



Newsletter



Drumchapel Housing Co-operative would like to say a big **Thank You** to all **Key Workers** in the community.

We know that we have lots of amazing people in the community whether it be NHS staff, care workers, shop staff, transport workers, bin-collectors, cleaners, post office workers and emergency services. We know that there are many people who are having to work just now to help the rest of us stay safe at home.

We would like to say that every single one of the key workers in our community are very much appreciated.

Aliyah Tyrell is one of several children in the Glasgow area who have displayed their PMG poster in their windows.



Statement from the Chairperson



The Co-operative took the decision to close the office on 24 March 2020 following the UK Government advice to stay at home.

We had prepared for this scenario and successfully managed to have all of our staff set up at home to continue to provide services to our tenants. There has been a reduction in demand on our services and some of our staff are furloughed. The Housing Officers have been contacting tenants to see if there is anything that we can help with and, for some tenants this has resulted in food deliveries and grants being awarded to help with bills and shopping for others, it's been about more practical help or advice. We think that we have helped many of our tenants but want you all to know that we are here if you need us. Please contact us in the usual way via telephone, email, Facebook or our website if you have any concerns about your tenancy or if you are worried about anyone else then please let us know and we will try to help.

We are still processing applications for housing, dealing with rent enquiries and payments and our Welfare Rights service is still available to support you with benefit and Universal Credit enquiries. Like all Housing providers, we are following guidance from the Government, NHS, and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations. We are continuing to work together with Police Scotland, Social Services and other agencies.

Our priority has been keeping everyone safe while still working to providing an excellent service to our tenants and service users and in partnership with the local community to provide good quality homes and create a better Drumchapel.

Service Delivery (Housing/Technical)

Due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, Drumchapel Housing Co-operative took the necessary steps and precautions to minimise the risk to our customers and staff and closed our offices to the staff, contractors and public from 5pm on 23 March 2020 until further notice. This is in line with recent UK and Scottish Government advice.

All our staff have been working at home however, the services have reduced slightly and some have been suspended such as:

- **Non-emergency repairs.** Any non-emergency repairs reported will still be logged and we hope to be able to schedule those as soon as possible.
- **Planned maintenance works** for the coming year will not be progressed until we are able to be back fully operating.

- **Non-essential** face-to-face meetings and appointments in tenants' homes.
- **Community services and events.**

We have continued to provide emergency repairs and gas safety checks with all other tenancy matters including rent payments, housing allocations, estate and tenancy management continuing. Our staff are assisting tenants with some new issues and we welcome any requests that you may have.

We are still conducting our board meetings with many members attending video conferencing meetings and this has become an effective way of continuing with many of our activities.

Please keep checking our Website and Facebook page, as this is kept up to date.

Rent increase 2020-21

Following consultation with tenants our Management Board approved a rent increase of 1.5% from 1st April 2020.

We consulted with tenants in various ways, see table below. We received 119 responses, of these responses 106 opted for 1.5%.

Method of Contact	Number of Responses
Facebook	5
Telephone Survey	46
Survey Form	2
Evening Consultation within office	0
Text Message	66

We also asked whether tenants thought that rent was affordable, 76 tenants responded to this question:

Do you feel your rent is currently affordable?

Yes	60 (79%)
No	16 (21%)

Tenants who receive housing benefit should not need to do anything as your benefit should be updated automatically, however if housing benefit contact you requesting further information it is important that you provide this promptly to prevent benefit being suspended.

Shared Service Agreement

Tenants will be aware that we have had a shared service agreement with Cernach Housing Association for the last 3 years, this agreement concluded on 31 January 2020 and Caroline Jardine resumed her role as full-time Director at Cernach.

Our Deputy Director, Pauline Burke has been in place as Acting Director since mid-August



2019 and our Board have felt that although the shared service agreement was successful for both organisations, we are keen to review the longer-term plan for Director services while continuing the close relationship formed between both organisations. We had planned a full article for early Spring, however due to the office being closed and homeworking, we have been unable to progress this work at this time.

