

VIEWPOINT

Autumn 2022

newspoint

Cost of Living

Fact sheet

Tenant Satisfaction Survey

What's happening next?

Jubilee Celebrations

Around Our Houses

Highlights

Page 8

Update from our Assets Team

.....

Page 15

Home Contents Insurance

Why Bother

.....

Page 16

Complaints and Compliments

A summary of 2021/2022 and information on how to make a formal complaint

Page 22

Our Tenants are Tapping Into IT

Find out how you can do the same

.....

Page 26

My Days at the Blind School

Find out more about Jim's days at the blind school and about his travels to other countries

Important Information

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Freephone Repair Number

0800 345 7347

admin@viewpoint.org.uk

www.viewpoint.org.uk

Opening Hours

Monday, Tuesday &

Thursday

9am - 5pm

Wednesday

10am - 5pm

Friday

9am - 4.30pm

 @ViewpointHA

 /ViewpointHA

Welcome to your Autumn Edition of **Newspoint**

We have worked hard to ensure that Newspoint continues to be of interest to you with a mix of Viewpoint news and what is going on around our houses.

This edition shows all the wonderful Jubilee celebrations that took place in June and it was great to think about people getting together in person again. To continue the Jubilee theme try our puzzles on page 38 and you can enter our jubilee competition to win a £25 shopping voucher.

We have decided to launch a letters page for you to have your say, tell a story about the present or a tale from the past, or even to share a photo of something you have made or a place you have been. You can give your letter/photo to any member of staff or email newspoint@viewpoint.org.uk

If you are not confident writing something yourself then just give us a call and Heather, our Tenant Participation Coordinator, will help you.

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“”

You can contact Heather by telephone or text at **07554 389 180** or email newspoint@viewpoint.org.uk

In addition, we have started looking to the next edition of Newspoint and want to know what you would like to see in it. Just speak to any member of staff or email newspoint@viewpoint.org.uk or contact Heather by phone or text on the numbers above.

Happy reading and let us know what you think about this edition of Newspoint.

Grace, Yvonne, Melody and Heather
The Editorial Team

JOIN THE EDITORIAL TEAM



Would you like to join the editorial team and be involved in delivering your Newspoint?

The current team have been working very hard to produce this edition. Unfortunately, two members of the group are unable to continue to work on the team at this time, and we are looking for more volunteers to assist with this important piece of communication.

If you are interested please contact Heather by phoning or text **07553 389 180** or email newspoint@viewpoint.org.uk



A Message from Jean

I hope this finds you and your family well and that you have been enjoying the longer days and warmer weather albeit scattered with heavy showers, a true Scottish summer!

Since March 2020, we have experienced one of the most difficult periods of our lives. Of course, we do not lose sight of Covid-19 and remember all those who have suffered loss. As an organisation, we remain committed to keeping our residents, tenants and staff safe. Unfortunately, this pandemic is not over and I know that many of you are still coping with the longer-term impact of Covid as well as trying to get your everyday lives back to normal. However currently normal is not what we are experiencing as the cost of living has become a challenge for so many people. If you do have concerns regarding your own personal situation please contact us and we will try to assist and if we cannot then we will signpost to the appropriate agencies.

Over the past few months, we have focussed on completing our new Business Plan. This was finally approved in May and sets out the vision for Viewpoint for the 3-year period from April 2022 through to March 2025. Over the life of this Business Plan there are very clear objectives linked to each area of our business. A couple of our key aims include reviewing our current stock to determine the suitability and financial sustainability of our current buildings. We have a clear operational focus on providing our customers with excellent customer service looking in particular at how we improve engagement and communication. We remain committed to continuing in care. However our existing care homes are old and the buildings are not fit for purpose and have become more challenging to maintain, therefore we will be considering the development of a new care home. That is just a flavour of our strategic direction and I would recommend that you take time to read our Business Plan which can be accessed on our website at www.viewpoint.org.uk or if you'd prefer a hard copy then please contact us on **0131 668 4247**

However, with the challenges we faced during the pandemic, it is fair to say that Viewpoint is still on a journey to consolidate present changes.

There are increasing challenges from the external political environment, new and existing legislation and the advent of a National Care Service. At the moment our main concern is recruitment and retention of staff across the whole organisation although particularly concerning in our care homes. This is a national crisis and needs national intervention. However in the meantime we are doing all we can within the organisation to learn why staff are moving on; to consider what we can do to retain them and where we can focus our attention to attract new people.

As many of you will be aware there are also challenges within the construction industry. I am pleased to advise that we have managed to minimise the impact on service delivery and we will continue to monitor and discuss these issues with our contractors at their monthly meetings. Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) remains a political priority however, I am pleased to say that the Scottish Government has agreed to pause the implementation of EESH2 until there has been a full review of the previous standard. More to come on that in the future linked to the Zero Carbon Agenda.

Thank you to those of you who took time to complete our recent Tenant Satisfaction Survey. We are now working on the outcomes to identify how we improve in these particular areas. Your feedback is important so thank you again.

Just to remind you that if you are interested in getting involved in Viewpoint in a way that suits you then please do get in touch by contacting Heather Jeffrie, Tenant Participation & Communications Co-ordinator by phone or text on **07554 389 180** or email heather.jeffrie@viewpoint.org.uk

I hope you find this newsletter both interesting and enjoyable and I look forward to seeing some of you at the tenant meetings over the next few months.

Best wishes
Jean Gray, CEO

Coming Soon

Annual Landlord Report

Work is currently underway on our 2021/22 Annual Landlord report, which will be published in October.

This report will provide tenants with information on Viewpoint's progress towards meeting the performance requirements of the Scottish Social Housing Charter.

Tenant Participation Strategy

Our Tenant Participation Strategy lays out how we engage with you.

Our strategy is being reviewed this year. Heather Jeffrie is currently out and about attending your coffee mornings trying to find out how you want to engage with us, how you want us to inform you of what is going on and what you want at a local level.

If you want to be involved or you have anything you would like to be considered as part of this review please do not hesitate to contact Heather by phone or text on 07554 389 180 or by email at tp@viewpoint.org.uk

Customer Service Standards

We are looking to review our service standards this year.

These standards will provide the basis for our staff and customers to measure how successfully our services are delivered across the organisation and help provide guidance on the required level of service.

In order to do this we are planning on working with staff and tenants to help shape and drive the review of the standards.

If you would like to be involved or have any comments or suggestions then please let Heather know by phoning or texting 07554 389 180 or by email at tp@viewpoint.org.uk

Tenant Quarterly Meetings and Walkabouts

We will be holding our next round of quarterly tenant meetings and walkabouts during September and October.

You will receive your invitation from your housing officer prior to the event. We look forward to seeing you there.



Annual General Meeting

SAVE THE DATE

The Association's Annual General Meeting will be held on Tuesday 20th September 2022.

It would be great to see many of you again, so look out for more details.

Service Review & Redesign Project Comes to an End

Over the past 18 months, we have been busy carrying out an extensive review and redesign of Viewpoint's housing services. The outcome of this work resulted in a remodelled staffing structure in the housing department and revised sheltered housing service that will continue to feel familiar to you.

Since the details of the redesigned service were shared with you in early March, we have been busy undertaking an evaluation of the approaches we used in the delivery of this project. The highlight for us during the evaluation was finally having the chance to meet some of you face-to-face before the project ended. Although the conclusion of this project ended our involvement as a Project Team in June, work to bring the full vision of the redesign to life will continue within the housing department over the coming months.

As the project comes to an end it is important that we acknowledge the contribution of others, in particular everyone who returned their survey, met with the consulting agents or with us as part of the research. Without this involvement, we would not have been able to reach the outcome you directed us to. Additional thanks go to the tenant communication volunteers who guided us in preparing and presenting our messages in a meaningful way and the Viewpoint Trust whose financial backing made this project possible.

We have both learnt a lot and enjoyed our time working on this project. The invaluable experiences we have gained by undertaking this piece of work will stay with us for a long time and will help in the delivery of future projects we undertake.

Kindest regards, as always
Pamela Paton and Christopher Palmiotto
The Project Team

Our Leaflets are Checked by You

When we prepare a new leaflet or renew an existing one we involve tenants, to make sure the information in the leaflet makes sense and will be of use to the recipient.

Some other Housing Associations actually have a stamp of approval on their leaflets that show that their leaflets have been checked and approved by tenants. This is something that was talked about by a few tenants a couple of years ago. As we were redesigning Newspoint we decided that this is something we would do.

In future when tenants have been involved in the development or review of a leaflet you will see our tenant stamp of approval.

And if you would like to be involved in preparing new leaflets or reviewing old ones then just let a member of staff know or contact me (Heather) by emailing tp@viewpoint.org.uk or telephone or text me on 07554 389 180.



