



# West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative

Spring 2011 Newsletter

## Centre Circle Launch - 5th March 2011

Inside this issue:	No :
- Fire Safety info	2
- Fire Safety info - House content insurance	3
- Rent increases	4
- Robina Goodlad Award - Spotlight dance school	5
- Census - Pharmacy	6
- Benefit changes - Rent payments	7
- Fob keys - Staffing update - Whitcomm up date	8
- CHI News - The Fruit Barra	9
- Zumba, Library - Pigeon Problem - Lock ups	10
- Digital switch over	11
- Repair line - Opening hours	12

The Whitlawburn five-a-side pitch, The Centre Circle, officially opened on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> of March, there was a great turnout from the community with about 130 young people taking part in all the different events including the under 12s coaching, skateboarding, dance workshops, a family fun day with arts and crafts and of course the youth football tournament.

West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative chairperson and Whitlawburn Community Resource Centre vice chairperson Anne Anderson thanked everyone for coming along to the opening of the new sports pitch. Anne went on to thank all the organisations who were involved in the project either through funding or construction before handing over to Provost



Clearie.

Provost Clearie thanked everyone who was involved in the sports pitch including all the staff and volunteers who worked on the project. Russell also addressed the young people of the community during his speech, asking the local kids to give a big clap for all the partners who were involved in the pitch. "It's about your future, it's about getting involved in your community, it's about taking pride in your

community." said Provost Clearie to the local kids.

James Kelly MSP also attended the event and said a few words about the importance of the project. "I think it is a tremendous facility for the local community here in Whitlawburn. You can see just by looking at the faces here how Whitlawburn really comes together as a community, this football pitch is a symbol of that." said Mr Kelly. James referred to the football pitch when it will have its floodlights on during the dark nights as a "beacon shining throughout Whitlawburn."

Football tournaments then took place for over 3 hours. The winning team was "The Team" and the best player of the tournament was 13 year old Maxie McLellan from Whitlawburn Utd.

If you would like to book The Centre Circle you can call Whitlawburn Community Resource Centre on



**0141 641 5005**



# Fire safety - important information

Some members of the Co-operative staff have recently attended a number of fire safety seminars. Strathclyde Fire and Rescue advise that people who live in shared or rented accommodation are seven times more likely to have a fire and therefore, we would like to draw tenants' attention to some very important information.

The picture to the side shows the devastating affect that fire can have on a property.



## WHAT DO WE DO AS A LANDLORD TO MAKE YOUR HOME SAFER?

We provide fire detection equipment within your home i.e. smoke alarms and carry out annual checks to ensure the equipment remains in safe working order. We keep your home fit to live in. Repairs are carried out when notified as deemed appropriate. We make sure all gas installations within your home (applicable to New build tenants only) are in good working order and inspected annually. We have staff trained to deal with emergency situations

## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO MAKE YOUR HOME SAFER?

### **Ensure Fire Detection Systems are checked and always operational**

Ensure you give The Co-operative access to carry out annual checks to your smoke detectors  
 Ensure you give The Co-operative access to carry out annual checks of your Gas Central Heating System  
 Report any faults to the main office immediately  
 Do not place covers over smoke detectors in your home  
 Do not remove smoke detectors that are fitted in your home  
 Regularly test your smoke detector (recommended at least once a week). If you need a demonstration on how to do this, contact our Concierge Manager Raymond Smith

### **Be extra careful with electrics**

Avoid overloading sockets - ONE PLUG PER SOCKET MAXIMUM  
 Do not use heaters for drying clothes. Always keep clothes a safe distance away from the heater to avoid them catching fire.  
 Use a proper adaptor when using a non UK electrical appliance.  
 Never put two prong plugs into three prong sockets  
 Do not attempt to carry out any electrical DIY or repairs yourself.  
 Contact our Clerk of Works/Repairs staff who will be happy to provide advice and assistance.

**Stay safe with candles and cigarettes**

Make sure you put cigarettes out properly. Use an ashtray. Do not throw them in the bin.

If you have been drinking or taking medication that may make you drowsy, take extra care.

Take care with candles and tea lights. Do not place them on or near materials that could catch fire and make sure you extinguish them properly.

**Make sure you have an escape route planned in the event of fire.**

Plan an escape route and make sure everyone knows how to escape. It could save your life.

