



# West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative Ltd Annual Report 2013

WEST WHITLAWBURN  
HOUSING CO OPERATIVE  
CONCIERGE STATION



# Chairperson's Report

What an extremely quick year that was. My second year as Chair of WWHC has been incredibly challenging for our Committee, tenant/members and staff, with considerable pressures on everyone. The sad passing of WWHC founder member Phil Welsh MBE in July this year was a particularly difficult time. External pressures brought about by Welfare Benefit Reforms, Bedroom Tax, Universal Credit and the pensions deficit have been extraordinarily difficult to manage.

Job losses at our Community Resource Centre, following the departure of Healthy n Happy Community Development Trust earlier this year, and an internal reorganisation have been problems everyone could have done without. Closing the funding gap for the much anticipated Energy Project at a time when money is short was another considerable challenge. The resilience, determination and strength of our Committee and staff to move WWHC positively through such troubled waters has been nothing short of magnificent, early indication from our tenants satisfaction survey show that despite all these problems we continue to deliver a tremendously high quality of services and housing to our tenants/members which is, of course, our mission.

I sincerely thank all our Committee members and staff for their tremendous commitment, resilience, determination and sheer hard work over this challenging year. I also commend our tenant/members for all their support and appreciation of our efforts this year. We know many tenants and families have suffered enormous hardship over the year.

We are here to help and we do so to the utmost of our resources and ability, that is the WWHC way,

Susan Anderson

Chairperson

## Annual General Meeting

The Annual General meeting of the Co-operative scheduled for the 26th August 2013 did not go ahead as it was inquorate (i.e. less than 10% membership was in attendance). However, at the reconvened meeting held on 2nd September 2013, 29 members attended and the meeting went ahead. The Management Committee met to elect Office Bearers. The Committee is now as follows, some of which are pictured below:

Office Bearers		Ordinary Members	
Susan Anderson	Chairperson	Helen Anderson	Andrew Duffin
Anne Anderson	Vice Chairperson	Sheila Jamieson	Louise Wilson
Muriel Alcorn	Treasurer	Muriel M Alcorn	Susan Stevely
Cheryl Burnett	Secretary	Elizabeth Kerr	Billy Hunter
		Kirsty McElholm	Patrick Byrne



Paul Farrell is the Co-operative's Director and Stephanie Marshall, the Depute Director.

# Tenancy Services

## Turnover and Allocations

During 2012/13 we received 198 new applications and our lists continue to be healthy with 198 on the housing list and 99 on the transfer list at the end of March 2013.

We let 84 properties during 2011/12 which was an increase from the previous year. We continue to pass a proportion of our available properties to South Lanarkshire Council so they can pass us cases from their lists. These cases can either be from the Council's Housing List or Homeless List, however WWHC controls allocations not South Lanarkshire Council.

	2011/12	2012/13
Number of lets	84	94
	<b>Breakdown of lets</b>	<b>Breakdown of lets</b>
Direct Applications	46%	46%
Transfers	24%	18%
SLC Referrals	30%	36%

## Estate Management

The Housing Management Team and the Concierge team work closely together and liaise with other agencies to resolve neighbour complaints and anti-social problems quickly. We have continued to work closely with the police to ensure that historical problems with youths on the estate have not re-occurred.

During 2012/13 we were granted an ASBO in relation to one tenant who has been the source of a number of anti-social problems and we also evicted one tenant as a result of anti-social behaviour.

	2011/12	2012/13
Abandoned tenancies	12	17
Serious Anti-social behaviour	13	3
Evictions (Anti-social behaviour)	1	1
Estate Management Action	113	115
Concierge Incident Reports	96	117
Housing Alarm Calls	334	353

Concierge also provide an invaluable service to vulnerable tenants. We currently have over 70 Housing Alarms installed in our properties and Concierge regularly respond to emergency calls to provide first aid to residents. All concierge staff are trained first aiders. Over the last year concierge helped 17 people who needed help in a medical emergency.

## Rent Collection and Arrears Control

We collected 98.6% of our rental income last year. Our Current Tenant arrears target was 4.6% and we have achieved 4.0% which was well below target. This year as a result of welfare reform we are working towards maintaining our arrears position.

