

GOVANHILL NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter of Govanhill Housing Association in Govanhill and Merrylee

Summer 2026



Association Supports Older Tenants During Recent Heatwaves

We have just over 100 tenants aged 80 and above. On the 21st and 22nd of July David and Roland from our Tenancy Sustainment Team delivered battery powered handheld fans to each of these tenants.

This also gave staff the opportunity to check that everyone was ok and see if there was anything the Association could do to help.

Association Launches Business Strategy

The Association has launched its business strategy for 2026-2029. You will find a summary copy enclosed with this newsletter, and you can read the full strategy online at www.govanhillha.org/business_strategy_26to29. If you have any questions or comments please get in touch.



Join our Management Committee!

Are you passionate about your local area? Would you like to help shape the future of housing in Govanhill and Merrylee? Consider joining our Management Committee – more details on page 5.

Housing Allocation myths and mis

It has been almost three years since Glasgow City Council declared a Housing Emergency, highlighting a reality that many already recognised: there is simply not enough suitable housing in Glasgow to meet the needs of those looking for a home. Our new corporate strategy gives an overview of how we aim to meet this challenge through property acquisition and development, but this does not change the fact that part of our work is to allocate what is often a scarce resource.

In this article we aim to give you more information about how this process works, and the steps we take to make sure that our allocations process is as fair and transparent as possible. For a full overview of how we allocate properties, please visit govanhillha.org/policies.



Allocations Overview

When we allocate properties we aim to:

- Provide good quality affordable housing to households who have been assessed as being in need of housing.
- Make best use of the housing which becomes available, including properties that have been adapted or are suitable for someone with mobility needs.
- Give as much choice to applicants as reasonably possible.
- Help create and maintain a balanced and sustainable community.
- Work constructively with Glasgow City Council to prevent and alleviate homelessness.

We will do this by taking an approach to allocating homes which:

- Is fair, open and transparent.
- Takes a consistent approach to decision-making.
- Promotes equality.
- Treats all applicants with respect, including respecting the confidentiality of information given to us.



tions – Busting conceptions

Myth

Govanhill Housing Association only gives housing to certain groups of people.

Our allocations policy is set out to ensure that housing is given to the people in most need. The only thing we take into account when allocating a property is housing need.

We do not take employment status, immigration status, what country someone

is from, what religion they follow or any other identity category into account. If you are over 16 and in need of housing, you are eligible to join our waiting list, and you will be assessed based on your level of need.

FALSE

Myth

You must be homeless to get a flat.

As an Association we will work constructively with Glasgow City Council to prevent and alleviate homelessness. We have a target to let just over half (55%) of our homes to people who have been declared homeless; these are known as section 5 referrals.

From May to the end of June this year we let 27 homes as section 5 referrals, and 24 homes from the general waiting list. We have a duty to house people who are declared homeless; however, we do also allocate properties from our waiting list.

FALSE

How can I find out more about how the Association allocates properties?

The Association has an allocations policy available on our website, and this policy is regularly reviewed to ensure that it is fair. This policy supports our staff to make good decisions and ensure that homes go to applicants with the most housing need. When this policy is reviewed, it is put out to consultation, reviewed by our tenant scrutiny panel and then signed off by our Management Committee which is made up of tenants and residents.

Our Allocation Policy, along with other Association policies can be found at **govanhillha.org/association-policies/** paper copies available upon request.



Govanhill Housing Association Management Committee – *A New Member Perspective*

My name is Jackie Donnelly, I work for the NHS; I came to Govanhill as a baby and in the 63 years I have been here, I've seen changes in the area, like, Cathcart Road used to be a really busy shopping area, that's where everybody met on a Saturday, we did our laundry and you'd spend hours in and out of all the local shops.

That said, it's nice to see all the new coffee shops, with the wee tables outside with people sitting socialising, it gives you a good feeling. I got to know Govanhill Housing Association through my involvement with the Community Garden, I am the sort of person who is always helping people with things, like fighting council tax banding etc.

