say that 8 out of 10 closes chosen this year have been approved, with J.S. Harvie being successful

following a competitive tender process.

J.S Harvie are now on site, with the first close being started at the beginning of March. All 8 closes should be completed by mid-April 2024.

We hope to be starting the process of choosing the next group of closes and tendering for these within the next few months and, with the residents continuing support for the associations ambitions, strive to make Yorkhill an even better place to live.



looking after your home together

Gas Safety

The Association has a legal responsibility to ensure that all properties it owns that contain gas pipe work or a gas appliance are serviced on an annual basis.

This Annual Gas Safety Check is required by law and is for your own and your neighbours' safety. Most tenants are very helpful and allow us access when requested, to carry out this essential check. However, there are instances when the Association has to intervene with strongly worded letters, legal letters or even gain

access via a locksmith. We urge all tenants to make their annual gas safety check appointments early with either the Association or Alba Gas.

Due to the potential seriousness of the situation and the fact that there is a Health & Safety risk to property and more importantly to people, we are taking a much firmer approach to gaining access. Where we have taken reasonable steps to gain access and have not been able to do so, we will arrange to gain entry via

a locksmith to make the supply safe. **If we require to gain entry to your property and change the locks in order to make your gas supply safe, you will be liable for all costs associated with this. This can be avoided by responding to our access requests to arrange a suitable appointment.**



Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR)

You may have been contacted recently by our staff with regards to Electrical Installation Condition Report (or EICR) in your home. An EICR is an inspection and testing of electrical installations within your home to ensure that it's in a satisfactory condition and safe for continued use. We are required to carry this out every 5 years, to make sure that it is safe and up to the current standards. This test takes only 2 hours to complete, forms part of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS), so it's really important that we are given access to your home to carry this out.

During the EICR we require clear access to your electrical cupboard/fuse board and to electrical sockets where possible. If we find any minor faults, our electrician will repair these at the time of the EICR. If we find more complex repairs such as replacing your consumer unit, we will arrange this as follow-up work at a date and time to suit you. Again, it is important that you do allow access for any follow-up work, to ensure the continued safety of your home.

If you receive a call or letter requesting access, please ensure that you allow access on date and time requested. Alternatively, you can call the Property Services Team on 0141 287 7910 to arrange an appointment. Failure to grant access is a breach of your tenancy agreement and we can exercise the right to gain access if necessary.

We appreciate your cooperation in allowing us to carry out this safety check. If you have any queries or concerns regarding this, please contact our Property Services Team on 0141 287 7910.



XL Bully Dogs

You will likely have heard recent news stories on changes in the law relating to keeping 'XL Bully' dogs as pets. The Association recently received advice from the Scottish Government:

- The first stage of the new rules came into force on 23 February 2024.
- XL Bully owners in Scotland must ensure their dogs are muzzled and on a lead when in a public place.
- Selling, gifting or exchanging XL Bully dogs is also now prohibited.
- It remains legal to own an XL Bully dog with no new legal rules on ownership of an XL Bully dog applying as yet.

However, that will change when the second stage of the new rules comes into force on 1 August

2024. From that date, it will be against the law to own a XL Bully dog without an exemption. Subject to consideration of the regulations by Scottish Parliament, owners can apply for certificates of exemption between 1 April to 31 July 2024 (full details will shortly be made available on the Scottish Government website). Owners of an XL Bully dog will need to apply for an exemption on or before 31 July 2024 to be able to continue to legally own their dog.

Although the XL Bully dog has been added to the list of designated dogs under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, any individual XL Bully dog will not be classed as prohibited where an owner of an XL Bully dog obtains a certificate of exemption that enables the owner to legally own the dog. This information is being given to help tenants

and landlords understand the changes where tenancy agreements include clauses relating to 'prohibited' dogs under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991.

Helpful and practical support and guidance has been published on the mygov.scot website to ensure owners are made aware of how to comply with the new safeguards on XL Bully dogs, with further information to be published in the coming period.

XL Bully dogs in Scotland - www.mygov.scot/xl-bully-dogs

Controlling your dog in public - www.mygov.scot/controlling-your-dog

I would remind tenants that permission should be sought before keeping a pet. If you would like to discuss this matter further please contact the Housing Management team at the office.



Switch to Direct Debit

Direct Debit is one of the safest and most convenient ways of paying your bills:



- Payments are made automatically, so bills are never forgotten and there's no risk of late payment charges.
- Organisations using the Direct Debit Scheme have to pass a careful vetting process, and are closely monitored by the banking industry.
- The Direct Debit Guarantee protects you and your money in the unlikely event that there is an error in the payment of a Direct Debit, for instance if a payment is collected on the incorrect date, or the wrong amount is collected.