Unfortunately the action to recover unpaid rent has resulted in decrees for eviction being granted against 16 tenants in this year. 6 of these tenants were evicted. This is not something the Co-operative undertakes lightly and we endeavour to avoid eviction whenever possible.

Rent collection and arrears prevention continues to be a high priority for Housing Management staff and in order to help tenants manage their accounts have started sending balance and rent charge information out four weekly and we hope this information is helpful. If you need any help or advice regarding your account or your finances please get in touch with your Housing Officer.

The Resource Centre is here to provide facilities and services needed by local people here in Whitlawburn. The centre is run by a Management Committee made up of local people who set the priorities for the Centre's work and base decisions on information from surveys and feedback from local people. It has been another busy year and there have been a number of significant changes in the Centre which were needed due to a reduction in our overall funding and income. We believe however, that this process has provided us with a good basis on which to maintain our current projects and develop new ones which are needed. Remember, the Centre is here for you to use and to benefit local people in Whitlawburn.



### **Whitlawburn Community Energy**

Over the last year this project has been saving people money by giving free impartial advice by our qualified energy advisors. From the information collected, each household is saving on average 863.304kg of Co2 per year, which in money is around £171.18 per year.

If you want to take up this service please contact John at the Centre on 0141 641 5005

This work is funded by the Climate Challenge Fund until the end of March 2014.



### **Whit Recycling**

This project accepts donations on unwanted household goods and passes them on to people who have nothing at all or are in desperate need of specific items.

Donations of unwanted non electrical household items which are in good condition are very welcome. Please contact Geraldine at the Centre on 0141 641 5005.

This work is funded by The Big Lottery Awards for All until September 2014.

**Whitlawburn Community Cafe** is now open under new management. Opening hours are Monday – Friday 9am – 2.30pm. We offer a wide range of food from a roll & sausage to our homemade steak pie. We also have a kids lunchtime menu for your little ones on their lunch hour from school. Why not pop along and give us a try!!!!



## Financial Inclusion

During 2012/13, financial inclusion work was carried out in the Centre with our partners Rutherglen and Cambuslang Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB), Blantyre & South Lanarkshire Credit Union (BSLCU) and South Lanarkshire Council Community Learning.

The outcomes of this work were:

### CAB Advice

Number of people receiving benefits advice– 182 with client financial gains of £194,394.70.

Number of people receiving debt advice- 105 with client financial gains of £120,433.19

### BSL Credit Union

BSL Credit Union Members in West Whitlawburn – 453

During the year savings of £3,429 were accrued raising the total of savings to £114,259

During the year 111 loans were made to a value of £27,750.

### Community Learning

From April to June 2013 two 10 week courses covering Universal Credit and online claims and form filling were run in the Centre. Of the 23 people who started the course 16 completed it.

This is being followed up by basic IT skills courses.

Thank you to NHS Lanarkshire through South Lanarkshire Council Tackling Poverty and Bank of Scotland Foundation who funded this work.

## Whit Money

Due to the huge benefits for local people of the financial inclusion work carried out, we are delighted that West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative has been successful in applying for Big Lottery Support and Connect funding to continue to build on this work which will be delivered through the Centre as the Whit Money project.





## CAB Welfare Benefits and Money Advice

Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays - 10.00 am to 3.00 pm.

Please contact Reception for an appointment on 0141 641 5005.



## BSLCU Community Banking and Financial Education

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays – 12.00 noon to 1.30 pm.

Please contact the Credit Union on 01698 711 112 or Reception on 0141 641 5005.

## Digital Drop In

The Whit Money project includes a free digital drop in. The IT room in the Centre will be open for people to come in and use on

Mondays– 5pm to 7pm

Wednesday– 1pm to 7pm

There will be a support worker there at these times to help if needed.

If you need some training in basic IT skills, please speak to the support worker who will sign you up to the next Community Learning course in the Centre.

## User groups

The Centre has regular user groups who provide classes from yoga on a Monday morning to sequence dancing on a Friday evening (with lots in-between!!). Contact the Centre or check our website at [www.whitlawburncrc.org.uk](http://www.whitlawburncrc.org.uk) for details!