I am also a member of the Environmental Group. I thought it would be good to be on the Committee because, as an Association tenant, I would be helping people in the same boat as myself. I was a bit apprehensive at first about coming to Management Committee Meetings, and for the first few I mostly just listened, and asked questions. But you learn quickly, and everyone has been so friendly and welcoming.

What the Housing Association wants from me is to scrutinise what they are doing. When big decisions are made, it is up to us to ask – why is the Association doing that? Where is the money coming from? It's interesting because

you find out so much more about what is going on, and it's good to be able to give my input on decisions, as a tenant. For example, if the Association has bought a building, and they want to strip it back and refurbish it, it's up to us to ask questions about cost, how long it will take, and what benefit it is going to be for the community.

We are also talking a lot about how to make homes more energy efficient, which is complicated because it can cost a fortune with all the old tenements. There is a time commitment to being on the committee, though it works for me because when I finish work, I come straight to Samaritan House, there is tea, coffee, sandwiches and fruit as they know some of us have come straight from other commitments.

There are a lot of papers to read, but you get used to looking for important information. You can also pick up a lot from other people at meetings. It's been a great education, being in a group of very knowledgeable, experienced people. There was a strategy development day that I took time off work to attend; it was educational, and we discussed our goals for the next three years. It was a great day, and I enjoyed it because I got to know the rest of the committee.

The Management Committee is not the place to bring up your own issues; you must inform the committee if any decision will affect you personally. It is about scrutinising the work of Govanhill Housing Association on behalf of the community. It gives you the opportunity to make a difference. I would say, if you are passionate about Govanhill, think about joining the Management Committee. It would be great to have more tenants and other local people involved. You do need to invest a bit of time, for meetings and reading papers, so you do need a level of commitment – but it's so personally beneficial. You learn so much and feel so much more invested in the area.



Make a Difference in Your Community

Join our Management Committee!



**Are you passionate about your local area?
Would you like to help shape the future of
housing in Govanhill and Merrylee?**

The Association is looking for new voluntary committee members to join our welcoming and dedicated management committee.

You don't need any special qualifications, just a willingness to learn, and a commitment to making our communities better places to live. We welcome people from all backgrounds and experiences, and full support and training will be provided.

Our Management Committee has overall strategic responsibility for the Association; in this role you will help shape decisions made at the highest level, ensuring the voices of tenants are heard.

If you would like to find out more, our Chief Executive, Jennifer Ciarns, would be happy to have a friendly, informal chat with you.

For more information, or to speak to Jennifer, email nbruce@govanhillha.org or phone **0141 636 3621**. Application packs can be found online at www.govanhillha.org/association-forms/

Working Together for a Better Environment in Govanhill

We know that the local environment is a key concern for many residents in Govanhill. To help address issues such as litter, fly-tipping and neighbourhood cleanliness, Govanhill Housing Association is hosting a strategic meeting with Southside Housing Association and Glasgow City Council.

The meeting will focus on how we can work together, share resources, and develop practical solutions to improve the local environment. By strengthening partnerships, we hope to make a positive difference for everyone who lives and works in Govanhill.

To find out more about our strategic work to improve the local environment, get involved, bring your feedback and make suggestions by coming along to our next Environmental Group Meeting on the 25th August at 6pm.

Nominate your Community Champion for this Year's Tenant Awards

Do you know somebody who is a good neighbour – someone who cares about their community, whether that's through litter picking, organising events, or simply by looking after their garden?

We are looking for nominations for this year's tenant awards! To nominate someone, visit govanhillha.org/tenant-awards or email cchirilov@govanhillha.org.

Nominations close on the 31st of August and the winners will be announced at our AGM.



Association Launches Anti-Racist Statement and Joins **#Safewithus** initiative

The Association has launched an Anti-Racism Statement which sets out our commitment to treating everyone fairly, with dignity and respect. It makes clear that racism has no place at Govanhill Housing Association and that any racist behaviour will be challenged and addressed.

