

Community Engagement Across Flair 2020/21



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FLAIR is The Federation of Local Housing Associations in Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire. This partnership of six housing associations includes Barrhead, Bridgewater, Ferguslie, Linstone, Paisley and Williamsburgh.

Since the FLAIR constitution was first drawn up in 1999 the objectives remain to provide a context for joint working. FLAIR encourages collaboration, campaigning and lobbying, employment, training and learning opportunities, and, through the iFLAIR framework agreement, increased buying power across the Housing Associations for the benefit of tenants and residents.

This short report summarises some of the actions during the financial year between April 2020 and March 2021, which was dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Summarised here are examples of action taken during the pandemic to support tenants and the local community during lockdown, demonstrating FLAIR's role as more than provision of safe and well-maintained homes. Since COVID hit our communities in March 2020 FLAIR has done a great deal to pivot the support to tenants and the local communities to address these needs and to continue to ensure the people in the communities we seek to serve are involved and influence how we deliver our services.



Beth Welsh

If you would like to find out more about any of the activities featured, contact details for each Housing Association are on the back of this booklet.





Barrhead Housing Association

Barrhead Housing Association and Citizens Advice Bureau East Renfrewshire Energy Partnership

£19,269

distributed to

257

East Renfrewshire Residents who were struggling with Fuel Costs/Debt.

HACT - Energy Redress Scheme

From February 2021 – May 2021 Between Barrhead Housing Association and our partner Citizens Advice Bureau East Renfrewshire (CAB) distributed £8,491 in **Fuel Vouchers to 171 households** in East Renfrewshire struggling with fuel bills.

Snapshot of support:

- 82 BHA tenants supported
- 46 BHA tenants were supported twice with (42 with an additional £28 energy top up voucher and 4 with a £49 voucher)
- £4907 of vouchers was distributed to BHA Tenants
- 89 East Renfrewshire Residents supported

- £3,584 worth of vouchers was distributed to East Renfrewshire Residents

The process we undertook was:

- Our Welfare Advice Officer and CAB workers identified community members who are struggling with energy costs through conversations/dealings with them on other matters.
- Our PT Digital Engagement Officer undertook a phone call assessment of our over 65's and one question was were they struggling with fuel costs, if the answer is yes, their details were passed onto the Welfare Advice Officer.

Supporting Communities Programme

In May 2020 BHA received Supporting Communities Funding from Scottish Government to support people during the pandemic. BHA identified CAB as a partner to support people and identified those who were struggling with fuel costs, and administered a fuel grant scheme

to support those most in need and provide advice and support. **55 people in East Renfrewshire were supported with a total of £7,778, with the maximum grant allocated to one person being £360.**

SCVO Recovery Fund

We continued to work with CAB after receiving funding from the SCVO Recovery fund, **CAB distributed £3,000 to 31 people** in East Renfrewshire to support them with fuel costs between January and March of 2021.

- Provided £5,040 of Amazon vouchers to 336 young people under the age of 16 in 2020 for Christmas.
- Set up the BHA Community Chest/Hardship fund in 2019 supporting tenants with training and education costs. 77 grants totalling £14,845 have been distributed.
- In late 2020, BHA Employed a PT Digital Engagement and Inclusion Officer for initially 12 months to provide tailored support around the unique barriers that stop

people going online, and adapt to people's needs which change over time, BHA also accessed Digital devices via SCVO Connection Scotland and distributed:

- 35 Chromebooks for Parents and Families in partnership with ERC
- 25 Ipad's for Older and/Or Disabled people
- 60 Mi-fi Devices with free unlimited data for 24 months



BARRHEAD HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Climate Challenge Project

DUNTERLIE FOOD SHARE

- 8,890kg of food has been distributed that would have gone to waste by supermarkets.
- 885 individual bags of food distributed to community (one per household).
- Benefited 1,909 people (total number of people living in all the households).



TOTNOSH

- 38 households have taken part in the food waste cooking workshops, with household memberships of 143 people.
- Totnosh have now been using food waste direct from their own Fairshare Membership, which to date has included 186kgs of food.
- There has been a 100% retention rate of participants taking part in the workshops.



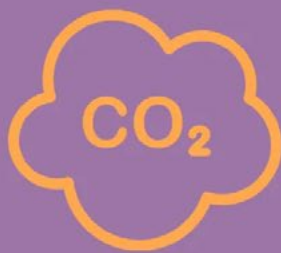
CRAFTING

- A total of 21 crafting workshops have been delivered since October 2020.
- 63.94kg of waste has been reduced by getting creative with it.
- 21 'How to' videos and step by step guides are available to the community.