## Wainz World

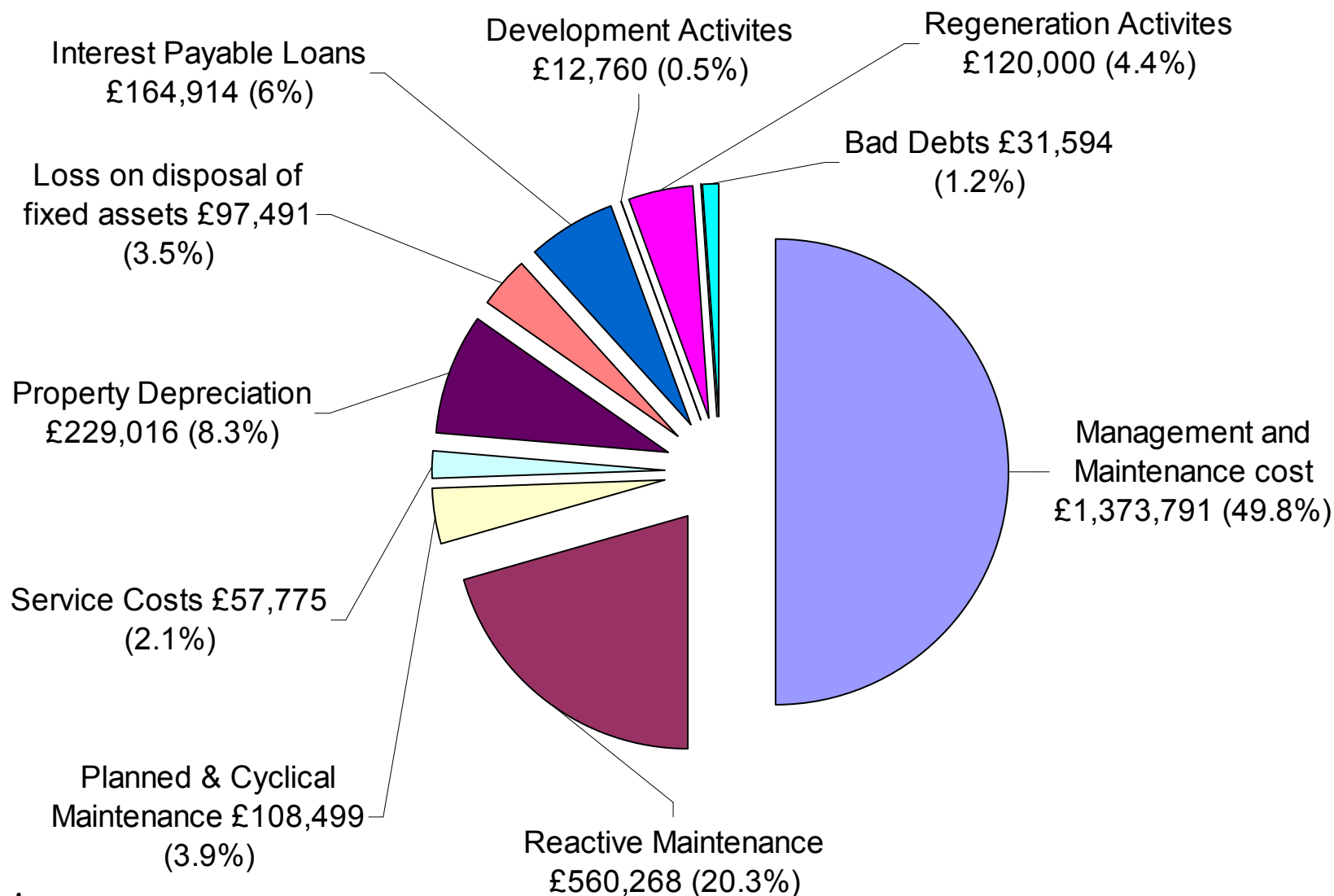
Wainz World Out of School Care is now open in the Resource Centre!