Tenant
APPROVED

What's Happening with the Tenant Satisfaction Survey

Thank you to all of you who completed the survey in March 2022.

Our contractor, Knowledge Partnership, prepared a report summarising the responses. At the time of writing this, Knowledge Partnership are contacting all tenants who said, when they completed the survey, that they may be interested in being part of a focus group. These groups will meet with the Knowledge Partnership, who will lead the groups and summarise the feedback and any recommendation to us. The focus groups will be on repairs and communication.

We will be using the outcome of the survey to target areas for improvement.

The survey report has been uploaded to our website at: viewpoint.org.uk/media/4608/viewpoint-tenant-satisfaction-report-21st-june-2022.pdf or you can ask any member of staff for a paper copy.

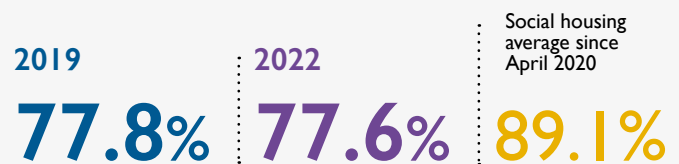
In the meantime here are some of the main statistics from the 2022 survey, along with the 2019 results and the social housing average.

Satisfaction with Association's overall service

% Tenants very and fairly satisfied



Satisfaction with repairs in the last year



Satisfaction with being kept informed about services and decisions



Satisfaction with contribution of Association to management of neighbourhood



Satisfaction with opportunities to participate in decision making



Rating of rent as very good or fairly good value for money



Satisfaction with quality of home





Assets Update

By Tom Hainey,
Director of Assets



I am delighted to have my first opportunity to introduce myself and give you an update on what has been happening in the Asset Management Department at Viewpoint since I joined the business a little over six months ago.

Health and Safety at Home

When I was appointed I was given a number of priorities to address in particular making sure that we were compliant with all of our landlord safety obligations. This was a major task and involved identifying what needed to be done in each of your homes and complexes, setting up contracts with suitably qualified specialist companies and then arranging access with you to get those works carried out.

Despite the impact of Covid-19 I was delighted to see just how helpful and accommodating the vast majority of our tenants were. Because of your assistance we were able to ensure that our contractors got access to virtually all of your homes.

By the end of March this year we had ensured that all but one of you with individual gas heating systems had your annual gas safety check carried out within a year of the last check. The one tenant who missed out was isolating due to Covid-19 and we were able to complete her safety check as soon as she was able to allow our engineers to access her home.

New regulations required us to have what is called an Electrical Inspection Condition Report (EICR) in place for every one of your homes and blocks. These inspections now have to be carried out at least every five years and a new one has to be done for every property that we relet.

This was a major task and I am delighted that the vast majority of those inspections were carried out by the end of March. Our Compliance Team is now working hard with their colleagues in Housing to get access to those properties where tenants have so far not given our contractors access. If you are one of those tenants I urge you to work with us to provide the essential access that we need to keep you safe at home. For the rest of you who did have an inspection carried out you may be contacted over the coming months to have some minor electrical remedial works carried out that were identified during the inspection. Please rest assured that anything that might have required immediate attention would have been fixed at the time of the electrical inspection.

In addition to the electrical and gas inspections we have also carried out a programme of Fire Risk Assessments (FRA) and interim reviews across our housing complexes and care homes. These are planned inspections that review the current safety of our blocks on a regular basis. The recent commemoration of the fifth anniversary of the Grenfell tragedy in London reminds us all of the importance of making sure that we make sure that fire risks are identified and managed appropriately.

These risk assessments and reviews have identified a range of actions that we now need to take to ensure your continued safety at home. We are actively working with our specialist advisers and contractors on developing programmes of remedial work that will make sure that all of those necessary works are completed on a planned basis over the course of this year. If you live in a block affected by these planned remedial works we will write to you in advance to let you know what those works will include.

Some of you may have already had that work carried out in your home, and I thank you for being so accommodating. I hope that everyone else who is yet to be contacted will be equally helpful in allowing access to carry out necessary works.

The other related major piece of work that we have been carrying out a major programme of works to comply with new Scottish Government regulations requiring all homes to have interlinked heat, smoke and where appropriate carbon monoxide alarms that came into force for all homes across the country in February of this year. Like many landlords across the country we were not able to complete all of that work by the February deadline but have been working hard with our contractor to complete the remaining installations as soon as possible. The properties that remain to be completed are those who previously did not provide access to our contractor and those for where we have been affected by a national shortage in the availability of wireless linked alarms.

Stock Condition

While we know from our recent tenant satisfaction survey that most of you have expressed satisfaction with the quality of your home (87%) we know that there is much that still needs to be improved and that some of you (7.5%) are not satisfied with your home. I am working with the asset management team to develop a planned approach to future investment in housing quality that we hope will raise levels of satisfaction with your homes even higher.

To make the right decisions about what, where and when to invest in your home we need to understand the current condition of all of the elements that make it up. That means developing an informed understanding of when essential components

like windows and doors, roofs and rainwater goods, heating and electrical systems, kitchens and bathrooms will need to be upgraded or replaced.

We have commissioned one of Scotland's leading surveying practices, Hardies, to review and update our current survey data last collected in 2018. They have already started an initial phase of surveys and we would really appreciate it if you can assist us to plan for the future by arranging access for them should you be asked over the coming months.

We will be preparing a three year investment programme that will list what works are due to be done and when. We will then make sure that this programme is made available to tenants and updated every year.

Energy Efficiency

Another of my priorities is to plan for improvements in energy efficiency and carbon reduction in your homes. The tenant satisfaction survey reveals that only a little over 65% of tenants said they could easily afford to heat their homes while nearly 20% said they could not. Even since the survey was carried out gas and electricity prices have risen dramatically and are predicted to rise yet further in the future. While most of our tenants benefit from being served by one of our communal heating systems and have been sheltered from the worst of those price rises by the excellent fixed priced deal we negotiated with our gas supplier, that situation will change substantially in the next year and of course is currently of no benefit to those of you with your own heating boiler and gas meters.

We are actively looking at how we can make your homes more energy efficient and help to reduce



ASSETS UPDATE

energy usage in your homes. To help us with that we have applied for grant funding from the Scottish Government that will allow us to gain a better understanding of the energy performance of our housing complexes. Our recently appointed stock condition surveyors, Hardies, will be assessing the energy performance of our complexes as part of the overall stock condition survey they are currently carrying out for us and we will use the grant aid we hope to get to make sure that those surveys are as informative as possible.

We will use that information to determine what packages of works would best achieve the necessary improvements in each complex and importantly how much those works are likely to cost. Because our complexes are so different in character often combining converted old buildings with newer extensions, we need to make sure that the approach we take is tailored to the specific demands of each of them. This approach will enable us to make the right decisions in each case.

The sorts of measures we will be looking at will include approaches to reducing energy use by improving thermal insulation, installing new efficient heating systems and switching energy consumption from fossil fuels to renewable sources.

Across the housing association sector there is great uncertainty about how much all of these energy efficiency and carbon reduction measures are likely to cost. If we can secure the grant support we have applied for from the Scottish Government we are certain that we will be able to calculate the likely costs for Viewpoint as accurately as possible and to plan ahead accordingly.

Housing Repairs

As you may know R3 was appointed as our response repairs contractor a little over two years ago. Sadly that appointment coincided with the Covid-19 pandemic which went on to have a massive impact on the delivery of services. Access to your home to carry out work was significantly restricted added to which the contractor had to deal with a number of key staff absences as result of illness and self-isolation.

Thankfully we are returning to something near normal now but there are still some remaining staffing shortages compounded by delays in the delivery of building materials from overseas that are affecting contractors across the country. These are occasionally still impacting on the contractor's ability to meet repair targets. While we aim to keep those disruptions to a minimum we would ask for your continued patience if you are affected by this on occasion.

We know from the recent customer satisfaction survey that a little over 15% of those of you who had a repair carried out in the previous year were not satisfied with our service. It is good to hear though that there were very low levels of dissatisfaction with the workers who visited your home and how our staff at Viewpoint dealt with your repair, but not so good to see quite high levels of dissatisfaction with repairs not being completed right first time.

It is one of my priorities to work with R3 to improve your levels of satisfaction with our repairs service. I have already opened discussions with them about ways that we can make it easier for you report repairs and to make appointments to have works carried out at more convenient times for you.

In the meantime, when you have a repair carried out you will be asked to complete a short multiple choice satisfaction questionnaire. It would be very much appreciated if you could take the time to provide us with your responses so we can keep our finger on the pulse and work with R3 to make your repairs service the best it can be.

Conclusions

There is a lot of work going on within the asset management service at the moment in addition to what I have listed in this article. My team is committed to delivering the best service we can to you and making the improvements that your homes most need. It is a work in progress but progress is definitely being made and I look forward to sharing more updates with you on what we have done and have planned for the future.