IMPACT

- 53 tonnes of CO₂e has been reduced as a result of the project so far.
- This is equivalent to the carbon off set by 876 tree seedlings grown for 10 years.



Barrhead Housing Association Limited



Barrhead Housing Association

SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES FUND

As an anchor organisation at the heart of our community BHA have proactively co-ordinated with key partners and stakeholders to identify organisations within our communities that require support during the COVID-19 pandemic.

19 Vital Partners were supported using the Scottish Governments Communities Fund.



£104,750 of the Supporting Communities Fund was distributed.

55 people were able to be supported by the Citizens Advice Bureau, who administered a fuel grant scheme with to support those most in need and provide advice and support



128 new school uniforms were supplied by Back to School East Renfrewshire for children (from P1 to S6) living in hardship and deprivation in East Renfrewshire



7 local organisations were provided PPE

by Voluntary Action ER including All About Barrhead and Clarkston Business Improvement Districts, St Andrews Church, Young enterprise Scotland, Barrhead Amateur Boxing Club and The Community Masks Initiative

51 devices and 16 data packages

were supplied by Voluntary Action ER Provided through financial support for digital connectivity for people such as tablets, Wi-Fi booster and Wi-Fi dongle to enable those most in need to access the digital world.



1 Mobile sensory unit was purchased by Cosgrove Care to support children, young people and adults with disabilities to access sensory time at home.



551 households were supplied with Community Boxes, Emergency Boxes, Kindness Boxes, Wellness Boxes and Hot Food with the main focus and demand being in Barrhead and Thornliebank.



Additionally

Helped a number of organisations to take their activity online, including Dementia Support, Gymnastics Parenting Well-Being, Social Care.



Barrhead Housing Association Limited



Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations



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Supporting Communities and Community Resilience Funding Support



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Bridgewater is working closely with Renfrewshire Council, the NHS, Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership, community groups and other partners to support our tenants and other customers and residents. As well as keeping our

staff safe, our priorities during the pandemic have been and will remain:

- Keeping residents safe
- Keeping staff safe
- Protecting residents income and livelihoods

Keeping residents safe

Our first priority remains keeping residents, employees and communities safe. We have;

- Put in place extensive contingency plans to ensure critical functions could continue to function for example vital inspection and maintenance works and emergency repairs.
- Ensured that critical safety functions will be fulfilled without exposing employees or residents to the risk of contracting the virus – for example calling ahead to every resident, sourcing and distributing protective equipment and re-scheduling appointments.

How have we supported residents through the economic challenges?

Bridgewater has charitable status and we have a strong record of supporting tenants through difficult times. We have been redoubling our efforts during the current crisis.

- Pledging that no one will be evicted from one of our homes as a result of financial hardship for any reason, but particularly because of the pandemic, where they are working with us to get their payments back on track.
- Putting in place extensive support to help residents manage falling incomes – for example, by helping them to promptly claim all the benefits they are entitled to.
- Setting funds aside to support residents via the Association's Community Fund
- Prioritising staff resources to deal with urgent issues promptly
- Treating people with compassion and understanding and supporting them to access appropriate services including in-house and external debt management services
- Providing support for older or vulnerable residents – for example by phoning every resident to assess need in the event of self-isolation and using staff and volunteers to help by finding or linking with other local charities and food distribution organisations.

The Association was fortunate to be able to quickly to respond to Coronavirus by sourcing funding opportunities to enable emergency support to reach those household and individuals in need within our community.

What has the funding enabled us to achieve?

As a Community Anchor organisation, Bridgewater was able to access funding through the Scottish Government Supporting Communities fund (£45,000) and Community Resilience fund (£74,425). Over half the funding was distributed to the local development trust, Community Action for Erskine (CAE) and cascaded to Erskine, Bishopton and Inchinnan Unites (EBI Unites) to co-ordinate the emergency Covid19 response within the community with the help and support of over 60 local volunteers. The

remainder of the funding was utilised by Bridgewater to increase our Welfare Rights Service through a partnership with RAMH and provide essential welfare benefits advice and support to our tenants.

In addition to CAE's own funds, BHA made an initial £1,000 cash donation and £750 value of Love to Shop vouchers to CAE which enabled early food parcel distribution which started at the brink of the Covid-19 restrictions in March 20.

- The Association, in partnership with RAMH was able to enhance the Welfare Rights Service provided to our tenants by providing advice and support to those experiencing financial hardship as a result of Covid-19, tenants struggling to pay their rent or finding it difficult to pay gas / electric bills.
- Tenants gained over £156,000 in additional income/ benefits through our Welfare Rights Service and an additional £155,000 due to the increase in this service from RAMH. In addition, RAMH were able to provide emotional support to individuals where required.
- We produced and issued a leaflet to promote our Welfare Rights Service



SUPPORTING OUR TENANTS

Please get in touch- we are here to help!