As part of this commitment, we have joined Refuweegee's 'Safe With Us' initiative. This means our office is a safe space for anyone experiencing hate or discrimination. If you need support, you can speak to a member of our team and we will do our best to help.



New Domestic Abuse and Safeguarding Policies

Govanhill Housing Association has recently launched its Domestic Abuse Policy and Safeguarding Policy, reinforcing our commitment to supporting the safety, wellbeing and rights of our tenants, residents and communities.

As part of our approach to tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), we are looking for residents who would like to join a new steering group. The group will help shape how the Association responds to VAWG and ensure residents' voices are at the heart of this work.

If you are interested in getting involved or would like to find out more, please contact Claire McGraw at cmcgraw@govanhillha.org



Meet Bryan McMahon our New Director of Property Services

Tell us a bit about yourself and your background.

I spent the early part of my career in the construction industry, before moving into social housing in 2013. I can honestly say it has been the best career decision I have made. Most recently I was Director of Property Services at Linthouse Housing Association, which in many ways is a slightly smaller version of Govanhill. What we were working towards there is exactly what we are working towards here: making sure customers are at the forefront of every decision, and that the services they receive are as good as they can possibly be.

What made you want to work for Govanhill Housing Association?

The size of the Association appealed to me, and the opportunity to apply what I have learned elsewhere, but more than anything it was the ethos and values here, which sit closely with my own. With a new CEO in place, it felt like an exciting time to join, and a real chance to be part of something that makes a difference for our customers.

What are your hopes for the Association and our communities?

I want us to be delivering the best service we possibly can. There is so much that is good about Govanhill, and I would like to see that recognised more widely, because the area and the people here deserve it. Just as importantly, our staff should feel empowered and connected to the communities they serve and understand the positive impact they can have on people's lives.

You've been here about a month now. What have your first impressions been?

Very positive. There is a good structure in place, and the staff are committed and motivated to

do a good job for our communities. As with any organisation, there are opportunities to build on what is already there, and for me that is mainly about getting the most out of the systems we have and making some small tweaks to processes, ultimately giving teams back the time to focus on our customers.

What about our stock and the development side?

I want us to be an ambitious, forward-looking Association that embraces what comes our way, where nothing is off the table. As with other Housing Associations, we know our stock needs ongoing investment, and one of my first jobs is making sure we have the right data behind us, so that investment is targeted, structured, and meets the needs of our customers.

And finally?

What I would say to customers is this. When you come to us with a problem, we want to find a solution, and to find it quickly, because that is what we are here for. We have the staff and the commitment to do exactly that, and I am looking forward to working alongside the teams to deliver on that promise. There is a great deal to be positive about, and I am genuinely excited about what we can achieve together in the years ahead.

A Summer Fun Day and an Important Milestone for the Govanhill Community Garden

This summer, the Govanhill Community Garden brought local families together for two special community events.

In June, Govanhill Housing Association and Govanhill Community Garden hosted a Family Fun Day, with children and adults enjoying games, face painting and a range of fundraising activities, including a raffle, tombola and plant sale. The event provided a fantastic opportunity for local families to spend time together and enjoy the garden.

The celebrations continued in July with the 10th Anniversary of the Govanhill Community and Remembrance Garden. Residents,

volunteers, and supporters gathered to mark a decade of growing, remembering and supporting one another. Visitors enjoyed gardening activities, music, refreshments and the chance to share memories of the garden and its impact on the community over the last ten years.

Both events highlighted the important role the Community Garden plays in bringing people together, promoting wellbeing and creating opportunities for residents to connect. A massive thank you to everyone who attended, volunteered and helped make these events such a success.



Changes to Tenancy Agreements from 1st August

We have updated our Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement and Short Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement to reflect recent legal changes and strengthen protections for tenants.

The updates include improved protections for anyone affected by domestic abuse, a stronger commitment to tackling damp and mould, and

clearer expectations that everyone is treated with respect. We've also added the option for tenants to receive some communications electronically, making it quicker and easier to access important information about their home and tenancy.