If you are interested in a place for your child/children or require further information please feel free to text or call Mary Fleming on 07564913467 or email [maryf183@gmail.com](mailto:maryf183@gmail.com)



# WWHC Corporate Services

**Shown below is the breakdown of WWHC expenditure, total expenditure was £2,756,108.**



## Financial Overview

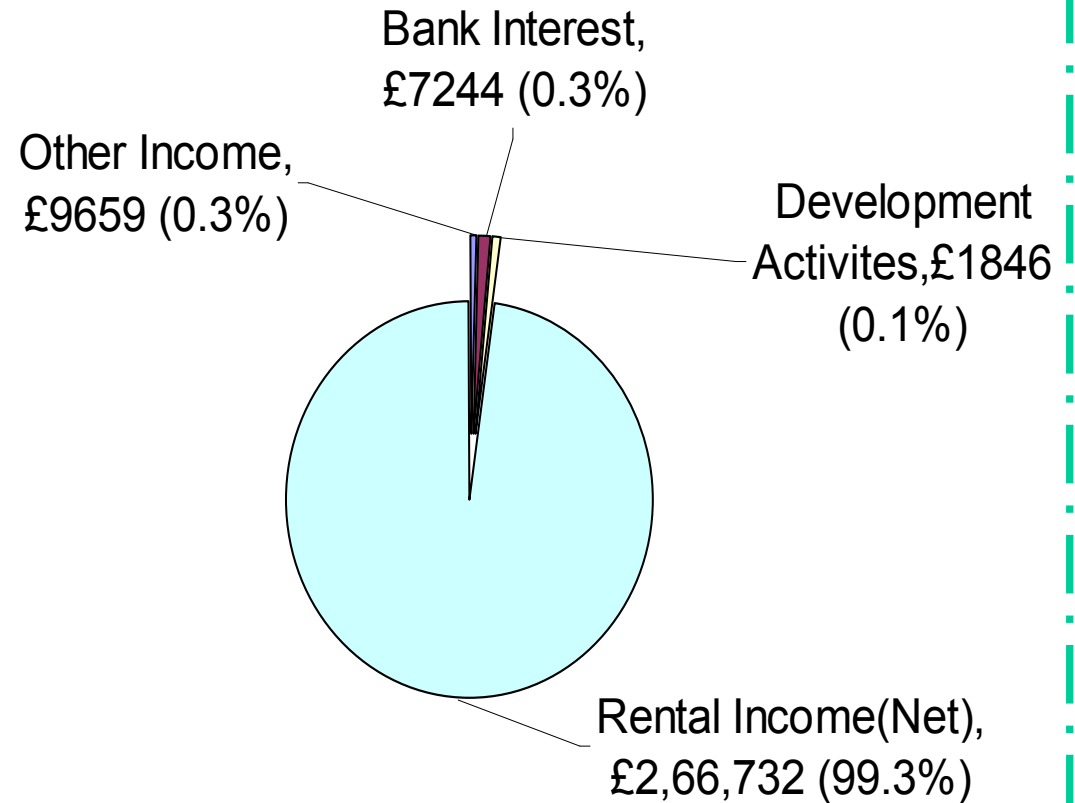
The Co-operative is in a strong financial position with around £1m deposited as cash funds. The Co-operative continues to have a major repair investment programme due in a small proportion of properties which will allow it to meet its commitments under the Scottish Quality Housing Standards during 2013\14.

At present the loan debt is £2.98 million which was the contribution required for the new build contract.

**Shown below is total Income received which equals £2,685,481**

Information contained in the 2012\13 Income and Expenditure Account.

	2013	2012
Income (Turnover)	£2,678,237	£2,638,230
Operating Costs (This is the cost of providing our housing services)	(£2,493,703)	(£2,439,072)
<b>Operating surplus/ (deficit)</b>	<b>£184,534</b>	<b>£199,158</b>
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	(£97,491)	-
Bank interest received during the year	£7,244	£5,970
Interest payable on private finance accounts	(£164,914)	(171,020)
Corporation tax on ordinary activities	£0	£0
<b>Gives a surplus/(deficit) for the year of</b>	<b>(£70,627)</b>	<b>£34,108</b>



**Corporate Services Team**

- Lauren Dalgleish - Corporate Services Assistant
- Lorraine McVie - Assistant Director (Corporate Services)
- John Dunn - Finance Assistant
- Noreen Currie - Reception/Admin Assistant
- Morag Gladstone - IT Officer
- Margaret Molloy - Reception/Admin Assistant
- Susan Paton - Projects Officer



# The Co-operatives' Development and Maintenance activity over the past year

The Co-operative is delighted to say that during financial year 2012/13, work to meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard was completed. The kitchen/bathrooms renewal programme carried out to those requiring replacement means that all properties will now meet the Standard by 2015. We were very satisfied overall with the way in which this contract was conducted by the Contractor and the quality of workmanship. We have also received positive comments from tenants involved and the tenant satisfaction survey returned high levels of satisfaction.