OUR SERVICE IS FRIENDLY AND CONFIDENTIAL

GET IN TOUCH:

0141 812 2237

admin@bridgewaterha.org.uk

Leave your name, address, phone number and/or email address and we will get in touch with you.

- Are you experiencing financial hardship as a result of Covid-19?
- Are you struggling to pay your rent?
- Are you finding it difficult to pay your gas/ electricity bills etc?
- Would you benefit from having an iPad and 12 months free access to the internet?
- Do you have debts?
- Would a regular food parcel help?

If the answer is **YES** to any of the above, then we may be able to help you. Please get in touch!



Bridgewater tenant's feedback

"I can't thank the service enough, it's made such a difference to me and I have been able to pay off rent arrears, that I was constantly struggling with".

"I can't thank you enough, we didn't think my Mother would be entitled to anything and I would never have got round to checking or applying as I am too busy working and caring, it's been such a great help".

"the service has been brilliant, and he very much appreciated the extra support during this very difficult time for him

"having someone to listen has been so helpful, and being able to get the kids toys to distract them a bit has been such a relief"

Thank you so much! I will have two very happy girls when they return from school and nursery. My youngest is already subscribed to Dolly's imagination library, but again, thank you for suggesting it.

Bridgewater's help really does mean so much.

- Over 230 Bridgewater families with children 16 years and under received a £25 Morrisons voucher (1 per household equates to just under £6,000) to provide a treat to the children
- We carried out a survey of over 200 tenants in January 21 to obtain feedback on the support provided at the start of the pandemic and to obtain views on future support needs.
- 83% of tenants who responded were satisfied with Bridgewater during the pandemic
- 88% of tenants who responded felt that Bridgewater had kept you informed about the changes to services available due to Covid-19
- 94% of tenants who said they had been kept informed said you obtained information on changes to services via letter

In relation to concerns or difficulties experienced during the pandemic:

- 12% stated loneliness/ isolation/ not getting out
- 12% stated not seeing family or friends
- 12% stated financial worries



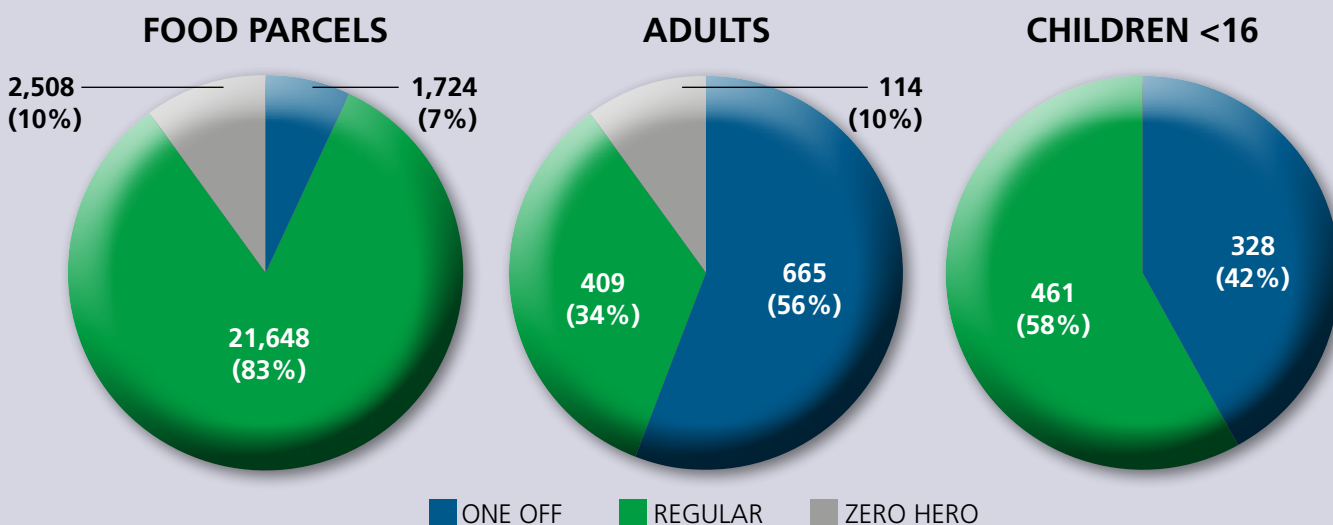
EBI Unites project is currently located at the Church of the Nazarene, Rashielee Avenue, Erskine PA8 6HA and Barnhill Farm, Houston Road, Inchinnan PA4 9LU