Tenants will still be able to receive paper communication if they wish.



Metallica Concert Offers a Surprise Boost to the South East Foodbank

Glasgow SE Foodbank recently received a significant boost with a £20,000 donation on the occasion of the record-breaking Metallica concert at Hampden in June. Also, on the day of the concert a group of Metallica fans spent time volunteering at the foodbank, helping with a full stock take then heading to the gig. We spoke to the South East Foodbank about their work, and what the donation meant to them.

The financial support came at a crucial time as funding the food bank is increasingly difficult as we are facing unusually high ongoing demand. We are incredibly grateful to the fans who volunteered and to All Within My Hands, Metallica's Foundation, for choosing to support our work. This donation will help us to continue supporting people across Govanhill and the south east of Glasgow at a time when our services are needed more than ever and traditional sources of funding for us are declining.

We were delighted to take part in this year's **Govanhill Carnival and Festival**. On carnival day, volunteers and staff were at our stall in Govanhill Park, handing out goodies, speaking to local residents about our work and gathering views on Trussell's **Guarantee Our Essentials** campaign, which calls for social security payments to reflect the real cost of essentials.

As part of the Festival programme, we also hosted an **Open Day** at the food bank on 5 August, welcoming members of the community to learn more about our work. Visitors had the opportunity to watch screenings of a short film recently produced about the food bank and meet some of the people involved in delivering our services.

For more information about the Foodbank, including ways that you can get involved with our work visit <https://glasgowse.foodbank.org.uk> or follow us on Facebook!



Photos credit
Ally Mack
Photography

Our Performance Update – Quarter 1 2026/27

Govanhill Housing Association's Tenancy Services team continues to support tenants, sustain tenancies, and manage housing services effectively across the community.



Rent Collection

At the end of Quarter 1 (April-June 26), total rent arrears stood at £464,556.62, representing 2.75% of rent due, which remains below the Association's target of 3%. During the quarter, six rent notices were served, with one eviction carried out for non-payment of rent.

Lettings and Housing Demand

The Association let 67 homes during the quarter, including 64 relets and three new lets. The average time taken to let a property was 22.17 days, which is better than our target of 25 days.

Demand for housing remains high, with 87 offers of accommodation made during the quarter. Of these, 40.23% were refused, exceeding the target refusal rate of 30%.

Of the 67 homes let:

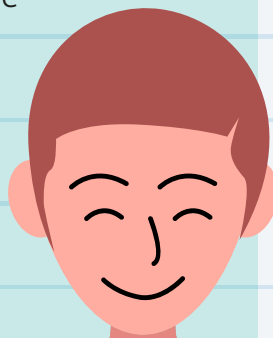
- 27 were allocated to homeless applicants
- 24 were allocated to applicants from the waiting list
- 16 were transfer lets for existing tenants



Tenancy Sustainment

The Association continues to help tenants maintain successful tenancies. Of the 69 tenancies assessed during Quarter 1, 67 were sustained.

Tenancy Sustainment services also remained busy, with 18 new referrals received and 46 live cases being supported throughout the quarter.



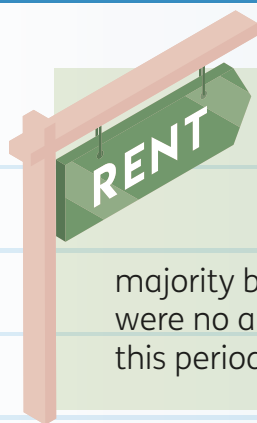
Tackling Antisocial Behaviour

A total of 32 antisocial behaviour (ASB) cases were opened during Quarter 1, including:

- 6 Category A cases (the most serious cases)
- 25 Category B cases
- 1 Category C case (the least serious cases)

The team closed 27 cases during the same period.





Empty Homes

At the end of Quarter 1 there were 25 vacant lettable properties, the majority being upper-floor flats. There were no abandoned properties during this period.