Cost of Living

Prices are currently going up for us all. We are feeling this particularly in our regular food shop, and energy prices are currently at an all-time high. Combined, this is causing anxiety and stress in many households. In response to this, the Government has introduced various measures of support, which are detailed in the Cost of living support fact sheet 26/05/2022 which we have printed on the previous page.

We continue to work to support anyone who is experiencing difficulty and our free welfare benefits service helps you maximise your income. Please contact Eleanor Eccles, our Welfare Rights Officer by phoning 0131 662 5144 or by email - eleanor.eccles@viewpoint.org.uk. Alternatively, please fill out the contact form on our website, and Eleanor will get back to you as soon as she can.

Alternatively, you can get in touch with your Housing Officer or Co-ordinator.

A number of you pay a service charge direct to Viewpoint for your Central Heating or your Central Heating and Hot Water. These charges increased by 2% in April of this year and our current monthly charge for a 1 bedroom property is £24.95 if you are paying for Central Heating only, or £30.15 if you are paying for Central Heating and Hot Water. These charges will not increase this financial year.

As we reported in our winter 2021 edition, through our partnership with national energy broker, Utility Aid, we entered into longer term pricing arrangements with energy suppliers during 2021, to protect against rising prices in the energy supply market, as far as we were able to. Our current arrangements last until 2023, although we have extended our agreement for 2 years beyond that (to 2025) at the most favourable rates available.

We continue to work hard to ensure that we are delivering value for money and to provide as much certainty as we can around these charges. We will be consulting on what this means for your service charge from April 2023 later on this year, during our annual rent and service charge consultation.



What makes you feel safe or unsafe when out/about?

Following on from the recent high-profile cases of violence against women Edinburgh's Women's Safety in Public Places Community Improvement Partnership want your views on what makes you feel safe or unsafe when out and about in public spaces.

Where do you feel safe or unsafe, and why? What do you think makes some areas and places feel safe or unsafe? What do you do to help make you feel safer?

While focused mainly on the safety of women and girls, we want to hear from anyone who lives or visits the Edinburgh area. We recognise that making spaces safer for women makes them safer for everyone.

Your responses will help to inform the future of how we develop and improve public spaces across the whole of the Edinburgh area, from the design of roads and pathways to the layout of parks and shopping areas and more.

The consultation is open until 20 September 2022. The partnership will report on findings later in 2022.

edinburgh.gov.uk/safety

Cost of Living Support Factsheet



gov.uk/government/publications/cost-of-living-support/cost-of-living-support-factsheet-26-may-2022

Millions of households across the UK are struggling to make their incomes stretch to cover the rising cost of living.

That is why the government is providing over £15 billion in further support, targeted particularly on those with the greatest need. This package is in addition to the over £22 billion announced previously, with government support for the cost of living now totalling over £37 billion this year. This means that almost all of the eight million most vulnerable households will get £1,200 of one-off support in total this year to help with the cost of living, with all domestic electricity customers receiving at least £400.

Energy Bills Support Scheme doubled to a one-off £400:

- Households will get £400 of support with their energy bills through an expansion of the Energy Bills Support Scheme.
- As well as doubling the £200 of support announced earlier this year, the full £400 payment will now be made as a grant, which will not be recovered through higher bills in future years.
- Energy suppliers will deliver this support to households with a domestic electricity meter over six months from October. Direct debit and credit customers will have the money credited to their account, while customers with pre-payment meters will have the money applied to their meter or paid via a voucher.
- This support will apply directly for households in England, Scotland, and Wales. It is GB-wide and we will deliver equivalent support to people in Northern Ireland.
- This support is in addition to the £150 Council Tax rebate for households in Scotland in Council Tax bands A-D, which was announced in February, and which millions of households have already received.



£650 one-off Cost of Living Payment for those on means tested benefits:

- More than 8 million households on means tested benefits will receive a payment of £650 this year, made in two instalments. This includes all households receiving the following benefits:
- Universal Credit
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Pension Credit
- DWP will make the payment in two lump sums – the first from July, the second in the autumn. Payments from HMRC for those on tax credits only will follow shortly after each to avoid duplicate payments.
- Claimants will need to be in receipt of one of these benefits, or have begun a claim which is later successful, as of 25th May 2022 to be eligible for the first of the two instalments. HMRC and DWP will provide further guidance, and the government will set out the eligibility date for the second instalment, in due course.
- This payment will be tax-free, will not count towards the benefit cap, and will not have any impact on existing benefit awards.
- The government will make these payments directly to households across the UK.
- Legislation will be introduced shortly to allow payments to be made to this timetable.

One-off £300 Pensioner Cost of Living Payment

- Pensioners are disproportionately impacted by higher energy costs, and many low-income pensioner households do not claim the means tested benefits they are entitled to.
- So pensioner households will receive an extra £300 this year to help them cover the rising cost of energy this winter.
- This additional one-off payment will go to the over 8 million pensioner households across the UK who receive the Winter Fuel Payment and will be paid on top of any other one-off support a pensioner household is entitled to, for example where they are on pension credit or receive disability benefits. Eligible households currently receive between £200 - £300, so the payment will represent at least double the support for this winter.
- The Winter Fuel Payment (including the extra Pensioner Cost of Living Payment) is not taxable and does not affect eligibility for other benefits.
- All pensioner households will get the one-off Pensioner Cost of Living Payment as a top-up to their annual Winter Fuel Payment in November/ December. For most pensioner households, this will be paid by direct debit.
- People will be eligible for this payment if they are over State Pension age (aged 66 or above) between 19 – 25 September 2022. There are certain circumstances where an individual above State Pension age does not qualify for the Winter Fuel Payment which can be found here on [gov.uk \[gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment/eligibility\]](https://gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment/eligibility)
- The government will make these payments directly to households across the UK.

£150 Disability Cost of Living Payment

- Around six million people across the UK who receive the following disability benefits will receive a one-off payment of £150 in September:
- Disability Living Allowance
- Personal Independence Payment
- Attendance Allowance
- Scottish Disability Benefits
- Armed Forces Independence Payment
- Constant Attendance Allowance
- War Pension Mobility Supplement
- We know people with disabilities may face a wide range of additional costs, such as specialist equipment, specialist food, and increased transport costs, and this payment will help with these costs as they are likely to have increased. Claimants must be in receipt of, or have begun an eventually successful claim for, one of these benefits as of 25th May 2022 to be eligible for this additional payment.
- For the many disability benefit recipients who receive means tested benefits, this £150 will come on top of the £650 they will receive separately.
- These payments will be exempt from tax, will not count towards the benefit cap, and will not have any impact on existing benefit awards.
- The government will make these payments directly to eligible people across the UK.

£500m increase and extension of Household Support Fund

- To support people who need additional help, the Government is providing an extra £500 million of local support, via the Household Support Fund, which will be extended from this October to March 2023.

- The Household Support Fund helps those in most need with payments towards the rising cost of food, energy, and water bills.
- The government will issue additional guidance to Local Authorities to ensure support is targeted towards those most in need of support, including those not eligible for the Cost of Living Payments set out on 26 May 2022.
- This brings the total amount provided through the Household Support Fund to £1.5 billion since October 2021.
- Of the £500 million, the devolved administrations will receive £79 million through the Barnett formula. This brings the total Household Support Fund allocations for the devolved administrations to £82 million for the Scottish Government, £50 million for the Welsh Government and £28 million for the Northern Ireland Executive. It will be for the devolved administrations to decide how to allocate this additional funding.

Pension Credit - Make sure you are claiming what you are entitled to

- Pension Credit is designed to help with daily living costs for people over State Pension age and on a low income, though you do not need to be in receipt of State Pension to receive it
- It tops up a person's income to a minimum of £182.60 per week for single pensioners or £278.70 for couples
- People receiving any amount of Pension Credit can also get help with other costs including rent (via Housing Benefit), council tax and heating. Those over 75 qualify for a free TV licence
- Up to an estimated 850,000 eligible households are not claiming Pension Credit worth £1.7 billion

Please contact our Welfare Benefits Officer, Eleanor Eccles, if you would like her to check whether you are eligible or not. Contact Eleanor by phoning 0131 662 5144 or emailing Eleanor.eccles@viewpoint.org.uk

Home Contents Insurance

Why bother?

After all nothing will ever happen or maybe you think I don't have that much anyway or that it's too expensive.

Well it could happen to anyone and the loss can be much more than you think – taking the cheapest items of furnishings for a single bedroom it could cost around £650 to replace your items in this room alone and that does not include your clothes or other personal possessions.

Read on to find out more about the Diamond Insurance scheme*

Home Contents Insurance and the Benefits

Whether you have just moved into your property or have resided in your home for a number of years, live in a flat or sheltered accommodation, it's always a good idea to consider what a home contents insurance policy would cover you for.