Universal Credit

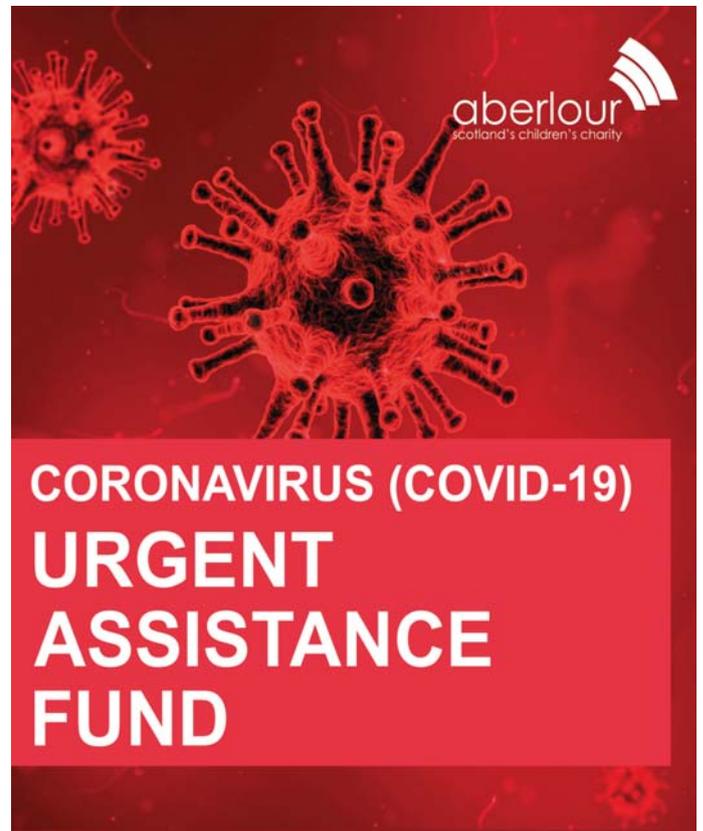
We previously issued a letter to all tenants to confirm their rent increase from 1st April 2020.

Tenants who receive Universal Credit must update their online journal with their new rent charge in order for their housing costs

to be increased to meet this charge. If you do not have access to your journal then you can contact Universal Credit on **0800 328 5644**. Please contact your Housing Officer at the office who can talk you through how to update your journal should you experience any difficulties.



Aberlour funding awards



The Aberlour Urgent Assistance Fund awards cash grants to assist children and young people (aged 21 and under) across Scotland, and their families, who are suffering extreme hardship.

This support is usually via cash grants to assist with a range of needs, such as food, prepay power cards, clothing, bedding or other essentials.

Please note, available funds are limited and all applications will be evaluated against evidence of a family's financial status. We aim to help as many families as we can. The average grant made is between £150 and £200.

To qualify for cash grants from the Trust:

- There must be a child in the family who is 21 or under.
- That child must be suffering extreme hardship.
- A family can receive one grant per financial year.
- Grants are made at the discretion of the Trust.
- A sponsor must submit a fully completed and legible application on an official application form.

Please contact your Housing Officer at the office to make an application as applications must be submitted by a sponsor acting in their professional capacity. Applications from individual tenants cannot be accepted.

Our Housing Officers have managed to secure grants worth a total of **£1,580** for our tenants so far, with applications continuing to be made.

Welfare Rights Service

Remember if you need advice or information on benefits and your entitlement, we offer a welfare benefit service every Thursday, by appointment.

Due to the pandemic, appointments are being conducted by telephone in the mornings at 10.00am and 11.00am only. If you require this service, please contact our office for an appointment and we will arrange for the Welfare Benefits Officer to contact you at the agreed date and time.

Gas Maintenance – help us to keep you safe!!

To make sure that gas appliances and installations are safe, our gas safety contractor, City Building, carries out Gas Servicing and Safety Checks on an annual basis. They also check that smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are operating properly.

Help us keep you safe by providing access when we contact you to arrange servicing. This is especially important at present, as staying at home puts additional pressure on gas appliances.

Be aware of the silent killer – carbon monoxide poisoning

You can't see it, taste it or even smell it but every year about 14 people die from carbon monoxide poisoning caused by gas appliances and flues which have not been properly installed or maintained.

Other signs that could point to CO poisoning:

Any of the following could be a sign of CO in your home:

- Floppy yellow or orange flame on your gas hob, rather than crisp blue
- Dark, sooty staining on or around gas appliances
- Pilot lights that frequently blow out
- Increased condensation inside windows



Anybody who has overdone it on a night out will be familiar with some or all of these symptoms, but if you experience them without drinking it's time to be concerned.