CAE initially supported our tenants through referrals from our Housing Officers and also those who made direct contact to CAE seeking support. Owner occupiers and individuals and families in private rented accommodation

have also been supported. A large number of people had initially requested support from CAE due to financial hardship or no family support in the area. Our Care & Repair staff volunteered to assist CAE and utilised their work vans to deliver food supplies to the storage area. The funding enabled EBI Unites to provide the following essential support to residents in the range of local communities:

- Support the provision of Care packages including food and other essential items to families and elderly/ vulnerable residents
- Deliver food to those in need, 3 days per week
- Provide and deliver soup to Elderly/Vulnerable residents 2 days per week
- Provide Welfare calls to elderly/ vulnerable residents
- Increase the Welfare Rights & Financial Literacy Advice Service
- Provide emergency mobile phone and power card top ups
- Reimburse volunteers petrol costs for delivering throughout Erskine
- Relocation from the farmhouse to the Community Centre etc

March 2020 – December 2020



During the period March 20 to December 20 the initiative delivered:

- over 20,000 food parcels
- 8220 soup and pudding servings
- 2280 Welfare Calls

The volume of support provided did not decrease over the period **January 2021 to March 2021** and across all tenures numbers were as detailed below:

- Delivery of 25,880 parcels, including food and other essential items to families and elderly/ vulnerable residents.

- Provide and deliver hot meals to Elderly/Vulnerable residents 2 days per week
- Provide Welfare calls to elderly/ vulnerable residents
- Provide emergency mobile phone and power card top ups
- Cover rent and utility costs of premises

	On Going Support	One off Support
Households	328	431
Adults	461	655
Children (<16 yrs)	136	409

The long term benefits of such partnership working should be acknowledged and capitalised upon: ensuring those in receipt of support are aware of the partnership between organisations is vital to maintaining good faith and remains an important tool for influencing the public perception of those involved.

- Additional outputs were that 3 volunteers were able to gain full time employment
- The provision of fruit and vegetables, food provisions and other activities at Barnhill Farm continued to develop with the provision of a free bus service.
- An online cookery demonstration was organised by EBI Unites in conjunction with Renfrewshire Council as part of Paisley Food & Drink Festival.

The project has evolved and the name was changed to Erskine, Bishopton, Inchinnan Unites in recognition of the wider geographical areas being supported. The leaflet details the range of organisations involved in ensuring essential support has been provided within these communities. Although a newly formed group, created in response to the COVID-19 crisis, the individuals who make up the founding members have a proven track record in community development and resilience building. The amazing work done is illustrated in the charts which show the number of individuals/ families/ adults and children the project has supported during Covid-19.

The success of the project has been down to the drive and determination of EBI Unites, Jacqui Reid and the team of local volunteers. The project has developed into a successful long term sustainable model demonstrating community cohesion with growth in scale and tenure, working relationships and partnerships, learning and recognition



of each organisations' strengths, removing duplication of effort and maximisation of resources. A further funding application will be submitted and It is hoped that future funding will be made available to support the work of the group and the provision essential support services within the communities.

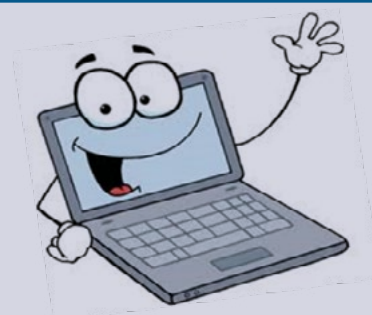


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Connecting Scotland

Bridgewater has been successful in applying to Connecting Scotland; this is a Scottish Government funded programme set up in response to coronavirus by helping people access online services and support they need whilst keeping family and friends in contact.

Each local authority is allocated devices, Bridgewater applied to Renfrewshire Council and obtained chromebooks, ipads and free wifi as detailed in the table below which were distributed to our tenants who met the eligibility criterion. The initiative also enables us to support our tenants to develop digital skills.



Date	Phase & Criteria	Number		
		Chromebooks	Ipads	WiFi
June 2020	Phase 1 – Elderly/vulnerable	5	15	20
Dec 2020	Phase 2 -Families/Carers	5	10	15
Feb 2021	Phase 2 Round 2 – Older/ Disabled	0	15	15
TOTAL		10	40	50



Ferguslie Park
Housing Association

Ferguslie Park Housing Association

Ferguslie Park Housing Association, and its charitable subsidiary, the Tannahill Centre work together as the Ferguslie Group to ensure Ferguslie Park reaches its full potential. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this meant raising £408,799 in funding and working alongside local volunteers and organisations to use these resources to support the most vulnerable in our community.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Whilst closed to the public, the Tannahill Centre acted as a food distribution hub for the whole of Renfrewshire, and as a base for our staff, volunteers and partners who were supporting those in our community most impacted by the pandemic.