You can choose a payment date to suit your needs, helping you easily schedule your bills. Factoring payments can be made monthly allowing you to spread costs over the quarter, or quarterly for the full invoice amount. Rent can be paid weekly, fortnightly, four-weekly, or monthly – whichever suits you!

Direct Debit payments come with a guarantee. So, you're automatically protected by three important safeguards:

- An immediate money back guarantee from your bank or building society in the event of an error in the payment of your Direct Debit
- Advance notice if the date or amount changes
- The right to cancel at any time.

Switch to Direct Debit – it's as easy as 1-2-3

1. Get your bank account details handy
2. Call us on 0141 285 7910
3. We'll do the rest

Rent Increase 24/25



In November 2023 the Association was preparing to review our rent charges to change from 1st April 2024.

Most Housing Associations will look at the most recent Consumer Price Index (CPI) rate, a reflection of the rate of inflation, when deciding what their future rents will be. During our preparations the CPI rate was 6.7% therefore we suggested that an increase of 7.7% was a possible option.

We suggested this as during the previous review we agreed to increase rents below-inflation due to the cost-of-living crisis within the country, in the knowledge that future increases would need to be above-inflation to make up for the shortfall.

The Management Committee and Senior Management Team read every response to the tenant consultation and considered the comments made. While the overall response was positive some raised money issues as part of the wider economic situation. Our rents were described as affordable however money was clearly a pressure.

Thankfully the CPI rate has reduced, however many tenants may still be feeling the effects of the cost-of-living crisis. Taking this into account, and the comments from tenants, the Association's Senior Management Team and Management Committee felt that a lower increase would be possible. As such an increase of 5.6% was agreed.

Our tenants should have received their increase letters by now (if you haven't please get in touch). **Those on Universal Credit must update their rent charge on their Universal Credit Online Portal on 1st April, or as soon as possible after this date.** You cannot update your rent charge before 1st April. If you would like any assistance please contact us.

Tenants on Housing Benefit (where it is paid to the Association) do not need to do anything. We have notified Glasgow City Council of the increase. If you receive Housing Benefit directly to your bank account you will need to notify them yourself of the increase.

We will update our tenant's Direct Debits to reflect the new amount, however if you pay by Standing Order you will need to update this with your bank.

If you have any problems paying your rent, or if you have any other debt or money worries, please get in touch as soon as possible. We offer free, independent, advice from a Welfare Rights Officer or the Drumchapel Money Advice Centre. Please get in touch for a referral if you would like this service.

Survey Winners!

Two winners were selected at random from the responses to the consultation. Both won shopping vouchers to say thanks for having their say!

- G McMillan – Old Dumbarton Road
- A Marshall – Lumsden Street

Scrutiny Panel



Yorkhill Housing Association exists to provide excellent services to our tenants and residents, and one of our key objectives is local control and accountability. We aim to be as open and transparent as possible in everything we do; that's why we're looking for local residents to help form a scrutiny panel!

The panel would look at our entire business, one area at a time, concentrating on individual policies and procedures to make sure we are as efficient as possible in everything we do.

While that sounds like a lot we will break it down into manageable chunks, and give the panel the right information and resources to help us get the right result. For example we might start on the process of allocating our houses; our housing management staff would explain in detail how we point applications, how we decide who gets a house, and the technical process of signing someone up with a tenancy.

We're looking for local people – you do not need to have any specialist skills related to running a business, or a knowledge of housing associations. In fact we're looking for 'another set of eyes' to help us find ways to make the process better.

We can also be flexible with times for the panel to meet, including holding meetings in the evening, or hosting via Zoom or Teams, to help people fit the Panel into their schedule.

If you would be interested in attending a Scrutiny Panel please get in touch with Grant Kennedy, Deputy Chief Executive, on **0141 285 7910** or administration@yorkhillha.org for more details.

Property Factoring Charges

The Factoring Management Fee, is charged for carrying out our function of providing the core services listed within our Written Statement of Factoring Services. This charge is reviewed on an annual.

Review Of Management Fee 2024/25

This year the decision has been taken to increase the management fee by Consumer Price Index (CPI) rate plus 1%.

As of 1st April 2024, our annual factoring management fee will, therefore, increase by 5.6%.

The increase will be reflected in you May 2024 invoice.

Should you have any queries regarding this matter, please feel free to contact our Factoring Department.

Paying your Factoring Account

Please note that our next Factoring invoices are due to be issued at the end of May 2024. Payment of invoices is required within 14 days of the invoice date. If you are experiencing financial difficulties, your payment will be late or you would like to make an arrangement to pay the invoice, please contact the factoring team by visiting the office, calling **0141 285 7910** or by email at administration@yorkhillha.org.

Please ensure that any previous invoices are paid in full before the May invoice is issued.