Establish where the fire exits and alarms are.

Count how many doors you might need to go through to escape. It can be hard to see in smoke and you might become confused about where you are.

Keep all exits clear, even communal areas.

Keep fire doors closed. They help to slow down the spread of fire and will give you extra time to get out.

**Arrange a Home Fire Safety Visit**

Strathclyde Fire & Rescue offer free home fire safety visits and are currently looking to target those households that are deemed most at risk. The visit takes approximately 20 mins and is well worthwhile. You can find out your level of risk by accessing the following web page and filling out a short survey:

<http://www.strathclydefire.org/your-safety/at-home/is-your-home-safe/fire-risk-assessment.aspx>

Alternatively, you can speak to a member of Co-operative staff who will be happy to arrange a visit on your behalf.

**IMPORTANCE OF HOUSE CONTENTS INSURANCE**

The Co-operative understands that money can be tight and that house content insurance is sometimes seen as an expense people can do without. However, please give a thought to what you would do should you lose all your possessions due to a fire.



# Rent increases

The Co-operative sets rents annually taking into account a variety of factors including all running costs, inflation, affordability, building cost indicators, future maintenance requirements, loan repayments, and in line with the rent policy. We are currently operating in a very difficult economic environment both nationally and globally, and are faced with increasing costs and funding cuts which have resulted in us having to increase our charges for next year. Our rent increase has now been agreed and the charges are noted below.

If you wish to pay your rent in a different frequency to the table below please contact your Housing Officer to discuss your payment amount. If you pay weekly your first payment at the new charge should be made during the week commencing 21st March 2011. If you pay four weekly your first charge at the new amount is due on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2011.

Property Type	Annual Charge	4-weekly charge	Weekly charge
2 apt MSF	£3,366.48	£258.96	£64.74
3 apt MSF	£3,976.44	£305.88	£76.47
4 apt MSF	£4,575.48	£351.96	£87.99
2 apt low rise	£2,801.76	£215.52	£53.88
3 apt low rise	£3,394.56	£261.12	£65.28
4 apt low rise	£3,985.80	£306.60	£76.65
4 apt low rise (conversion)	£3,690.96	£283.92	£70.98
2 apt cottage flat	£3,394.56	£261.12	£65.28
3 apt mid terrace	£3,959.28	£304.56	£76.14
3 apt end terrace	£4,202.64	£323.28	£80.82
3 apt semi detached	£4,363.32	£335.64	£83.91
4 apt bungalow	£5,009.16	£385.32	£96.33
4 apt semi detached	£4,928.04	£379.08	£94.77
5 apt end terrace	£5,332.08	£410.16	£102.54
5 apt detached	£5,573.88	£428.76	£107.19

If you pay your rent by direct debit we will have amended your instruction to take into account your new charge and you will have received a letter from Allpay detailing the new payment amounts and dates.



# Winner of The Robina Goodlad Award 2011

Muriel Alcorn, a founder member of West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative, has won this year's Robina Goodlad Award for Women Achievers in Housing.

The Award celebrates women who have broken new ground in Scotland's housing sector. It is for genuine innovators and achievers, women who have helped – and are helping – to remove barriers and open up opportunities for others.

Making the presentation at CIH Scotland's annual conference in Glasgow, Peter Taylor, who was Robina's partner, said the Award was not simply about people who happened to have been around a long time but about people who had made a real difference.

West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative was formed in 1989, and Muriel remains on the Management Committee to the present day. She became Treasurer in 1994, a position she still holds. Muriel is also a committee member of Employers in Voluntary Housing, West Whitlawburn Community Resource Centre and (until recently) the Rutherglen and Cambuslang Community Health Initiative.

Paul Farrell, Director of West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative commented: "Everyone at WWHC is delighted that Muriel's energy, stamina, resilience, patience and commitment have been recognised with this award. She has few equals. Muriel's outstanding contribution to the success of West Whitlawburn, and other voluntary organisations she is involved in, richly merits such an award."



## Spotlight Theatre & Dance

If you like to dance or want something a bit different as a work out why not try coming along to a dance class in the Resource Centre on Tuesday nights at 5:30pm. Classes are taught in a fun and safe environment to encourage and motivate. There are a big variety of different dances such as: tap, disco, jazz, ballet, modern, hip hop, cheerleading and plenty more.