Since April 2020 our partnership with the Darkwood Crew, the Star Project and others has supported those who were shielding or self-isolating or requiring some additional support in the following ways.

- Doorstep delivery of 21,374 food parcels in Ferguslie Park and the wider community.
- Shopping was collected on 72 occasions for those who were unable to leave the house.
- Trainees from the Tannahill Centre café prepared and delivered 18,511 meals to 93 people during lockdown.
- 433 prescriptions being collected on behalf of those who could not leave the house.
- Emergency energy vouchers were provided to 334 households experiencing fuel poverty as a result of the pandemic
- Advice, guidance and representation was provided by Welfare Rights Advisors to 69 people having to navigate the welfare rights system for the first time as a result of the pandemic.
- The Ferguslie Essentials Fund provided 33 people with white goods, digital devices or other household essentials that they otherwise would have been unable to afford.
- 72 families received digital devices and free internet data packages to ensure children from Ferguslie Park were able to fully participate in home schooling during lockdown.
- Pupils from Glencoats Primary School and St. Fergus Primary school were provided with homework packs, ensuring they were able to participate in home schooling, and a number of educational games packages were purchased for their use on their devices.
- Hygiene packs were distributed to over 200 people, to ensure the additional cost of social distancing and hygiene measures would not impact on those on low incomes.



TACKLING ISOLATION AND POOR MENTAL HEALTH

During lockdown local people informed us of the significant toll social distancing was having on their own mental health and wellbeing and that of their friends and family. In partnership with local volunteers and organisations such as Darkwood Crew, Lifelink, Own Yer Bike and YoMo, our partnership delivered a range of interventions to give everyone something to look forward to, promote socialisation and encourage better mental health.

Children and young people received 3,334 activity packs with activities and themes ranging from celebrating the Tannahill Centre's birthday, summer holidays, Halloween, Burns day and STEM activities.

187 socially distanced community activities including community bingo, a community advent calendar, pumpkin trails and picnic events brought the community together whilst socially distancing.

Youth workers continued to meet with young people throughout the pandemic through online activities, outdoor workshops and regular 'Walk and Talks'.

People were supported to engage in active travel with 523 bikes and safety equipment given away or sold at low costs, whilst 250 free and low-cost bike repairs were also provided to local people.



Lifelink provided 22 free telephone counselling sessions to local people needing someone to talk to about the challenges they had faced during lockdown.

BUILDING BACK BETTER



As we near the end of the pandemic, we asked local people to share with us their ideas for how Ferguslie can come together, and through our Good Ideas Fund distributed over £25,000 to projects that promoted good health and wellbeing that also brought the community together.

Pals of the Privies received £5,000 as a contribution towards a new play park, providing young people with somewhere safe to play outdoors.

A group of young people received £3,300 to run a community-wide wellbeing festival once group events are allowed to take place.

Local volunteers received £3,000 to establish a Men's Group – encouraging men to come together to support one another and to participate in a wide range of wellbeing activities.



Neighbours have teamed up to clean up a disused greenspace and have now received £3,000 to create a growing space, community orchard and play area.

£2,500 was awarded to the Bingo Bus, enabling it to continue running across Ferguslie during the summer months of 2021.

Glenvale Football Club was granted £2,030 to provide weekly free football training and activities to young people from Ferguslie.

A newly formed events team was awarded £1,250 and plan on running a number of events, bringing the community together for the first time after lockdown.

A local community gym was provided with £1,150 to repair essential equipment, allowing the gym to re-open to the community once restrictions allowed.



£1,000 was provided to re-launch the 'Cycle Round the Scheme' event in 2021.

Groups from a number of streets from across Ferguslie teamed up with their neighbours to deliver street parties, bingo and other socially distanced activities that lifted spirits. In total these groups received £3,500 between them.

Since then we have also provided a further £10,000 to projects including: the creation of a sensory garden, the relaunching of a community choir, the provision of lunches and snacks to school children during the summer months and the provision on training to local volunteers so their dance school can continue to run despite social distancing and hygiene measures.

