



The Ferguslie Group Newsletter

Winter 2018



Welcome to the winter edition of The Ferguslie Group Newsletter



It gives me great pleasure to be writing this article as the new Chief Executive for the Ferguslie Group. Having started in September, I have been spending time getting to know our staff, tenants, customers and services and will be continuing to grow my knowledge and understanding over the coming months. I will be getting out and about so if you see me please say hello and stop for a chat.

It is an exciting time to join Ferguslie Park which has been going through a period of significant rejuvenation. I am delighted that the Scottish Housing Regulator has now taken the decision to remove its statutory intervention powers and although we will continue

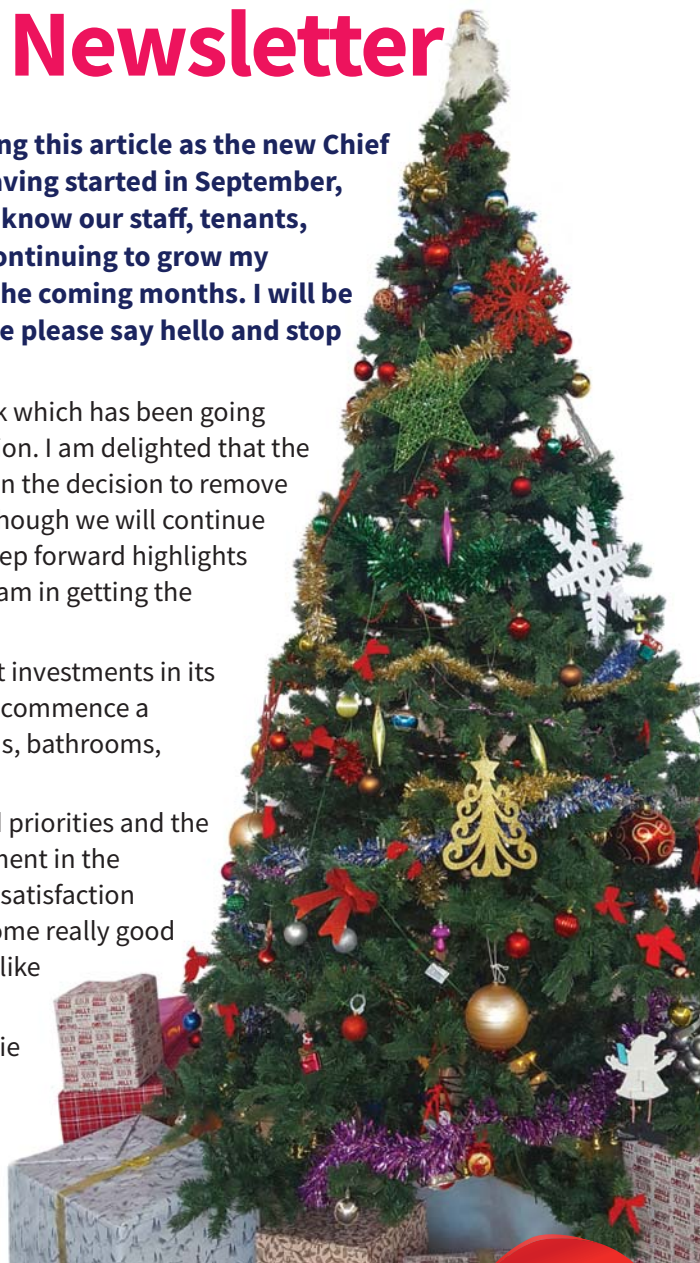
to engage with the Regulator at a high level for the time being, this step forward highlights the significant progress made by the Management Board and staff team in getting the organisation back to good health.

The Association's attention now moves towards delivering significant investments in its housing stock and improved services for its tenants. We are about to commence a number of planned maintenance projects which include new kitchens, bathrooms, boilers, windows and doors for a number of our homes.