Keep us up to date with changes

Let us know if you move home, are selling, have a new contact number or would prefer contact by email or text. We need this to ensure that we hold up to date information for correspondence or if we need to contact you about your property. To check or update your details please contact the Factoring Team on: **0141 285 7910** or email administration@yorkhillha.org

CONDENSATION & MOULD

Condensation occurs when moist air comes into contact with a cool surface and creates water droplets. On windows, the glass mists up and drops of water run down the window. When it happens on a wall, the wall soaks up the moisture and if left for long enough untreated can become damp. Mould may also grow on the damp areas.

Your body produces moisture all the time through breathing or sweating. We also put a lot of moisture into the air when we take a bath or shower, cook or wash the dishes. Moisture is also produced when we dry clothes indoors or use a tumble dryer or when ironing clothes.

Not so long ago many of our buildings had natural ventilation also known as (adventitious ventilation) this naturally occurring ventilation happened because homes had chimneys for example. There were often draughts at doors and windows (no brush strips or door seals in those days). We now have homes that could be described as being sealed with many



homes having double glazing and additional draught proofing – by sealing this natural ventilation we are reducing the airflow within the property which would have naturally removed excess moisture from the air – this moisture can then collect on cold surfaces as described above. So, if you see condensation/moisture or mould forming **you may need to do something - dry off or open a window to let the moisture escape or clean off & remove the mould!!**

IF YOU NOTICE MOULD OR EXCESSIVE CONDENSATION PLEASE CONTACT US



It isn't particularly difficult to remove mould, simply spray a good anti-mould cleaning product following the manufacturer's instructions for use onto the affected area & wipe off.

You may prefer to use natural products such as white vinegar or lemon juice – these can be used by spraying/ applying neat or diluted onto the affected area and leaving for 30 minutes to an hour before scrubbing and rinsing away with warm water and a clean cloth. Repeat as necessary with increasingly concentrated solutions until the mould is completely removed.

Reducing the risk of condensation in your home:

- Keep a window open if drying clothes & don't dry clothes over warm radiators
- Keep the kitchen door closed & keep lids on pots & pans when cooking
- Keep the bathroom door closed when running a bath or showering
- Use the extractor fan in the kitchen and bathroom or open a window
- Let air circulate; don't overfill cupboards or put furniture & beds too close to walls
- Put the tumble dryer hose out the window or door.

Information from Police Scotland

How to check an officer's identity

If Police Scotland contact you, they will do so in person, by phone or by email.

Contact in person

Our officers will always have their Police Scotland Warrant card with them, which you can ask to see.

Contact by phone

Our phone number should show as 'Private', not 'Withheld'. If you are unsure, hang up.

Email

Our email ends in '@scotland.police.uk'. Ensure you fully check the sender address.

In every instance

An officer is formally identified by their shoulder number and is required to provide it when asked for it. If in doubt, call **101** with their shoulder number to verify their identity.

If they have called you via a landline, try to use a different phone to call **101**.

Do not let them into your home or continue the conversation until you are satisfied with their identity.



An officer of Police Scotland will never:

- Ask for your PIN number for your bank card
- Ask you to transfer money from your account
- Ask you to withdraw cash or buy foreign currency
- Ask you to hand cash or bank cards to a courier or anyone else
- Ask you to pay a fine or fee to them or a third party over the phone or online
- Ask for remote access to your phone, computer or any other device
- Ask you for online banking login details including passwords
- Ask you to enter your personal details into an attachment they send you or a website they direct you to
- Ask you to 'assist' in an investigation by doing any of the above
- Ask you to keep their contact with you a secret and not tell anyone
- Ask you to memorise lines to say if bank staff ask you any questions
- Be threatening or abusive towards you

There are scams being reported where criminals are impersonating police officers in an attempt to get money. Often this takes the form of a phonecall.

If you receive a phonecall and are being asked to do any of the above, stop, hang up the phone and dial 101. You are at risk of losing your money.



@PoliceScotland

PoliceScotland

scotland.police.uk



@PoliceScotland

PoliceScotland

scotland.police.uk

Bins, Bulk & Vermin

- How to Report Issues to Glasgow City Council



The Association has noticed an increase in issues relating to missed bin collections, bulk items in backcourts, fly tipping and rats/mice in backcourts or in properties.

The following services are provided by Glasgow City Council and is covered by your council tax; bin collections, bulk uplift (chargeable), uplift of fly tipping and pest control. Therefore, immediate issues should be reported directly to Glasgow City Council.

For example, missed bin collections, missing or additional bins, bulk uplifts, rats in backcourt or property, mice in property.