Being aware of these symptoms could save your life.

What to do if you suspect CO poisoning

- Get fresh air immediately. Open doors and windows, turn off gas appliances and leave the house.
- See your doctor immediately or go to hospital - let them know that you suspect CO poisoning. They can do a blood or breath test to check.
- If you think there is an immediate danger, call the Gas Emergency Helpline on **0800 111 999**.

Don't give Legionella a home...

Legionella bacteria occur naturally in locations such as rivers, lakes and reservoirs but may also be found in:

- Domestic water systems
- Places where water droplets may be formed such as showers and taps
- Hose pipes

The risk of infection from exposure in domestic systems is very low but everyone should be aware of the risks and take the necessary steps to avoid being exposed to the bacteria in water droplets.

How to reduce the risk of legionella

- Disinfect and de-scale your shower head every three months using products like Milton or antibacterial disinfectants.



- If you have a shower or water outlet you don't use regularly, you should flush the system out once a week by running water through it for several minutes.
- If you don't use your shower for two weeks or more, you should remove the shower head and let it run for two minutes and disinfect the shower head before refitting it.
- If you have an external hose pipe, you should flush this through every week and if they are not used for over 2 weeks, you should remove the nozzle or adjust it so it doesn't produce a spray and let the hose run for two minutes. Disinfect the nozzle before refitting it.

Further information can be found on the Health and Safety website: www.hse.gov.uk



Painterwork

The painterwork and power washing carried out to Merryton Avenue is almost complete and is helping to transform the appearance of the area, says Duncan McKnight, Technical Manager.

Works were disrupted due to the pandemic, however, our Contractor Mitie will return at the end of the shutdown period to complete the remaining work and commence year two of the programme which includes the tenements in Linkwood Drive, Southdeen Avenue and Southdeen Road.

Good news/ Community coming together

Since mid to late March, our tenants have shown tremendous strength and compassion during the coronavirus pandemic by looking after the isolated and vulnerable within our community.

Now we want to hear your good news stories and who you feel has been a local champion? Who has provided shopping for the elderly in Carolside Drive? Whose drawings in Southdeen Road have cheered you up? Has anyone cleaned door handles, closes, or even toys for other children to play with in Merryton Avenue? Is there a kind-hearted Linkwood tenant who has made phone calls to the isolated, ensuring that they are keeping well?

This is your chance to celebrate the community spirit which Drumchapel is renowned for.

If you would like to share your stories with us for our next newsletter, we ask you to contact us by 5th June 2020 using one of the methods below:

- E-mail us on enquiries@drumchapelhc.org.uk
- Send us a Facebook message at <https://www.facebook.com/DrumchapelHousingCooperative/>
- Use our contact form on the website at <https://www.drumchapelhc.org.uk/contact-us/>

OR

- Phone us on 0141 944 4902

COVID19 Drawing Competition

We are all aware that the Government guidance is to stay home during the Coronavirus pandemic. We understand that it has been difficult time to keep the children entertained during this time at home.

We would like to involve the children by inviting them to design their most colourful, eye-catching poster on how we can beat the Coronavirus!

There will be a **£20 prize voucher** awarded to the winning entry.

The closing date for entries is Friday 5th June 2020.

You can take pictures of your poster and send them in via email at enquiries@drumchapelhc.org.uk or our via Messenger on Facebook page.

You could also post them through our letterbox at the office if you are able to get out for your daily walk.

We look forward to seeing them, good luck!

**£20
prize!**



Charity Fundraising

In support of a young cancer sufferer, our Board Member David Riddell recently agreed to have his hair shaved off to raise money for Cancer Research.

Between the eight volunteers from *The Butty Bar* at Hecla Avenue, a fantastic sum of £600 was raised. Well done to David and all the team who had their locks sheared for the cause - and additional thanks is extended by David to Janet, the manager of the Butty, and Donna the hairdresser.



Office Closures

With respect to the ongoing coronavirus situation, the telephone and office will be closed for the **Spring Holiday** on **Friday 22nd May** and **Monday 25th May 2020**, reopening on Tuesday 26th May at 9.00am.

On the provision that staff are still working from home, phones and office will also be closed for the Glasgow Fair weekend on **Friday 17th July** and **Monday 20th July** re-opening on Tuesday 21st July at 9.00am.

If you have an emergency repair between these dates, please contact **City Building** on **0800 595 595**.