It is my job to make sure we engage with our tenants and understand priorities and the challenges they face. It is also my job to ensure continuous improvement in the services we provide to tenants. Our most recent independent tenant satisfaction survey carried out over the summer provided the Association with some really good feedback and will help shape our priorities going forward. We would like to thank those tenants who took the time to give their views.

Finally, it is a great privilege to be the new Chief Executive for Ferguslie Park and I will lead the organisation through the delivery of our Business Plan and beyond, ensuring tenants and the local community are at the heart of our organisation.

Many Thanks. **Catrina Miller** Group Chief Executive



Festive Season Office Closure

**The Association will close at 12.30pm on Monday 24th December 2018
and will re-open on Monday 7th January 2019 at 9am.**

We will contact all tenants with the emergency contact number for repairs before we close for Christmas.

*Wishing all of our tenants a
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year*



Universal Credit Top Tips

- 1 Get a benefit check** – Some people might be better off under Universal Credit, especially some people in part-time work and tenants with working non-dependants, ie sons, daughters or other adults living with them who are in work.
- 2 Get help to claim** – All claims are expected to be made online so please let us help if help is required.
- 3 Take the right documentation** – You will be asked to attend new claim appointment at the Job Centre – make sure you take evidence of your identity and a letter (which we will provide) to confirm your current housing details, including your accurate rent charge.
- 4 Avoid Council Tax Debt** – Always make a claim for Council Tax Reduction directly with Renfrewshire Council as this is not part of the Universal Credit claim (we will help you with the claim).
- 5 Advance Payments** – Once your identity has been verified at your new claim appointment, you can request an advance payment. It can be claimed online and the advance can be up to 100% of your expected first payment and it will include money to pay your rent. The advance will be repaid over 12 months from your ongoing entitlement each month.
- 6 Remember your log-in details** – Universal Credit is claimed and managed online, so always remember your username, password and the answers to your security questions (you will have set these up when making your claim and we will help you to manage this if required).
- 7 More frequent Payments** – Universal Credit is normally paid once monthly however, after you receive your first payment (but not before), you can request 'more frequent' payments and you will receive half your entitlement payable in two payments within each month. This request can be made online.
- 8 Remember your pay date** – Universal Credit payments should be paid on the same date each month (but not if you opt for more frequent payments), so for example if you receive your first payment on 04th February you should receive your next payment on the 4th March and the 4th of each month thereafter.
- 9 Avoid Rent Arrears** – Discuss with your Housing Officer how you intend to pay your rent payments.
- 10 Prepare for the switch** – If you're working age you may not have been asked to switch to Universal Credit yet – but you will be eventually so please be prepared and make sure you have an email address, a mobile telephone and an account for your money to be paid into, ie, bank, building society, credit union etc.

A cartoon illustration of Santa Claus, wearing his traditional red suit with white trim and a white beard, pushing a shopping cart. The cart is overflowing with numerous wrapped gifts in various colors (red, green, yellow, blue, white) and sizes. Santa is smiling and looking towards the cart.

***Pay your rent
before it's
spent!***

If you are having difficulty paying your rent contact your Housing Officer as soon as possible.

We also have our dedicated Welfare Rights Service that can help you with your benefit matters.

Housing Officers • 0141 887 4053

Welfare Rights • 0141 847 5219 / 5204

Children's Christmas Party

**Funded by
Clyde Radio's
Cash for Kids, we will
be running a Christmas dinner and disco
for children from Ferguslie Park.**

Taking place on **Monday, 17th December 2018** from
6:00 pm – 8:00 pm, information
on how you can get a free ticket
to this event will be available
on our Facebook page shortly.



cashforkids



New Faces at the Tannahill Centre

You may have spotted some new faces in the Tannahill Centre over the past few weeks, with Gordon joining us as a full time Facility Officer and Ryan joining us on a sessional basis, supporting us when we require an extra pair of hands. Alongside our existing Facility Officers they are responsible for keeping the building in tip-top condition for everyone visiting the centre.



Participatory Budgeting

Thanks to funding from the Scottish Government young people from Ferguslie Park will decide on how £25,000 is spent within their own community. We are currently recruiting young people who would like to get involved in this project and learn new skills, meet new people and gain new experiences as part of this process.