Home contents insurance provides cover for the contents of your home including cover for items such as furniture, carpets, curtains, clothes, bedding, electrical items, jewellery, pictures and ornaments.

No matter how careful you are, there's always a risk that your belongings could be broken, damaged or stolen so home contents insurance may help provide peace of mind should the worst happen. Imagine if your washer was to leak causing damage to your carpets, or your property flooded damaging all the contents in your home, or you had a break-in and your valuable possessions were stolen - Could you afford to repair or replace all of your possessions? Unfortunately, these things do happen, and that's why it's a good idea to consider taking out home contents insurance, either through the Diamond Insurance scheme or by making your own arrangements.

Some of the reasons to consider Diamond Insurance Scheme which was designed specifically for tenants and residents in social housing, in Scotland:

- Apply over the telephone or complete an application form.
- Covers theft, water damage, fire and many more household risks.
- Cover for fixed improvements you have added as a tenant of the home such as fitted kitchen units and bedroom furniture (up to 20% of the contents sum insured)
- Covers theft or attempted theft of contents in sheds, outbuildings and garages (up to £2,000).
- Covers damage to external glazing for which you are responsible.
- Covers replacement and installation of locks for outside doors and alarms, if keys are lost or stolen.
- You don't need to have special door or window locks (just a lockable front door).
- Flexible regular payment options you can pay premiums by cash fortnightly or monthly, monthly by direct debit or annually, (fortnightly and monthly premiums include a transaction charge).

Limits and exclusions apply. A copy of the policy wording and/or the Insurance Product Information Document (IPID) are available on request.

To find out more about the Diamond Insurance scheme, designed for tenants in social housing in Scotland, please contact URIS Group on **0345 671 817** or ask your Landlord for an application pack.

*The Diamond Insurance Scheme is a product name arranged by Thistle Tenant Risks on behalf of the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations and administered by URIS Group. The Diamond Insurance Scheme is underwritten by Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance Ltd. Authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority. Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance Ltd, No 93792 Registered in England and Wales at St. Marks Court, Chart Way, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 1XL. Thistle Tenant Risks is a trading style of Thistle Insurance Services Limited. Thistle Insurance Services Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority FRN 310419. Registered in England under No. 00338645. Registered office: Rossington's Business Park, West Carr Road, Retford, Nottinghamshire, DN22 7SW. Thistle Insurance Services Ltd is part of the PIB Group. Our Data Protection Privacy Policy is online at <https://www.thistleinsurance.co.uk/Privacy-Policy>



Complaints & Compliments

2021/2022

By Bianca Culbert
Corporate Support Administrator

Complaints

During 2021/2022, we received 115 complaints.

The diagrams show the breakdown of the type of complaint that was received and the outcomes.

Please note that two complaints were received in the financial year 2020/21 and resolved in the year 2021/22. Three complaints were received in the financial year 2021/22 and resolved in the year 2022/23. Therefore, although 115 complaints were received in the year 2021/22, only 114 complaints were resolved in the same year.

Stages of a Complaint

Our complaints process provides 2 key opportunities to resolve complaints:

Stage 1- Frontline Resolution

This can be used to deal with complaints in relation to issues that are straightforward and easily resolved requiring little or no investigation.

Frontline complaints must be resolved within 5 working days. Frontline complaints can be received and resolved by any member of staff, or referred to the appropriate colleague/ team for resolution if necessary- the aim is for resolution as close to the point of service delivery as possible.

Stage 2- Investigation

This stage can be used to deal with issues that have not been resolved at Stage 1, or are complex, serious or 'high risk'.

Complainants must receive a written response to Stage 2 complaints, within 20 working days. Senior management must sign off Stage 2 complaint responses, although relevant investigations can be carried out either by senior management, or delegated to relevant team members, as appropriate.

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)

If you are unhappy with the outcome of a stage 2 complaint, or the way in which we handed your complaint, you can ask the SPSO to look into it. We will tell you how to do this when we send you the decision letter. Contact details for the SPSO are

- Address: SPSO, Bridgeside House, 99 McDonald Road, Edinburgh, EH7 4NS
- Website: [spsos.org.uk](https://www.spsos.org.uk)
- Freepost Address: Freepost, SPSO
- Freephone: 0800 377 7330
- Online contact form: [spsos.org.uk/contact-us](https://www.spsos.org.uk/contact-us)

Compliments

We received 57 compliments during 2021/2022.

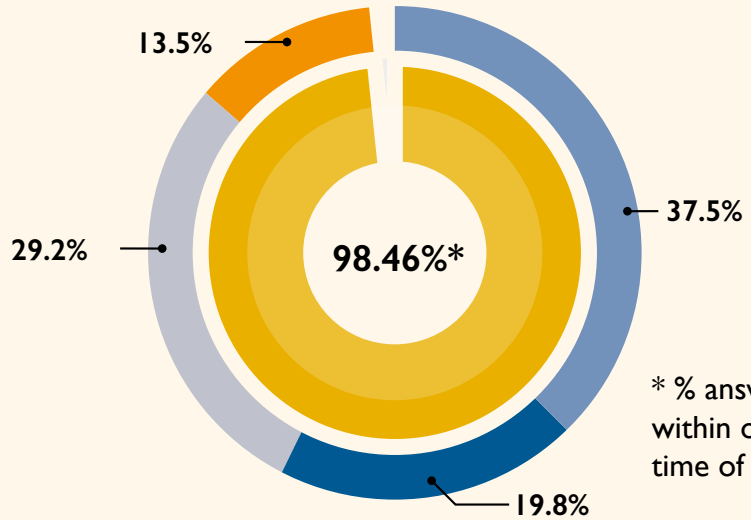
Compliments help the Association look at what is working well and we can look at ways to transfer what we are doing well to other areas of the organisation.

COMPLAINTS

Stage One

95 Complaints

6 Days average response time



* % answered within our target time of 5 days.

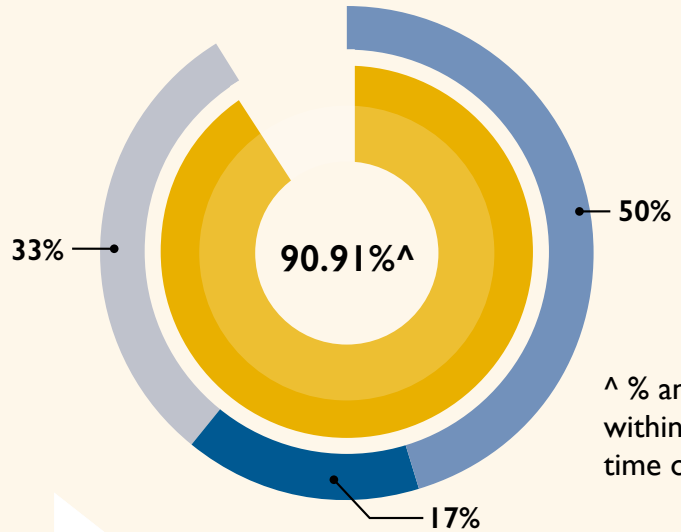
KEY:

- Responded to in full
- Upheld
- Not Upheld
- Partially Upheld
- Resolved

Stage Two

20 Complaints

18 Days average response time

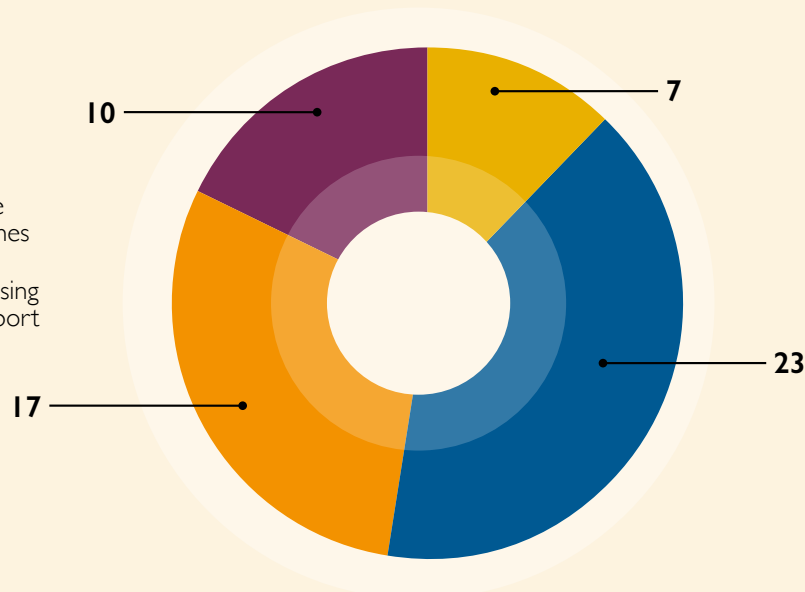


^ % answered within our target time of 20 days

COMPLIMENTS

KEY:

- Assets Management
- Care Homes
- Housing
- Housing Support



How to Make a Formal

Our Tenant Satisfaction Survey highlighted that 36% of our tenants do not know how to make a formal complaint. So for those of you who do not know how to make a formal complaint and reminder for those that do here is a summary of how to make a complaint.