Classes available for all ages and experience - children taught from 2 years through to Student and Professional standard.

The Dancers are currently practising hard for their forthcoming show on Friday 27th May in the Mitchell Theatre. All new members welcome and you can be included in the show if you come along soon. Your first class is free for all new members. For further information contact Alexis on 07801 627 978 or visit [www.spotlight-dance.co.uk](http://www.spotlight-dance.co.uk)



# Census starting March 2011

Scotland's census is the official count of every person and household, which takes place every 10 years. The next census is on Sunday 27th March 2011.

Every household in Scotland will receive a questionnaire that asks 13 questions about the household and up to 35 questions about each person who usually lives at that address.

The answers people give to the census questions will help shape Scotland's future. Everyone must be included on a census questionnaire, and anyone trying to avoid taking part may be fined up to £1,000.

The results are used to produce statistics that help decide how billions of pounds of taxes will be spent every year on services everyone needs, such as education, transport and healthcare.

A paper questionnaire will automatically be delivered to your home or you can fill in the census online if your paper questionnaire has an Internet Questionnaire Access Code on the front page. You can also watch the census in British Sign Language, listen to the questions through audio clips or download translated forms and information leaflets from the census website.

[www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk](http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk)

## Pharmacy

Local Pharmacists David Dryden and Michael Balmer are bidding to open a new community pharmacy in the old 'Racing Colours' bookmakers on Western Road, Whitlawburn. In order to gauge support for their application and gain local knowledge, the pair have been involved at a local-level, running an 'Open Night' in the resource centre, and following that up with a Q&A session at the WWHC quarterly meeting. All three local councillors have come out in support of the application, which if successful, would bring important NHS healthcare to the community of Whitlawburn. The people of Whitlawburn have been having their say too,

with a number of residents offering written support for the pharmacists to pass on to the Health Board. Fresh investment and a staple business would also help to attract other businesses into the area and would have a positive long-term impact on Whitlawburn. NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde have arranged a hearing took place on the 14<sup>th</sup> March, and we are currently awaiting feedback on

whether the application was successful. For further information, or to get in touch with David or Michael, email: [whitlawburnpharmacy@live.co.uk](mailto:whitlawburnpharmacy@live.co.uk)



# Housing benefit changes

## Are you claiming Housing Benefit and do you have another adult living in your house who is not your partner?

If you are claiming Housing Benefit and you have another adult living in your house, who is not your partner, it is likely that your Housing Benefit award has been reduced and you are liable to pay a rent charge because they are living with you. The adult living in your house could be an adult child, a friend or an elderly relative and the person is known as a “non dependant”.

The reduction in your Housing Benefit depends on the income of the other adult.

From April 2011 the non dependant rates are changing significantly and the table below shows the rates for this year and the increased amount you will have to pay for next year. This change will affect all claimants of Housing Benefit and not just our tenants.

Non Dependants circumstances	2009 – 2010 rates	2010 – 2011 rates
Aged 25 and over In receipt of IS, JSA or ESA (income related) or Earnings of less than £120	£7.40	£9.40
Earnings of between £120 and £177.99	£17.00	£21.55
Earnings between £178 and £230.99	£23.35	£29.60
Earnings between £231 and £305.99	£38.20	£48.45
Earnings between £306 and £381.99	£43.50	£55.20
Earnings more than £382	£47.75	£60.60

If you are in receipt of Attendance Allowance, the care component of Disability Living Allowance or registered blind your Housing Benefit will not be reduced because another adult is living with you.

If you are liable to pay this charge you will need to budget for the new amount from the beginning of April. Any tenants experiencing difficulty paying their rent should contact their Housing Officer who can make a referral to the Citizen’s Advice Bureau outreach service in the Resource Centre.



## Rent account payment methods

You can now pay your rent in several different ways:-

**Paypoint** – you can use your swipe card to make cash payment at any Post Office, PayPoint or PayZone outlet. If you need a swipe card we can order you one from the office.

**Direct Debit** – you can

complete a direct debit mandate at the office and the payments will be taken directly from your bank account weekly, fortnightly, four weekly or monthly on a date that suits you.

**On line** – you can register on the Allpay website and then make payments on-line. To

register for online payments log onto [www.allpayments.net](http://www.allpayments.net) and set up an account using the reference number on your swipecard.