If you are aged between 12 – 25 and would like to get involved, please contact **Caitlin McGlynn** on **0141 280 2208** or by email on caitlinmcglynn@fpha.org.uk.

Burns Day Multicultural Food Festival

To celebrate the life and contribution of Robert Burns to Scotland's culture the Tannahill Centre will be teaming up with a number of local organisations to hold a Multicultural Food Festival on Burns Day.

Come along to enjoy food and entertainment from the different cultures from around the world from 3:00 pm till 6:00 pm on Friday, 25th January 2019.



New Year, New Works

Over the past couple of months the team at Ferguslie Park have been working hard to get in place new contracts for replacement of key components in your house.

Kitchen and Bathrooms

We will be starting a new programme very early in 2019 of replacing new kitchen and bathrooms. Over 100 houses will be part of a programme of works which we intend to start in January 2019 to replace old kitchens and bathrooms.

Tenants that are in this programme have been contacted and surveys have started on these properties involving the contractor L&D Services and staff from the Association. The cost of these works is in the region of **£500,000** and we hope that the investment will make a difference to the tenants affected.

Windows and Doors

A programme of replacing windows and/or doors in over 300 houses is also due to start in early 2019 with the Association in the final stages of appointing a contractor.

The programme has yet to be finalised however we are working hard to try to start installations around February 2019 and run for a number of months.

All tenants who will be part of the programme of works are being contacted with more information once the appointment of the contractor takes place.

The Association is investing around £1m in carrying out these works and we really look forward to the benefit that tenants will get from this programme of works to replace older windows and doors which are at the end of useful lifecycle.

New Bin Stores

The Association has also been working with a landscape architect to design new bin stores for the tenements at 31, 33, 35 and 37 Dalskeith Road. The new designs are being completed and we will be contacting the tenants in these properties to get their views and input on the new designs. Once this consultation has taken place we will tender the works and aim to be onsite with the new stores before the end of March 2019.

New Year – even more new works

The Board of the Association has also decided to bring forward some further investment works to your houses in Ferguslie.

The Board has recognised that there is a need to keep investing in your properties therefore as a result a number of works have been approved.

More New Bathrooms

Approval has been given to add an additional **86** bathrooms to the replacement programme mentioned earlier which is scheduled to begin in January 2019. This represents an additional spend of around **£300,000** to the programme and will help to replace some of the older bathrooms in the Association's stock.

More New Boilers

During 2018 the Association installed over 150 new high efficiency 'A' Rated Boilers. The Board has approved for the installation of a further 26 boilers to help deal with some houses which still have old inefficient boilers

Common Close Works

In addition to works in houses the Association recognises that we also need to ensure that common elements in tenements need to be

maintained to ensure that common areas are safe and attractive for current and future tenants.

As a result the Association has approved the installation of **upgraded door entry systems; redecoration works and improved stair lighting** to the closes at 31 – 37 Dalskeith Road; 165 & 167 Ferguslie Park Avenue.

The tenements at 125 & 145 Blackstoun Oval are also included for **new security doors** in the closes and **redecoration works**.

External Repainting

The Board has also approved for the repainting of the external render of the properties at 23 – 30 Barochan Crescent; 71 – 77 Dalskeith Rd; 126, 128 Glencoats Drive; 106 – 110 Ferguslie Park Crescent & 1 – 14 Park Lane.

These works are intended to help maintain the external fabric of the properties and ensure that the properties are well maintained for years to come.

Future Works

The works described above mean that over 500 houses owned by Ferguslie Park Housing Association will be positively impacted by works to your home. However, we do know that there is still a lot of work to be done to help meet your demands for your home. The Association will also be undertaking a Stock Condition Survey during 2019.

The purpose of the Stock Condition Survey is to help the Association put together longer term investment plans for your home. Once we have the results of the Survey we will be able to provide more information about future plans so that tenants know better when replacement works will occur in your homes.