We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf. You can complain about things like:

- delays in responding to your enquiries and requests
- failure to provide a service
- our standard of service
- dissatisfaction with our policy
- treatment by or attitude of a member of staff
- our failure to follow proper procedure.

Your complaint may involve more than one of our services or be about someone working on our behalf.

There are some things we can't deal with through our complaints procedure. These include:

- a routine first-time request for a service, for example reporting a problem that needs to be repaired or initial action on anti-social behaviour
- requests for compensation
- our policies and procedures that have a separate right of appeal
- issues that are in court or have already been heard by a court or a tribunal
- an attempt to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given our decision following a stage 2 investigation. If you are still not satisfied, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman for an independent review of the complaint.

You can complain

- In person at any of our complexes and homes where we have staff
- By telephone
- In writing
- By email to complaintscompliments@viewpoint.org.uk
- Online at viewpoint.org.uk/make-a-complaint/

You can find out how complaints are dealt with in our policy and procedure at viewpoint.org.uk/make-a-complaint/ or ask any member of staff for a copy.

Do you need help to make a complaint?

At Viewpoint we would encourage you to discuss any housing or care issues with a member of staff, however we recognise that sometimes you may need a little bit of help to resolve your issues.

You may need help because you are not in a position to do this yourself due to your health or lack of confidence. It may be possible for a family member or friend to help you but, if not, there is help available for you, in the form of advocacy.

An advocate does not just deal with housing, but with other issues you may have such as with your doctor, the NHS, your dentist, your bank, etc.

Complaint



What is Advocacy?

An advocate is a person who can help you make your needs and wishes known. They work to ensure that:

- The service is confidential, impartial and independent of Viewpoint
- You can access and understand information that you need or want
- You understand your rights
- You have a voice and that you are being listened to
- You are supported to make decisions
- You get help to make a complaint if you are unhappy with service

How do I find an Advocate to work with me?

You can find an advocate by:

- Using the internet and searching for advocacy services in your area
- See the list on our website at viewpoint.org.uk/media/4554/advocacy-services-contacts.pdf or ask a member of staff to print you a copy.

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list and there may be other services operating in your area.

The services that we have identified are all free of charge and independent of Viewpoint.

Our Board recently considered a paper on advocacy, which was raised by one of our tenants with the SHR with a proposal that the provision of advocacy services to social housing tenants should become mandatory. While the Board felt it could not influence the Regulator directly regarding this matter, it was felt that we can act as a positive example by promoting advocacy services. Therefore, we have developed a very comprehensive leaflet about advocacy featuring a list of free local advocacy services, which will be built into staff training and complaints processes.

Staffing Update



Hello to

Gary Cantwell
*Sheltered Housing
Coordinator
(Northwood House)*



My name is Gary Cantwell. I am 37 from Cork, Ireland and I now live in West Lothian.

I have worked in health and social care since I was 16 and love it. I have worked in many different areas of care from working in hospitals, care homes, palliative care facilities, enhanced and supported sheltered housing and private home care.

I worked for Viewpoint previously for a few years until I left in 2012. I worked as a Senior Carer at Lennox House before transferring to housing and working at Gillespie lodge. I was also one of Viewpoint's training team and trained Viewpoint staff on moving and handling, dementia awareness and companionship care. I think I have a range of skills that I can and bring to my new role at Northwood House. Most recently, I was the Senior Carer and Supervisor at Trust Housing Association.

Fun Fact:

I got married in Vegas in 2018
I have 3 dogs, 2 cats and 2 bearded dragons
Lived in Gran Canaria for 10 years.

Lynne Feeny
Receptionist



I joined Viewpoint in the middle of May so I am very much finding my feet just now!

I'm the first person you'll speak to when you call the office and when we are allowed to have visitors back, I'll be first person you'll see!

Most of my career has been spent doing admin work in the voluntary sector, and I have worked in other housing associations in the past. I used to work with Hanover who provide your Telecare services. This very much feels like coming home to me – really enjoying it all so far and everyone has been so helpful and welcoming – and patient, as I can't seem to remember anyone's names!

Fun Fact:

I love a wee holiday in the sun, and my husband and I have visited Skiathos in Greece almost every year for the last 27 years (as well as other places!). They have a dog shelter on the island and a big part of our holiday is walking some of the dogs most days, although it's hard not to become too attached! They rely very heavily on donations and I've combined my other love – swimming – with a bit of fundraising for them in the past.



Graham Clark *Housing Officer*

I started my post as a Housing officer for Viewpoint on the 2nd of May, so like Lynne I am still finding my feet. I'm really enjoying working for a great organisation, Viewpoint really care about their tenants which gives me pride doing my job.

I previously worked for Edinburgh Council as a Housing Supervisor and I have many years' experience working in the homeless side of housing. I really look forward to meeting all my tenants!

Fun Fact:

I have recently found a passion for conquering Munro's. I've completed 4 so far, so if you see me around let me know if you've completed any.



Goodbye to

Lindsay Hart *Team Leader*

Lindsay Hart, Team Leader in Housing, is leaving us in August to go and work at Port of Leith Housing Association. Her new job will be working with the owners of the factored properties and Lindsay is really looking forward to this new challenge.

Lindsay has been Team Leader for three and a half years and during lockdown was a key figure in ensuring that our working practices kept everyone safe. Lindsay has also been involved in improving our Housing Management systems and in working with the housing officers to ensure that customer needs are met.

Lindsay will be very much missed by all her colleagues and we wish her all the best in her new role.





Our Tenants are Tapping into IT

We are living in an increasingly digital world and sometimes it is difficult to do even the simplest things without going online.

To help you we have asked Tap Into IT to provide some support to help you, whether you are presently online or just getting online for the first time.

Tap Into IT are offering help with the following

- For you to get online for the first time and if you don't have a tablet, phone or computer no worries as we can lend you one to try it out
- For you to learn a bit more online. Maybe you want to pursue a hobby or join a zoom meeting and have no idea where to start. Or you need a hand to iron out those niggly wee things that you thought you had to put up with.
- Of maybe you have a smartphone and are not very sure how to use some of the functions on it

And the best bit of all is you get to meet your friends and neighbours, have a cup of tea/coffee and a natter Tap Into IT staff can offer help with all of these things. Just pop into one of the sessions and you will be made welcome.

Obviously they cannot be everywhere at the one time.

For ten weeks between April and June 2022 Tap Into IT spent two hours per week at Lyndoch House, Inverard, Maidencraig Crescent, Gillespie Crescent and Old Farm Court.

Tap Into IT will be back at these locations from August 2022, except for Old Farm Court where the demand was not enough for this to continue.

Tap Into IT will also be starting a regular club at Croft-an-Righ, Woodthorpe and Salisbury Road.

The timetable from the 1 August 2022 is as follows:

- **Mondays 2pm – 4pm**
Croft-an-Righ and Inverard
- **Tuesdays 1.30pm – 3.30pm**
Lynedoch House
- **Tuesdays 2pm – 4pm**
Woodthorpe
- **Wednesdays 2pm – 4pm**
Maidencraig Crescent and Salisbury Road
- **Fridays 10.30am – 12.30pm**
Gillespie Crescent

Please note that tenants who attended the Old Farm Court sessions are more than welcome to go to any of the other locations.

And come October we will be adding on another three new locations – watch this space.

For more information speak to a member of staff or go online at

**[tapintoit.org.uk/
connecting-people/](http://tapintoit.org.uk/connecting-people/)**

Don't Be Scared

Well, here we are putting 'pen to paper' in the zoomy technology world and I know communication in today's world is mind-blowing and that many of an older age find it mystifying.

But I have found that to decide what you want from your phone, tablet or laptop and to get to grips with it, then it does open up another world of communication.

For someone living on their own it is an absolute Godsend.

So here I am and, although I have always used a keyboard for any writing, the new technology and ways of communicating is so fulfilling.

Even if it is only a small amount, go for it. There will always be those who are willing to tap a few keys and try to make sense of it all.

Melody Green
Inverard



Melody, Janet and Violet at the Tappers club having a lot of fun and getting online'

Conquering Schiehallion

For a very good cause

Jean Gray

Chief Executive

On Saturday 11 June, Jean Gray, Viewpoint's CEO climbed her first Munro, Schiehallion, alongside fellow members of KD FIT, Kelso. They took on this challenge to raise money for Lukas, an 8 year old boy from Kelso in the Scottish Borders who, up until just before his 4th birthday, was an active and healthy little boy.