Supporting Communities

Feedback from some of the Supporting Communities Funded Organisations in Renfrewshire that Linstone have been assisting since Lockdown:

With the funding coming from Linstone we decided, with the prolonged period that our children would be off school combined with the potential loss of income for many parents, we would invest in outdoor play equipment such as basketball stands, football goals, archery sets etc. to keep the kids happy all summer long as they can return the equipment in exchange for something different each week. This initiative is promoting healthy outdoor play away from large parks where infection may still be possible. We know summer in Scotland is unpredictable, so we have bought in crafting supplies, slime kits and kinetic sand to pass the rainy days. This initiative also protects parents from financial harm when their income may have already been slashed due to furlough or redundancy



Lewis Nesbitt, Chairperson, highlighting just part of the many services the Spateston Tenants and Residents Association have been providing for the local neighbourhood

Supporting Communities Funding has helped Music Broth to support those living in Renfrewshire's, improving mental health, wellbeing, creativity and self-expression in lockdown through our sanitised 'musical instrument to your door' delivery service and online tutorials. Our online tutorials have had over 450 views to date and incredibly touching feedback from our delivery service so far.

MUSIC BROTH

User of Music Broth services

With the funding we received we have installed remote studio equipment including microphones, mic stands and software to allow other charities to broadcast their information to the listeners of Paisley FM automatically, remotely and safely. It has been great to more easily get closer to so many organisations working across Renfrewshire and get their message of help broadcasted.



Norman Ross, Paisley FM, Radio for Renfrewshire.

LOCHWINNOCH

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST

The funding from Linstone has enabled Lochwinnoch Community Development Trust to transform a derelict piece of land into a community resource, with a team of volunteers who co-operate in cultivating fresh vegetables for families in receipt of food parcels to enjoy at home.

**Lochwinnoch Community Development Trust,
community assisted agriculture**

Diggin' It has helped over 150 individuals across over 50 households grow their own vegetables from home. The funding has provided compost, fertiliser, raised beds and vegetable seeds for those who need them.



Working with the Primary School Diggin' It provided compost, seeds and canes for a project on pollinators with 55 pollination kits collected by school pupils.

**Participant of the Diggin' It Project - Helping
Households Grow Their Own Vegetable from
Home and Education projects.**

"Thank you for my wellbeing bag, puzzle book will keep my mind working in the right direction and I will be trying the get up and go exercises, and I love my new colouring book and pens. It has just come at the right time as I have been struggling. Thanks"



"Your walks are cheering so many people up with their inspiring messages. The virtual challenge is a great idea. Well done."

**Active Communities, encouraging activity and
wellbeing amongst participants**

I Am Me Scotland are extremely grateful for the funding which means we can take our resources online to continue our disability and hate crime awareness. We will be able to continue our work with people across the Renfrewshire to record short stories that encourage acceptance of diversity and promote community cohesion. As we move through the phases of lockdown this funding will help to highlight that people may not always behave in expected ways. This may be due to hidden disabilities, for example, some people with autism may not be able to wear face masks on public transport. It is important that people are not targeted or abused because of this.



I Am Me

The Supporting Communities Fund contribution towards our Boredom Boxes



has allowed us to distribute boxes to more than 100 isolated young people throughout Renfrewshire as part of our communities programme, distributing over 1000 boxes working with over 35 local partners. One young person from Linwood said - 'I would like to say a very big thank you for the boredom box. I split some of the things with my sister. I am sure I am going to use all of the contents. and my sister will also do all the activities.' We've also been able to run 7 online sessions with the SPACE group via Zoom and have worked with the group on everything from home baking to games, to getting involved in a New Practice architect challenge and discussing future programme ideas.

**CREATE Paisley working with Young People
across Renfrewshire.**

The Scottish Government's Supporting Communities Fund being distributed in Renfrewshire by Linstone



£300,000

Supporting Communities Funding secured from Scottish Government to benefit Renfrewshire Residents through onward distribution to local charities working to address immediate need in response to the pandemic



38

local Renfrewshire charities supported with funding to date



25%

of the funding distributed to date has been to support the provision of emergency food supplies across Renfrewshire, working particularly with The Star Project, REEM, Erskine Community Council and Friends for All Project



£3,800

was distributed to provide Adult Activity Packs to shielding elderly residents in the Paisley area



£50,000+

has gone to organisations to set up their own emergency funds to help those in most need with phone and energy top ups, purchase of tablets for home schooling and many other urgent needs, these include Ferguslie Park Housing Association, Home Start, The Star Project, Corseford and Spateston Tenants and Residents Associations



£26,000+

has been distributed to Renfrewshire Charities to help everyone stay active during Lockdown, organisations include Active Communities, Jones&Us, Twist and Hit Cheerleaders, Get Active Coaching and St Mirren Charitable Foundation



£32,000+

has allowed organisations in Renfrewshire to help with create pursuits for everyone and including Music Broth, LoudnProud, PACE and CREATE Paisley.