## Medical Adaptations Completed

Our allocation for the financial year 2012/2013 was £42,900 (£32,900 for minor adaptations and £10,000 for major adaptations) Cases completed were as follows:

- 4 x Housing Alarms
- 4 x Level Access Showering Facilities
- 3 x Wet Floor Shower Facility
- 2 x Internal Bannisters
- 1 x Major Adaptation—Bedroom Alteration

Funding for these adaptations was provided by the Scottish Government. Cases are carried out on a prioritised basis and this priority is set by South Lanarkshire Council Occupational Therapists. A medical referral is required from South Lanarkshire Council to support funding applications and therefore should you feel you would benefit from a medical adaptation, please contact your Housing Officer who will arrange for an Occupational Therapist's referral for you.

## Other Maintenance activity over the year

Maintenance activity over the past year has included the following:

### Cyclical Maintenance

#### Chute Cleaning

This work is carried out annually and was last completed in March 2013. This helps to keep the chutes clean and operational throughout the year. However, we would also ask for tenants' assistance with this and ask that you refrain from trying to put large items down the chute such as carpets etc. These items should be disposed off as per normal bulk refuse disposal. Contact Concierge for further information if required. We would also ask tenants to be considerate when using the chutes. Please do not let them bang shut especially if later in the evening.



**Quarterly and Annual Checks**

Smoke Detectors: Smoke detectors in all properties are tested on an annual basis. This year’s checks have been carried out and all required repairs were completed. **REMEMBER**....the activation of a smoke detection system can save your life. Therefore it is essential that you allow access when requested and report any problems encountered between annual checks as a matter of urgency. You should also test your smoke detector at least once a month.

All other estate inspections etc are carried out regularly as programmed, including:

- Inspecting and repairing roofs; Cleaning of gutters; Inspecting and repairing house and close windows; Servicing close doors;
- Inspecting and repairing close floor and stair finishes;
- Inspecting and repairing paving slabs and coping stones;
- Inspection and upkeep of planter areas; Inspecting and repairing

external gullies, drains and manholes. **However, we would ask that tenants continue to report any problem areas as they see them.**



**Repairs Service—Performance**

Repair Category	2011/12	2012/13
Emergency	487	494
% on target	97.1%	91.3%
Non Emergency	2,173	2,077
% on target	89.06%	93.31%
Total Repairs	2,927	2,571
% on target	92.1%	92.92%

Of the 2,571 repairs completed during the year, 67 qualified under the Right to Repair. 67 (100%) were completed within target.

**The Focus for 2013/14**

The focus for the next year will be on examining all areas of our maintenance contract works and determining where we can achieve better value for money through a tendering process.

As well as this, we will deliver a biomass energy project for the supply of heat and hot water. Heat will be delivered via radiators with the supply fed from a centrally located energy centre.

We are currently working in partnership with NPower and Vital Energi to progress this project.



### **Security and Door Entry System**

The quality of the upgraded external cameras and recording equipment continues to produce more effective footage which in turn assists with police action when required. We also continue to note a decrease in the amount of vandalism and graffiti since the introduction of cameras to back stairs in all of the multi-storeys. We also hope that low rise tenants continue to enjoy the benefit of fob controlled door entry to their properties.

### **New Play Facilities for all Ages**

The last year was a successful one in terms of obtaining funding and support to allow us to upgrade existing and provide new play equipment that will cater for all ages.

The equipment ranges from pieces designed for use by toddlers, outdoor fitness equipment for 15+ upwards, football facilities, a multi use games arena as well as a new wooden Fit n Fun Park.



We have to give thanks to the various funders such as Biffaward, The Postcode Lottery, Community Payback Scheme and The Scottish Government.

### **The Operations Team**

Jeanette McGrory - Property Assistant  
Gavin Glaister - Property Officer/Clerk of Works  
Kathleen Nisanci - Property Assistant  
Mags Brownlie - Assistant Director (Operations)





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