**Telephone** – you can pay your rent by calling Allpay on 0844 557 8321. When you call quote your reference on your swipecard and your debit card details.

## Fob key price increase

Please note that as from 1st February 2011, the cost of providing a replacement fob key will be £10. The Co-operative has had to implement this increase to cover the cost to us for purchasing spare fobs and also the administrative cost of reprogramming it.

Please note that tenants are not able to buy additional fobs as a matter of course. Additional fobs will only be provided where there is a demonstrated need. Should you feel you need an additional fob, please contact Raymond Smith, Concierge Manager.



## Staffing update

We would like to say a fond farewell to Christine Rothnie who worked as Projects Officer in West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative and then took on Stephanie McPeake's role while she was on maternity leave as Community Development Co-ordinator. We wish you all the best for the future Christine!

A warm welcome back to Stephanie McPeake who is now back at work after having her first born baby in May last year. Welcome back Stephanie!

A big welcome to Lynn Meenagh, our HNC placement, who is working in the office 2 days a week as part of her HNC course. She has settled in well and is hard at work setting up Over 50s Zumba for the Resource Centre and also setting up the swap shop library for tenants to come and exchange books.

Our future jobs fund placement Jed, who was working with us to tidy up some of the garden has now left.



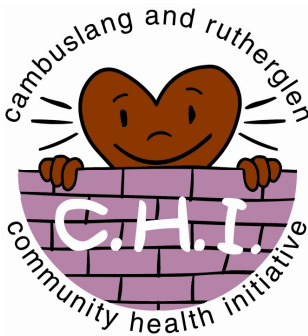
## Whitcomm update



We are delighted to announce Whitcomm has a fully functioning committee. The committee is made up of Whitcomm customers from the New Build and some expertise from the West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative's committee. The committee make decisions on all aspects of the Whitcomm service and ensure it is in the best interest of the customer. If you have any suggestions for the committee or any questions, please contact Susan Paton at the office.



# CHI news



**CHI** are looking for volunteers to become involved in the **Let's Talk About Health** programme. The volunteers would be out and about in the local area talking to people in the community and gather feedback about health issues and NHS service provision. We are looking for someone with good communication and listening skills, someone who is either already active in or keen to take an active role in their community. No formal qualifications are required – we value life experience and skills. This opportunity would suit someone with a personal interest in health issues. For more information contact Esther at **CHI** on 0141 646

0123 or [esther@healthynhappy.org.uk](mailto:esther@healthynhappy.org.uk)

Pictured right is some of our volunteers  
And their mentors at a recent game of  
bowling.



The **Fruit Barra** sells delicious fresh fruit and veg at great prices in the following venues: Wednesday, Benmore Tower, Whitlawburn from 10.30am to 2.30pm, Thursday, Rutherglen Health Centre from 9.30am to 11.30am and now on a Thursday evening in Benmore Tower from 5pm to 7pm. Call Jan at **CHI** on 0141 646 0123 or [jan@healthynhappy.org.uk](mailto:jan@healthynhappy.org.uk) for more information.

**Are you worried about your money?** Do you know how to get the most from your cash? We can help with free, fun & informal training sessions to help you plan and organise your money. Topics Include: Basic Budgeting, Choosing Credit, Prioritising Bills, Basic Banking. For more information or to register for these sessions please contact Lesley at **CHI** on 0141 641 5236 or [lesley@healthynhappy.org.uk](mailto:lesley@healthynhappy.org.uk)

**CHI** are looking for caring people who enjoy helping others. If you are interested in **mentoring or support work**, this is an ideal opportunity for you. For more information contact Caroline at **CHI** on 0141 646 0123 or [caroline@healthynhappy.org.uk](mailto:caroline@healthynhappy.org.uk)

Would you like to receive regular **health tips** directly to your mobile? **CHI** will be sending out a free text to people aged 16-24 years old. To register your interest or for more information call 0141 646 0123.

## Swapshop library



New swap Library  
bring your old books  
and swap them for new  
ones!