Welfare Rights

The Welfare Rights team continued to provide essential financial support and advice to tenants and residents. During Quarter 1, the team assisted 286 clients across 532 cases, securing financial gains of £1,093,695.



Repairs and Maintenance Performance

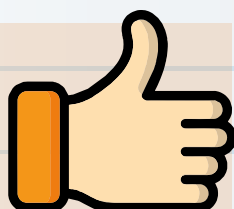
During the reporting period, we completed 831 emergency repairs, with an average completion time of 1.99 hours, better than our target of 2 hours.

We also completed 1,276 non-emergency repairs. These took an average of 7.19 working days to complete, which was above our target of 5 working days. We are continuing to review our performance and identify opportunities to improve repair times.



Tenant Satisfaction

We asked 1,686 tenants for feedback on our repairs and maintenance service and received 198 responses. Overall, 80.8% of respondents were satisfied with the service they received.



Safety Compliance

We achieved 100% compliance with annual gas safety checks, with no cases where the statutory requirement to complete a gas safety check within 12 months was missed.

We did not meet the requirement to complete an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) within five years in 12 cases. Work is ongoing to ensure full compliance and reduce outstanding cases.

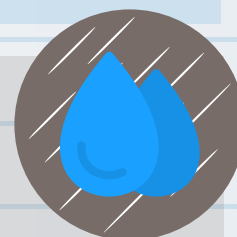


Damp and Mould

The average time taken to resolve damp and mould cases was 28.4 days.

No damp and mould cases were reopened after completion, indicating that issues were resolved successfully the first time.

At the end of the reporting period, there were 13 outstanding damp and mould cases being actively managed.



Our Staff

During Quarter 1, two employees left the organisation, resulting in a staff turnover rate of **2.17%**, which is well below the annual target of **12%**. This indicates a stable workforce and positive employee retention levels.

The percentage of working time lost through sickness absence was 6.8%, which is better than our target of 7.0%.

All Human Resources performance data reported includes both Association and GCDT employees.



Audrey Flannagan Awarded British Empire Medal

Everyone at Govanhill Housing Association was delighted to learn that our Vice Chair, Audrey Flannagan, has been awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) in the King's Birthday Honours 2026 for services to the community.



The award recognises Audrey's outstanding dedication to helping others over many years.

In 2011, she founded Glasgow Southeast Foodbank and went on to manage the organisation until

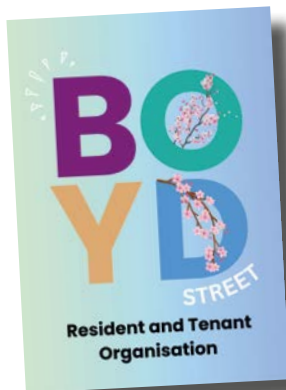
her retirement in 2024. Through her leadership and commitment, the foodbank has provided vital support to thousands of people across the south side of Glasgow.

Audrey joined the Govanhill Housing Association Management Committee in 2022 and was elected Vice Chair in 2023. Since then, she has devoted countless hours to supporting the Association's work and championing the interests of local residents.

We would like to congratulate Audrey on this fantastic achievement and thank her for the dedication, compassion and leadership she continues to bring to Govanhill Housing Association and the wider community.

New Tenant and Residents Group for Boyd Street

A new Tenant and Residents Group has been established for people living on Boyd Street. The group will give residents the opportunity to meet neighbours, discuss issues that matter to them, and share ideas for improving the local area. For more information contact gscott@govanhillha.org.



Disabled Residents Group – Get Involved

We are looking for tenants and residents who would be interested in helping us establish a new Disabled Residents' Group.

The group will provide a welcoming space for disabled tenants and residents to share their experiences, discuss issues that matter to them, and help influence decisions that affect them. It will also offer opportunities to meet others, build connections and work together to improve accessibility and inclusion.

For more information contact Gillian at gscott@govanhillha.org

Do you have other ideas for a resident group?
The group could be around a shared interest or geographical area. Please get in touch and we will support you.