£26,000+

has gone to help some of Scotland's most inspiring charities that are based in Renfrewshire, to continue the good work they do including Finding Your Feet, I Am Me, and Scotland's Bravest Manufacturing Company



£5,750

has gone to Sassy Lassy to make PPE including Face Masks for free onward distribution to local charities and front line health care workers



LINSTONE
HOUSING

Linstone Response Team



When COVID struck Linstone set up the Response Team, to assist tenants who may need extra support. Every day the team reached out to tenants and local residents to offer help with the many and varying challenges they and their families found themselves facing due to the pandemic.

The team have taken an individual approach to every case, providing assistance as required, which may include material and financial support, or signposting to other local organisations.

- We contacted and spoke with over **1800** households to maximise tailored support
- Our team has applied for and provided further support for **193** children
- We have distributed **46** Tablets and Laptops and Internet Connections
- **33** Householders have benefited from counselling support
- **316** have been referred on to other local support services
- **32** were provided with assistance to collect prescriptions
- Linstone Emergency Funding has provided direct support to **37** households in the form of appliances, furniture, clothing and household equipment



Paisley Housing Association

Emergency Support for tenants

Paisley HA understood that the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in many of our tenants having significant financial issues which resulted in them contacting us in crisis. Early in the pandemic a strategic decision was made to help our tenants, by supporting them financially in times of crisis. There were three streams to this all of which allowed tenants in crisis to get support.

Fuel Bank and Emergency Assistance Scheme

Early in the pandemic we secured funding from Energy Action Scotland to provide emergency fuel vouchers to our tenants, we then secured top up funding from the Scottish Government Communities Recovery Fund, Energy Savings Trust, Martin Lewis COVID Emergency Fund and Foundation Scotland to expand this scheme to deliver more Fuelbank Vouchers, Supermarket Vouchers and Mobile Phone Top Ups which distributed **£36,000** of Emergency Assistance in the year 2020/21.

This scheme continues to provide assistance to tenants this year until October.

Christmas Hardship Fund

Thanks to funding from the Scottish Government's Communities Recovery Fund we were able to provide support to 250 vulnerable households over the Christmas holidays. This involved 150 households with pensioners and 100 vulnerable families and distributed **£15,000** of assistance. This ensured that our most vulnerable tenants received significant support through the festive period.

Easter Holiday Family Support Fund

The Communities Recovery Fund also allowed us to provide families with some additional support over the Easter Holiday period. In doing this we supported 380 families with a total of **£6000** of assistance. As part of this scheme, we also partnered with Create Paisley to deliver Easter Activity boxes to families with a 12–15-year-old child.



Advice Services

Welfare Benefits Services

Throughout the pandemic our Welfare Benefits Service provided significant support to those tenants who had lost their jobs or whose income had reduced. We supported 360 tenants with nearly 800 issues. This generated an increase in annual income of **£1.3million** and backdated benefits worth **£200,000**. Due to increased demand our Welfare Benefits Officer was joined by another advisor, funded by the Scottish Government, who supported in managing the increased demand.

Money Advice

This additional capacity was also used to deliver Money Advice, this advice focussed on reducing deductions from benefits and dealing with small debt issues. We supported 45 tenants with this and increased their disposable income by **£17,000** by assisting them to come to affordable repayment arrangements.

Energy Advice

We also received funding from the Energy Savings Trust to deliver a 2-year Energy Advice project which is now supporting tenants to save money on their gas and electricity by ensuring that they are on the cheapest tariff, dealing with energy debt, and providing advice on how to spend less on their gas and electricity.

This project is also supporting our void properties to be supplied with energy saving LED lightbulbs and will be helping provide some tenants with thermal lined curtains.

Homeless Prevention Project

Looking forward Paisley HA have been successful in a bid for **£120,000** of funding for an innovative 3-year project to prevent homelessness.

This project will work intensively with tenants who have been homeless or are at risk of homelessness, to try and resolve underlying issues which may put a tenant at risk of homelessness. The project will manage a Crisis Fund which can be used to help alleviate crisis by providing furniture, white goods and in exceptional circumstances a cash grant.

The project will work in conjunction with Impact Arts to assist some new tenants with children to decorate a child's bedroom and will also have access to counselling services to support tenants who have mental health needs.