Open every  
Monday & Tuesday  
from 10am-1pm  
located in Ailsa Tower

## Over 50s Zumba class

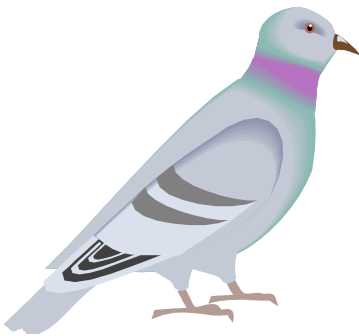
Every Monday 1.30pm - 2.30pm

Only £2 per class, takes place in the  
Whitlawburn Resource centre.

Classes started on Monday 28th  
February. No need to book just come  
along and join the fun.

Easy pace

## Pigeon Problem



Pigeons and their excrement carry disease, if tenants could refrain from feeding the pigeons on the estate we can try and alleviate the problem. Feeding the pigeons encourages them to roost on window cills and roofs etc which is causing damage to the surface of the towers and low rise buildings.

## Lock ups available

Please note that we currently have some lock ups available. The majority are in Ailsa Tower. If you are interested in renting a lock up, please contact reception, where you can pick up an application form.

If you have any further queries regarding this matter please contact Natalie at the office.



# Digital TV Switchover - June 2011

The Digital switchover for the Whitlawburn area will take place in two stages as detailed below:

1. 8.6.11 - BBC2 analogue channel will be switched off.
2. 22.6.11 - all remaining analogue channels will be switched off.

We have been aware that this was coming for some time and have prepared to ensure that we meet the obligations of a landlord in this respect i.e. to provide an aerial which allows digital transmission to our properties.

## Multi-storey properties

- The communal aerial systems were upgraded to allow digital transmission during fabric works.
- All MSF tenants can access Virgin media and Sky. Sky Plus is not available.

## Low Rise Properties

- The communal aerial systems were upgraded to allow digital transmission in August 2005.
- All low rise tenants have access to Virgin media.
- Low rise tenants do not have access to Sky.

## New Build Properties

- All new build properties have been fitted with a digital aerial.
- Virgin media is not available for our new build tenants as Virgin did not take up our offer to extend their network during the build process.
- Whitcomm currently has the ability to provide IPTV (Internet provision over television) services to all new build tenants. This gives tenant access to a number of free digital channels as well as channels 1 to 5. It also allows them to access the internet using a keyboard and set top box.
- New build tenants have the option of obtaining Sky over the fibre network.

## What does the switchover mean for tenants?

- Television signals can be received via an aerial, satellite cable or broadband connection. Switchover will affect those tenants who receive their TV signal from an aerial.
- Tenants who receive their TV signal via an aerial will require to either have a digital television or some form of digital receiver e.g. freeview box in order to be able to view television from the switchover dates. Tenants who already have a freeview box or freeview television or who subscribe to Sky or Virgin media will not be affected (other than maybe their channel numbers requiring to be rescanned)
- Before switchover, local relay transmitters are only able to transmit an analogue TV signal. After switchover, all transmitters, including local relay transmitters will transmit a digital signal and increase the number of channels available from around 5 to 15 (sometimes more).



# New repair telephone line

## **NEW TELEPHONE NUMBER FOR REPORTING REPAIRS**

The Co-operative would like to remind all tenants that there is now a dedicated repair line for you to report repairs. This will mean that you will be answered directly by a member of the Property Team who will be able to provide you with immediate assistance.

The new number for use during office hours is:

**0141 404 6288**

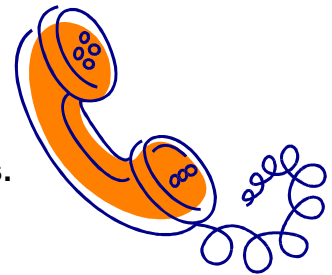
This number should also be used to report Whitcomm faults.

The Out of Office Hours Emergency Number remains as

**0800 24 20 24**

All calls for other purposes should still be made to the main office telephone number.

You can also continue to report repairs via Concierge from your handset or by calling 0141 646 1924.



# Extended office opening hours

We are pleased to announce that, in order to improve customer service, The Co-operative has extended its main office opening hours as undernoted. In addition to opening slightly earlier and closing slightly later, we also remain open throughout lunch hours. We hope you will find the extended opening hours advantageous.

**Our new opening hours are now 9.15 a.m. through to 4.45 p.m.  
Monday to Friday.**

**The office telephone system will now switch on/off at the above times also.**