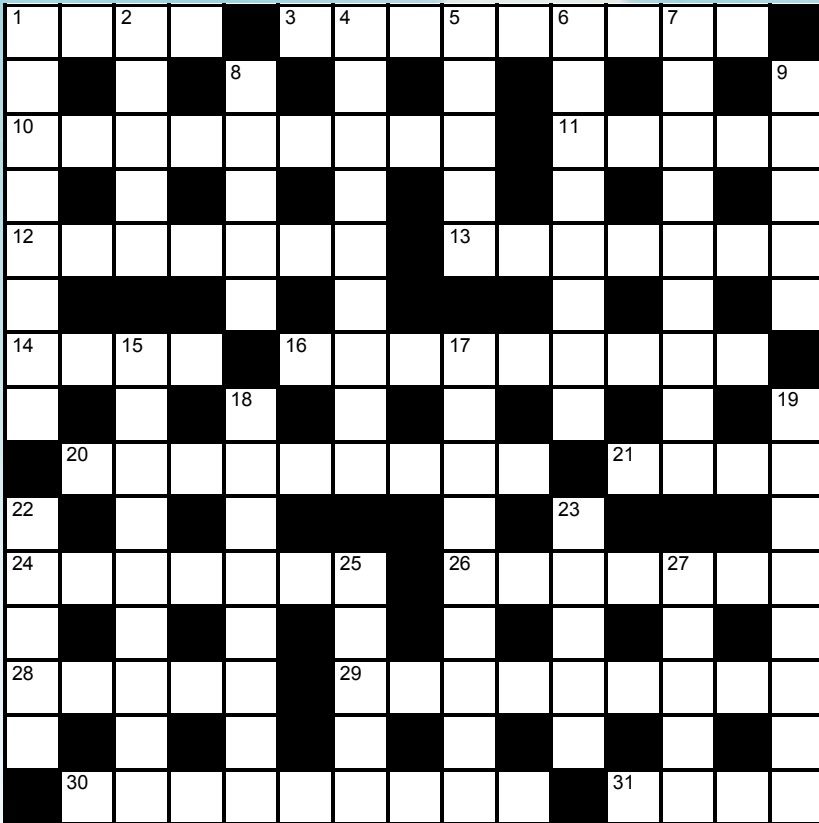
Residents can find information on how to report issues on the Glasgow City Council website: www.glasgow.gov.uk. You can also download the MyGlasgow App to any smartphone or tablet. If you do not have access to internet, please contact our office and we can provide you with assistance to

report the issue to Glasgow City Council.

The Association's staff carry out inspections of close and backcourts recording and reporting any issues we notice during our visits. However, residents too have a responsibility to keep the common areas in a good condition.



Crossword Competition



Open to everyone!

If you're good at crosswords have a go at ours. Everyone who submits theirs to our office by 30th April 2024 will be entered into a prize draw for £30 in shopping vouchers.

Good luck!

Across

- 1 Relating to aircraft (4)
- 3 "The Hay Wain" artist (9)
- 10 Moving stairway (9)
- 11 Joanna (5)
- 12 Hopelessness (7)
- 13 Among (7)
- 14 Back of the neck (4)
- 16 Poisonous mushroom (9)
- 20 Custom (9)
- 21 Doing nothing (4)
- 24 Pear-shaped fruit (7)
- 26 Breakfast flatbread (7)
- 28 Dull yellowish brown (5)
- 29 Professional personal car driver (9)
- 30 Observe with festivities (9)
- 31 Irritate (4)

Down

- 1 Removing faults (8)
- 2 Speed contests (5)
- 4 Farthest from the centre (9)
- 5 Rub vigorously (5)
- 6 Desire for food (8)
- 7 Type of permanent tenure (9)
- 8 Communion table (5)
- 9 Injury (5)
- 15 Rectory (9)
- 17 Air-freshener (9)
- 18 Put on a pedestal (8)
- 19 Investigate (8)
- 22 Small nails (5)
- 23 Rigid (5)
- 25 Happen (5)
- 27 Wide-awake (5)

Name:

Address:

Email: Phone Number:



Thank you for reading our Spring Newsletter. We are always keen to know what people think of its contents, and to hear any suggestions for future editions!

We would be grateful if you would fill in the form below and return this to the office, or complete the form online on our website: www.yorkhillha.org.

One lucky responder will win a £30 shopping voucher – chosen at random from all responses.



Name:

Address:

Please rate our newsletter out of 5:

What did you like or dislike about our newsletter:

Do you have any suggestions for future editions?:

Contact us:

Yorkhill Housing Association Ltd, 1271 Argyle Street, Glasgow G3 8TH

Tel 0141 285 7910 • administration@yorkhillha.org • www.yorkhillha.org • [Find us on Facebook](#) /Yorkhill Housing Association

Scottish Housing Regulator 209 • Scottish Registered Charity SC040346 • Financial Conduct Authority 2302 RS • Property Factors Register PF000220