In 2017, Lukas became unwell with flu type symptoms. The flu virus attacked his heart resulting in myocarditis. He then went into cardiac arrest, requiring 30 minutes of CPR, before being placed on an ECMO (heart and lung bypass) machine, saving his life. During his two weeks in ICU Lukas then suffered a stroke. Four months followed in the neuro rehabilitation ward where he had to re-learn how to talk, eat and move.

Lukas has worked so hard since his stroke and can now stand and walk a little with assistance. His goal is to be able to run around the garden with his younger sister, something we all take for granted. Although Lukas receives NHS physio once a fortnight, there is hope that private therapy is key to getting Lukas to where he wants to be.

The team left Kelso at 5am to drive up to Schiehallion, the weather conditions were poor with gale force winds, torrential rain and hail at the top. However they all did it and Jean said

afterwards "It was really tough, the rock pathway to the top was really slippy and the hailstones battering at the top just added to the cold. There were some falls on the way down but nothing serious. It was a shame the weather was so bad because the views, which we were told were spectacular were clouded with the mist but I'm not sure I'll be rushing up again soon just for the views. I've never been so pleased to see a car park again!"

Jean and the KD FIT team set out to raise £2000 to help Lukas get private physio and so far they have raised over £5500.

It was really tough, the rock pathway to the top was really slippy and the hailstones battering at the top just added to the cold

“”

More about Schiehallion

At Viewpoint, we are all very proud of Jean for achieving this challenge. I thought you would like a wee bit more information on Schiehallion.

- Schiehallion is one of Scotland's 282 Munros
- A Munro is a mountain over 3000ft
- Schiehallion is the 58th highest Munro at 3553 ft.
- Schiehallion is 10 miles north of Aberfeldy and sits between Loch Tay, Loch Rannoch and Loch Tummel.
- It is one of the most familiar and best-known mountains in Scotland and takes the form of a ridge, but from Loch Rannoch it looks like a cone.
- If you climb a Munro, you can say you have 'bagged' it and if you bag all 282 Munros, you can claim the title 'Munroist'.

Therefore, Jean only needs to bag another 281...



Where to Report Scams

Scams

In Scotland, report all scams to Advice Direct Scotland by calling **0808 164 6000** (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm) online at [consumeradvice.scot](https://www.consumeradvice.scot)

Fraud

If you have been the victim of fraud, report it to **Police Scotland** on **101** or **999** in emergency

Suspicious Emails

You can forward suspicious emails to report@phishing.gov.uk and send links from websites which you think are trying to scam the public to the National Cyber Security Centre's scam website reporting service at [ncsc.gov.uk/section/about-this-website/report-scam-website](https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/section/about-this-website/report-scam-website)

Suspicious Text Messages

If you receive a suspicious text message you can forward it to **7726**. The free-of-charge '7726' service enables your provider to investigate and take action if malicious content is found.



My Days at the Blind School

JIM BOWMAN

TENANT AT CROFT-AN-RIGH

I was born in December 1951 at Bellshill Maternity Hospital. I have been registered blind since birth but that hasn't stopped me living my life to the full.

I went to Craigmillar Park School (Royal Blind School) and was educated at Muirburn Lodge, which was part of the school. I have very happy memories of my time at Muirburn Lodge and I made friends at school that I am still in contact with, to this day.

I was only 8 years old when I went to Muirburn Lodge, resided there during the week, and went home at the weekend. Mrs Thomson was my housemother and we hit it off right from the start, as she liked the name Jim.

She spoiled me rotten and became a very good friend. I remember when she put an Easter egg in my case and told me not to tell anyone. When Mrs Thomson went on holiday, she sent me a postcard, which always ended by saying fondest love, Mrs Thomson.

I have always loved music and for my 14th birthday Mrs Thomson bought me the record 'What would I be' sung by Val Doonican. It still moves me to this day.

In 1962, Mrs Thomson went to Spain and sent me castanets and I still have these among my treasured possessions.

Mrs Thomson even came to visit my mum, dad, and Billy (my brother) in Glenrothes, where we lived at the time.

Life was rather good for me and I think back to all this with a warm heart.

My dad died in 1990 and my mum died in 1995. I continued to live with my brother, Billy, until 2001, when I got a home of my own in Glenrothes. Billy died in 2015 and in 2016 I moved to Croft-An-Righ.

At the age of 40 (1991) I decided I would like to train with a guide dog. This is a lot harder than you think, as you have to concentrate on yourself, your dog and what is going on around about you e.g. the traffic. The dog I was teamed with was a fawn and brown Labrador called Buster. Unfortunately, I did not manage to make this work and, as a result, was really upset and broke down afterwards. The instructor was very kind and said that it was 'not my fault – it works for some and not for others.' It took me a while to get over this.

In 2001 I reapplied for a guide dog and again went through the training at home with a yellow Labrador called Iona. I was managing really well and nearly qualified but on the day I did not manage to meet the required standard and again I was left very upset. I decided not to put myself through this again.



I receive a magazine called 'Playback' and in 2014 there was an article from Jane from the RNIB about a holiday to Mallorca. I decided that I wanted to go so booked up and went to Mallorca with the RNIB later that year. It was a nice hotel and the entertainment was good – I was on the dance floor every night. On the Friday night of the holiday, we played Bingo. Jane (from RNIB) had never played bingo before and won 100 Euros. I won a Thomson gold wallet and a bottle of champagne. It was such a good holiday that at the end of it I did not want to go home. In fact, I went again in 2016 and had just as much fun.

I love travelling and have been to many places including Ibiza, Austria, Portugal, Tunisia, Turkey, Croatia, Egypt, Cyprus, Mallorca, Corfu, Minorca, Sorrento, Sicily, Blackpool and Devon.

When I was in Mallorca the first time there was a chap selling raffle tickets at the hotel and it turns out he came from Glenrothes – goes to show it is a small world.

And talking of small worlds, in 2015 I went on a holiday to Windermere Manor and met friends from the Blind School. I was talking to a woman and said I was looking for Andrew McNeil, an old school friend, and it turned out she was Andrew's wife. It was great to meet up and chat with Andrew again.

In 2007, I was at Lothian Sounds AGM and met Martin, who had a guide dog called Oscar. In 2014, I heard Martin's voice in an advert on Lothian Sounds and contacted him and we got on really well. Martin lived in Edinburgh but was about to move to Leeds but we have stayed in touch since then and not let the distance get in the way.

When my brother Billy died in 2015 Martin insisted that I go to Leeds for Christmas and I ended up staying a month. Martin was such a tower of strength to me during this time. Martin and I visit each other regularly and he well known at Croft-An-Righ.

As I said previously I really love music and love all the music from the 1950s to the 1980s and even some in the 1990s. Helen Shapiro was my favourite in the 60s

and I could even sing like her! – Although could not do it these days.

Through my travels I have also been able to indulge in my love of music. In 2018, I visited the USA and the Mowtown museum. This year I went to New York (where it was much colder than it is in Scotland). It was a five-day trip and we went to the Lunt Theatre to see Tina (a jukebox musical featuring the music of Tina Turner and depicting her life from her humble beginnings in Nutbush, Tennessee, to her transformation into a rock 'n roll star) and visited Strawberry Fields where John Lennon was murdered. This year I am going to Magic of Mowtown, and Twist and Shout, at the Brunton Theatre in Musselburgh, I am already planning my next trip to the USA next year, and I plan to go to Nashville for the country music.

For any of you who listen to Radio 2, you will be familiar with the quiz Popmaster. In 2015, I was lucky enough to be a contestant on Popmaster and managed to score 30 points and beat my opponent who scored 20 points. My bonus questions were on hit duets. I won a digital radio, which arrived a week later.

I have been at Croft-An-Righ for the last six years and these have been the best years of my life. I have great neighbours and friends like Connie, Hilda, George and Graham, to name but a few.

My faith is very important to me and I play hymns for the church service at Croft-An-Righ, which is held on the second Sunday of the month - I learned to play the piano by ear when I was at Muirburn Lodge. I was a church elder between 1989 and 2008 and on the Kirk of Session between 1991 and 2008. These days I take more of a back seat but my faith is central to my life. It has kept me going through everything and I thank god that I am here today.

I want to finish this off by saying that just because I am blind it doesn't stop you doing things. I take each day as it come and enjoy my life.

I love travelling and have been to many places including Ibiza, Austria, Portugal, Tunisia, Turkey, Croatia, Egypt, Cyprus, Mallorca, Corfu, Minorca, Sorrento, Sicily, Blackpool and Devon.



Facts About the Royal Blind School, Edinburgh

Royal Blind (now known as Sight Scotland) was founded in 1793 and was 'the third foundation in the world that was dedicated to improving the welfare of blind people'.