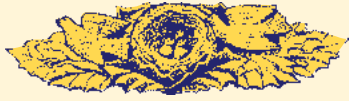
This project will work closely with our Housing Management Team and Advice Services to deliver a holistic service and practical support to tenants and help them settle in their properties and avoid risk of homelessness.

Digital Support

Over the last 18 months, we have become aware that digital access is as essential to our tenants as gas and electricity. In fact, we now believe that it is the third utility.

We have been awarded 25 iPads with 2 years mobile internet from Connecting Scotland, which will be issued to vulnerable households to support them in remaining connected. We have also been awarded funding from Lintel Trust which will be used to supplement this provision and support tenants with devices and access to the internet.





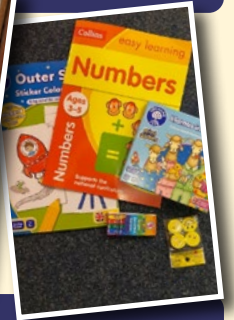
Williamsburgh
Housing Association Limited

Williamsburgh Housing Association

Our Tenancy Support Assistant provided various initiatives and projects that benefited our tenants during lockdown such as:

CHILDREN ACTIVITY PACKS

WHA were able to access Supporting Communities Funding via our FLAIR Partner Linstone Housing Association to provide our tenants children (under 7 years of age) with activity packs during lockdown. We provided a number of packs straight to their doors.



DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY

With a little help from Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, WHA fund a free book gifting programme devoted to inspiring a love of reading in the hearts of children everywhere. Each month, enrolled children receive a high

quality, age-appropriate book in the post, free of charge. Children receive books from birth until they turn five. Currently over 20 of our youngest tenant's benefit from this programme.

EMERGENCY FOOD

WHA secured emergency food parcels for 76 of our tenants through the Star Project and Renfrewshire Food Bank.

CRISIS GRANTS

WHA secured crisis grants for 23 of our tenants, totalling £3,440.

SCHOOL CLOTHING GRANTS AND FREE SCHOOL MEALS

WHA assisted 9 tenants to apply for school clothing grants of £900 and to register for free school meals.

FUEL VOUCHER SCHEME

We accessed the Energy Redress Scheme via our FLAIR partner Paisley Housing Association and were able to

provide 404 fuel vouchers totalling £17,708 to our most vulnerable tenants and those struggling with energy bills.

COVID WINTER HARDSHIP PAYMENT - £100

WHA assisted 4 eligible tenants with successful applications, for the Covid Winter Hardship Payment, totalling £400.

WARM HOMES DISCOUNT

WHA have proactively contacted tenants regarding helping to apply for the Warm Home Discount, where they receive £140 each in grants from their energy supplier. We have successfully applied for 30 grants, totalling £4,000.

COMMUNITY CARE GRANTS

WHA obtained 23 Community Care grants for household goods for our new tenants.

COMMUNITY BENEFIT CLAUSES

WHA has provided over £1000 of sports equipment to Williamsburgh Primary School thanks to its Community Benefit Contract Clause with Everwarm Ltd. During the pandemic, Williamsburgh Primary Schools' Parent Teacher Association approached Williamsburgh Housing Association on how it could benefit the young people of the primary school. The equipment included, hoops, beanbags, footballs, tennis balls, basketballs, shuttlecocks and pucks.

Alison Vandal, deputy headteacher, said: "On behalf of the school, staff and children we would like to thank the PTA, Williamsburgh Housing Association, and Everwarm Ltd for providing us with such a generous donation of sports equipment."

"This will help support our outdoor curriculum, especially PE and break time activities, which each classroom to get



their own pack so that every child benefits while ensuring we are complying to Covid control measures within the school."

CONNECTING SCOTLAND

After a successful application to Connecting Scotland, via Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, for digital devices and Mi-Fi devices Williamsburgh Housing Association were able to obtain 30 Chromebooks for parents and families and 10 iPads for our elderly tenants to help them connect with the digital world and improve their digital skills. Each device came with a Mi-Fi device which uses this connection to create a mini wireless broadband cloud or hotspot. This can then be shared between mobile internet-enabled devices — such as smartphones, laptops, tablets and even gaming consoles — that are within range of its signal. Each of the distributed mi-fi devices have 24 months of unlimited data.

"I've been trying to do my beauty course and qualification online through my phone as college is all remote now, so this Chromebook is going to help me out so much"

"I've 3 children trying to use my phone to do their homework, so this is perfect, thank you so much"

"I've been suffering from depression during lockdown, but I'm starting to feel better, this has made my day"

"I'm going to get this out of the box right now and start job searching as I've been trying to do it on my phone, and I'll be able to type up my CV too"





Flair = community regeneration • community work • partnership • employability



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