They started their work in a rented house on Waterloo Place in Edinburgh (which was then called Shakespeare Square) and the trainees were taught handicrafts to help them gain employment and to support themselves

This facility was only for male trainees and it was not until 1822, when 38 Nicolson Street was purchased, that they were able to provide women with the same opportunities to develop employability skills.

On their website, Sight Scotland note that 'Throughout the 19th century, many people flourished there as highly skilled workers who could contribute substantially to their own support. The quality of their work was recognised at many international exhibitions.'

The education unit amalgamated with The School for Blind Children in 1875. The school was based in Craigmillar Park and children were taught arithmetic, Braille printing, English, geography, history, recitation and for the older children organ and piano playing. And it was here in 1891 where commercial braille production began, initially for the production of religious and educational materials.

The services of Royal Blind School continued to extend and supported World War I veterans blinded in the war and in 1933 the school extended to provide secondary education and pre-school

education. The Royal Blind School remained open throughout World War Two and following the war supported veterans from the war.

Since then the facilities have developed to meet the changing needs of our world but always emphasising support and independent living skills. Royal blind are also involved with supporting teachers in mainstream education who are teaching visually impaired children.

Older adults have not been forgotten about and Braeside House in Liberton Brae is a purpose built care home for visually impaired older people and provides exceptional residential and nursing care.

In 2018 Royal Blind celebrated its 225th anniversary and in 2020 relaunched with a new name – Sight Scotland. The new name 'represents a new era of change and growth, focusing on the issue which matter most: tackling the impact of vision loss together'

This is a quick potted history of one of Scotland's oldest charities and they have done so much. If you want to read more go to their website at sightscotland.org.uk/about-us/our-history

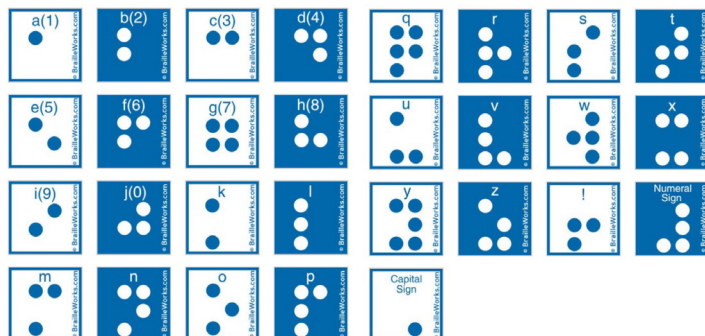
What is Braille?

Braille is a system of touch reading and writing where raised dots represent the letters of the alphabet. It is read by moving the hand(s) from left to right along each line, usually using the index fingers.

Apparently the average reading speed is about 125 words per minute but greater speeds of up to 200 words per minute are possible. To put this in context the average reading speed is 250 words per minute.

The history of Braille is said to go back to the early 1800s when a man named Charles Barbier developed a unique system known as 'night writing'. Barbier was a military veteran and had seen the problems soldiers had reading instructions at night and, if they used a lamp it highlighted to the enemy where they were. The system had its limitations as it used 12 dots and the human fingertip could not feel all the dots with one touch.

A young French boy found inspiration to modify Barbier's night writing. Louis Braille had lost his sight when very young due to an accident and at just eleven years old he started to look at ways to modify the system. It took him nine years to develop the system we know today as Braille. He reduced the twelve dot system to six, which meant it could be felt all at the one time by a finger.



New Tenants Handbook

During lockdown, a number of tenants and staff worked hard to produce the new tenants handbook.

Letters and emails went back and forward until we were all happy with the content. In November 2021, the tenant volunteers met with the graphic designer and agreed how the tenants handbook should look and this went to print in March 2022.

The new tenants handbook is now given out to all new tenants and we have uploaded a copy of this to our website at <https://www.viewpoint.org.uk/housing-services/>. If you would like a paper copy of the handbook, please ask a member of staff.

We will be putting a copy of the handbook into each complex that has a lounge in the near future; however please do not remove this from the lounge area as it is for the use of all tenants.

Around the Houses

Activities at Croft-an-Righ Grace Machirant

The weekly, well attended, activities were in full swing, including Pancake Tuesday provided by Etta Giche, our Elder from the Cannongate Kirk.

Stories from Croft-an-Righ and Beyond

Our first extra social event took place on March 28th when Chief Executive Officer Jean Gray, and Housing Director Esther Wilson, joined residents and friends for afternoon tea in the lounge to celebrate the launching of the publication of a selection of memoirs collected by Citadel Arts Group entitled “*Stories from Croft-an-Righ and Beyond*”. The Group originally set up this second project just after Lockdown, whilst restrictions were in place, and Liz Hare together with Vincent Maguire met with tenants on Zoom to share stories. Later face-to-face meetings enabled the completion of the memoirs.



Copies of the book are available from Liz Hare, Citadel Arts and cost £5 each. Liz can be contacted on 07770 623 924 or lizhare@blueyonder.co.uk. Alternatively you can contact our Tenant Participation Coordinator, Heather Jeffrie, by phoning or texting 07554 369 180 or email tp@viewpoint.org.uk. Liz will deliver any orders to Viewpoint’s main office and staff can then deliver them out to you. For an additional £2, you can get the book posted out to you. For the latter you can pay using Citadel’s bank account No 0600 0890 – sort code 80 11 94.



Fish Supper Night

On the evening of Friday 6 May residents had the pleasure of enjoying an almost forgotten social event in the dining room with tasty Fish Suppers. A pleasant encounter for all who attended and special thanks from all go to Jackie Baillie for organising the event.

98th Birthday Party

The following weekend we enjoyed a special church service given by the Reverend Neil Gardner, our Minister from the Cannongate Kirk, who brought along the programme from the commemorative Jubilee service held at St Paul's Cathedral, which he attended. Thereafter we celebrated Hilda Miller's 98th birthday with afternoon tea and a special cake provided by our church elder, Etta Giche.

Walkabout and the Cafe

Finally, we had our first quarterly Walkabout and meeting of the year on 17th June and were brought up-to-date with plans for the future and soon something definite will be known about the Café @ Croft-an-Righ, so watch this space!



City Park News **Naomi Anderson**

Craft Group

As regular readers will know, City Park has a very skilled and active craft group. Recently members of the craft group asked the coordinator for help to secure funding. They were running out of supplies and needed a larger table to give them more space for crafting activities.

The coordinator submitted an online application to a local charitable trust, the St Andrews Community Trust. The Trust have nine community objectives of which the funding application met a number including supporting voluntary projects and advancing health and wellbeing as well as supporting older people living in the town.

Following the application a trustee visited to interview the coordinator and a few weeks later the award was granted in full. In addition to the support given by the Trust, Viewpoint have offered to support the craft group through the loan of a MiFi device to enable the craft group to access the internet from the craft room.

One particular piece of crafting equipment has been left on a shelf in the craft room due to lack of access to the internet. Being able to use every piece of equipment and access the many craft resources available online will be a huge boost to the group.

The coordinator and craft group would like to express their thanks to both the Trust and Viewpoint for their support.

Guest Room

City Park guest room is unsurprisingly quite possibly the most popular guest room across the Viewpoint developments. St Andrews is a popular destination for tourists from around the world and situated as it is in the heart of the town the guest room makes an ideal location for Viewpoint tenants to enjoy a break in this historic town.

After being closed for so long due to COVID the demand is higher than ever however this guest room remains closed for the time being. There are major works being carried out at City Park which require tenants to be decanted so the guest room is currently reserved for City Park tenants only.

This is expected to continue throughout the summer with the guest room only becoming available to tenants from other developments in the autumn. Apologies for any disappointment but look out for an update in the next edition of Newspoint and we look forward to welcoming you back soon.

Catch Up with your Coordinator at Old Farm Court

Carol and Michele were delighted to launch their monthly coffee catch up with your coordinator at Old Farm court on 6 May 2022.

It was a good opportunity for a good old chinwag and to reconnect with each other after a very long period of lockdown. It's also a chance for them to find out more about what you want and for Carol and Michele to share any new news.

Carol and Michele will be organising these monthly so make sure you find out when they are and to go along and have a cuppa and enjoy. From the photographs it looks as if everyone was having a good time.

4 in a row celebrations here at Buchan Gardens

Mr & Mrs Sadie & William Hall had 4 special occasions over the weekend (27th March).

First, they celebrated the birth of their great grandson, then Sadie celebrated her 80th birthday, as well as mother's day then their Diamond Wedding on Monday 28th March.

They had a lovely day with the family celebrating, and a lovely visit from the housing officer Alex Edwards who gave the happy couple a lovely bouquet of flowers.

St Raphael's Home Fundraising

The staff team at St Raphael's Care Home have raised a staggering £1500 so that a colleague's sister can come from overseas to support her while she undergoes medical treatment.

Brave staff took part in an 'I'm a Celebrity' type taste challenge and there was also an ice bucket challenge. Well done to everyone who organised this and took part.





The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

At her coronation the Queen said 'With all my heart I shall strive to be worthy of your trust'. I know that not everyone is a fan of the Royal family but I think we all have to agree that Queen Elizabeth II has done just that.

The Queen has now been our monarch for 70 years 4 months and 25 days (at 30 June 2022) and is the second longest reigning monarch in world history. In 2015, the Queen became Britain's longest reigning monarch.

Across Viewpoint, there have been many celebrations for the Platinum Jubilee and I am delighted to be able to share some of the photographs of these celebrations with you.

Memories of the Silver Jubilee from Heather Jeffrie

I remember all the Jubilee celebrations, as I am sure many of you do. However, for me it is the Silver Jubilee that sticks in my mind.

As a 12-year old girl guide, I was very excited that we were going to 'see' the Queen. We stood on the roadside and waved our flags. We never actually saw anything but I do remember the atmosphere, the joy that abounded throughout the crowds and the party feeling that lasted the whole day. It was a wonderful feeling and I was proud to be part of that.

I received a silver jubilee badge with the girl-guide trefoil on it and 45 years later, I still have the badge in my collection of 'treasures'.



...I do remember the atmosphere, the joy that abounded throughout the crowds and the party feeling that lasted the whole day.

“ ”

THE QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE

Strawberry and Champagne Celebration at Northwood

By Gary Cantwell

Here at Northwood House we had a Champagne & Strawberry Platinum Jubilee Celebration.

There was a selection of cakes, sandwiches and finger foods on offer as well as lots of Strawberries and Champagne! There was a great turnout and all the tenants had a great day.

The day was rounded up with our own coronation with the crowning of our Northwood House Jubilee Queen for the day (Dorothy Hewson) by (James Marshall).

We had some amazing prizes in our raffle which raised over £250 for the tenants social fund for future events and all the winners were delighted with their prizes.



Platinum Jubilee Celebrations at Kilravock

By Yvonne Mills

This was the first time since lockdown that the residents of Kilravock were together socially and we all had a fantastic time celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee at our Champagne and Strawberry Tea.

We all remember the Coronation in 1953 and were able to recall how we celebrated that and what memories we had of the day, particularly watching snippets of the service on possibly the only television in the streets where we lived! Some of us also still have mementos of the day.

We are lucky to have a resident who worked at Buckingham Palace although Billy was unable to attend our party as he was celebrating at the Jubilee Concert and Pageant in London. However, before he went off he very kindly supplied bunting which he used to decorate our Common Room and garden shrubs. During his speech when we toasted the Queen, David made us laugh by suggesting that from now on Billy should be known as Billy Bunting!

Lots of happy memories of a joyful celebration.

Jubilee Celebrations at Buchan Gardens By Danny Rankin

Buchan Gardens held a Platinum Jubilee Street Party on Saturday the 4th June. We had a very extensive buffet for all our guests. Sandwiches, sausage rolls, pies, pizza, cakes, cheesecakes, crisps, sweeties, jelly, and various juices.

After the buffet was served we were entertained by Keirra Marshall, from the Mary Bradford Singers, singing for us. She sang songs from the 70's and 80's and everyone sang along with her. Even a couple of our residents were up and dancing! Keirra was an excellent singer and we look forward to her coming back again.

A raffle was then held with all the prizes coming from donations from our tenants, family and friends. A large selection of prizes were realised. After the raffle, music was played from our own equipment. Everyone had a great day and we were very lucky with the weather. We even had to put up umbrellas to shade us from the sun! No clouds being in evidence! We all look forward to the next occasion when we can all get together outside and have a great time.



Jubilee Afternoon Tea at City Park

Around 16 tenants gathered on Saturday the 4th of July to enjoy an afternoon tea in celebration of the Platinum Jubilee. The ladies of the craft group worked hard to make sandwiches and bake cakes and scones for everyone to enjoy. Unfortunately the coordinator was unable to attend but Alex Edwards popped in with his children. Many of the tenants invited family or friends to join them, pictured is tenant Evelyn Tait and her daughter Alison, and everyone agreed it was lovely to get together after so long. Some tenants met neighbours for the first time and plans were made to have another get together soon.



Croft-an-Righ Jubilee Celebrations

June, an important month for all in the UK, brought the celebration of the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty The Queen, and we combined tenant and staff teamwork to organise a Jubilee Afternoon Tea Party.

This was attended by approximately 40 residents plus family and friends, and our “hands on” Housing Officer, Graham, two of our Coordinators, Nicky and Shannon, and Vicky from head office. A happy pleasant celebration in honour of our wonderful Queen was enjoyed by all, with a Royal Quiz plus a special raffle, and was just what was needed to stimulate social contact again. The photos say it all!

Special thanks to Jackie Baillie again for all her work in organising the event and to the volunteers Bobbie McKenzie, Cheryl Trigg and Shannon's mum who worked tirelessly throughout the day and cleared up at the end. Cheryl also made a Jubilee Cake, which she donated to the event.

Celebration Selection

Some additional snaps of Jubilee parties around the houses. And look out for some more in the next issue.



Croft-an-Righ



Balfour House



Maidencraig Crescent



Northwood House



Northwood House



Northwood House



Old Farm Court



Mill and Lade Court



Haugh Park



Maidenraig Crescent



Balfour House



Woodthorpe






Glenesk House

Games & Puzzles



A Royal Quiz **Your Chance to win a £25 shopping voucher**

All you have to do is answer the following questions about our Queen using the answer form on page 39. The closing date is **Monday 10 October 2022** and the winner will be the person who has the most points. If there is a tie then the winner will be drawn from a hat!

1. Who was Queen Elizabeth's father? (1 point)
2. What age was Queen Elizabeth when she acceded to the throne (1 point)
3. What date (day, month and year) did the Queen's coronation actually take place? (1 point each for day, month and year)
4. In which month and year did Elizabeth marry Prince Phillip? (1 point each for month and year)
5. The Queen does drive - but does she have a driving license? (1 point)
6. The Queen has four children – what are their names? (1 point for each correct answer)
7. The Queen created a new breed of dog by mating one of her beloved corgis with one of Princess Margaret's dachshunds. What is the name of this breed of dog? (1 point)
8. How many grandchildren does the Queen have? (1 point)
9. How many great grandchildren does the Queen have? (1 point)
10. Where is the Queen's main residence today? (1 point)
11. How many Prime Ministers have there been during Queen Elizabeth's reign (1 point)
12. In which year did the Queen celebrate the following (1 point for each correct answer):
 - a. Silver Jubilee
 - b. Golden Jubilee
 - c. Diamond Jubilee
 - d. Platinum Jubilee
13. Identify the below Scottish Castles or Palaces (1 point for each correct answer):
 - 1 
 - 2 
 - 3 
 - 4 

WINNERS

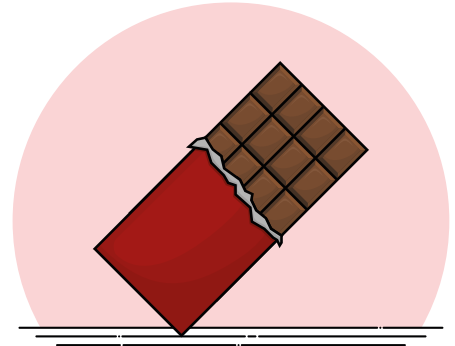
Tenant Satisfaction Survey Prize Draw

Everyone who completed a tenant satisfaction survey was entered into our prize draw with the opportunity to win a £50 shopping voucher. Our contractor carried out the prize draw and the winners are:

- Jennifer from Maidencraig Crescent
- Ann at Balfour House
- Peter and Catherine from Balfour House
- Annie at Gillespie Crescent
- Mick and Irene from Haugh Park

The Big Chocolate Quiz

In our Spring Edition of Newpoint, there was a quiz with the opportunity to win a £25 shopping voucher.



The winner, who got all the answers correct, was **Caroline from Gillespie Crescent**. Congratulations to Caroline and thanks to all who entered.



'A Royal Quiz' Answer Form

For your chance to win write your answers below and then submit your answers by either:

- Post 4 South Oswald Road, Edinburgh, EH9 2HG
- Email newspoint@viewpoint.org.uk
- Text 07554 389 180

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. Date _____

Month _____

Year _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. Name 1 _____

Name 2 _____

Name 3 _____

Name 4 _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. A _____

B _____

C _____

D _____

13. Picture 1 _____

Picture 2 _____

Picture 3 _____

Picture 4 _____

VIEWPOINT
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Autumn 2022