Calvay Housing Association Limited A Community with Commitment

Calvay News

www.calvay.org.uk Spring 2023

Tell us what you think

Your chance to have your say in the 2023 Tenant **Satisfaction Survey**

It's almost time for the launch of our latest Tenant Satisfaction Survey which we carry out every three years to find out how happy you are with the services we provide to you.

The survey will once again be undertaken by independent consultants Wider Role Solutions who will be conducting telephone interviews with around 400 tenant households.

The households will be chosen at random and if you're one of those selected, we would urge you to please take part.

Calvay Director Nick Dangerfield explains:

"The whole focus of the survey is to help us better understand the needs of our tenants. We'll use the findings to find out what we're getting right and where we need to do better. Most importantly, it will help us make appropriate changes to improve our services where required. So it's vital you have your say and tell us what you think."

The survey is short and simple. Questions will cover topics such as the quality of your home, repairs, rent and complaints. All information given will be entirely confidential and participants will not be asked to give their name (except for two questions where we may need to follow-up with you – you will be told which questions these are and will not have to give your details if you don't want to).

Wider Role Solutions will be conducting the guestionnaires in March/April, so if you receive a call, please do take part - it's really important you have your say about how we do things.

Please be assured we do listen to what our tenants tell us in these surveys. In the past we asked about newsletters. Most people who replied said they would like to keep receiving a paper copy of the newsletter - that's why we continue to produce Calvay News quarterly!

The initial results from this year's survey will be published in the Summer newsletter.

Thank you in advance for your support

Win a £20 cinema voucher





Welcome

Welcome to the Spring 2023 edition of Calvay News.

Here at Calvay, the Committee have been hard at work on your behalf. We've been working closely with the Scottish Housing Regulator to improve our governance and to get us back to 'compliant' status.

We've come across an issue with some rendering coming off a property at the rear of one of the blocks in Calvay Crescent. We've had structural engineers look at the problem, and while they don't believe there's an immediate, serious risk, we've put up a scaffold shelter just in case some more rendering does come off this building.

We've had the structural engineers look at all similar properties to check them. They carried out inspections from the ground, but again did not report any serious immediate problem.

These problems have led us to think about the exterior of Calvay Crescent (and similar properties) and what we need to do in the long-term. We'll keep you informed about what we discover and any plans we make.

We recently said goodbye to Tricia Thomson, our longstanding Property Services Manager who retired after many years at Calvay. She has been replaced by Derek Baker (the job title has changed to Operations Manager). Derek joins us from Maryhill Housing Association. More staff news can be found on this page.

Here's looking forward to longer days and better weather!

Best wishes,

Jim Gourlay Chair

STAFF NEWS

Farewell, Eileen

We were sorry to bid farewell to our Corporate Services Assistant, Eileen Stevenson, at the end of last year. Eileen has moved on to a promoted post at another local housing association and we wish her well for the future.





New faces

Derek Baker joined us in January as Operations Manager, with overall responsibility for both the Housing Management and Maintenance teams. Derek is looking forward to working with the team and our customers to deliver a first class service and homes to be proud of in the local community.

Following a robust recruitment process, **Jim McKinlay**, who has been with us on a temporary basis since January 2022, has been appointed as permanent, full-time Maintenance Officer. Jim has a wealth of experience, having worked for several housing associations over his career.

Karen Donaldson has joined us as a permanent full-time Maintenance Assistant. Karen has previously worked for Calvay as a temporary Maintenance Assistant so she may already be known to some of you.

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Calvay Bingo

Every Wednesday The Calvay Centre, 7-9pm All welcome

TRIBUTES TO FORMER COMMITTEE MEMBERS

We would like to pay tribute to two of our former Committee Members, **Rebecca Howden** and **Frances McCall MBE**, who sadly passed away recently.



REBECCA

Rebecca was a member of Calvay's Management Committee between 2013 and 2020, and served as an Office Bearer during her time with us. She was a force to be reckoned with and had no hesitation in speaking her mind. This occasionally resulted in 'heated' exchanges with our Chair at the time, who happened to be her husband, Peter!

Rebecca was keen to learn and as well as attending numerous training courses, she also achieved her SQA in Governance in 2017. After leaving the Committee, Rebecca continued to live in the local area and volunteer at the Calvay Centre where she was a member of the Volunteer Group. Rebecca, along with the other ladies in the group, was constantly fundraising and arranging activities such as Easter, Hallowe'en and Christmas events for local children.

Rebecca will be missed by both staff and Committee Members who worked with her over the years. In particular, we will miss her wry sense of humour, positive outlook and good-humoured stories regarding her latest tussles with husband Peter, which kept us all amused.



FRANCES

It's clear that Frances made an important contribution to the social housing movement in Glasgow and this is confirmed by the Association's first Director, Duncan McLean, who had this to say about her:

"I met Frances in 1986 when I became the first staff member of Calvay Co-operative, which was just starting its work to transform the Calvay area. For Frances, the co-operative was not just about improving housing, it was also about giving local people power over decisions affecting their community. She was committed to both these aims and worked tirelessly to deliver them. Frances was a great leader, always supportive to those of us who were working alongside her; and always prepared to challenge decisions she thought were not in the interest of the Calvay community.

Many people, in Calvay and beyond, owe Frances a debt of gratitude for the work she did to improve housing and to empower communities. I was sorry to hear of her passing and I am sure she will be sadly missed by her family and friends."

Although Frances retired from Calvay's Committee in 2004, she retained links by becoming a volunteer at the Calvay Centre.

We send our deepest sympathies to the families of both Rebecca and Frances.

Housing Matters

KITCHEN UPGRADES Going Down Well!

Our programme of kitchen replacements across **77 homes** is almost complete. MCN Scotland Ltd began installing the high quality Howdens kitchens last year. With a number of colour options available, we've received very positive feedback from tenants who are delighted with the finished results.

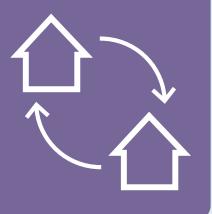


Fancy a swap?

Are you're wanting to move house? If so, a mutual exchange or 'house swap' may be the answer for you.

This happens when two or more housing association or council tenants agree to swap homes with each other. There's no need to submit a housing application. Instead, tenants advertise their property in a mutual exchange book in the Calvay office, in the hope of finding a "swap".

If you're looking to move, why not pop in to put your property in the book and see what's available?





WIN a **£20** cinema voucher!

Pop the kettle on and have a go at our fun Easter wordsearch! Find the 14 Easter-themed words and return your completed wordsearch to the Calvay office by 25th March 2023.

The first correct entry out the hat wins a £20 Vue Cinema voucher. There's no age limit, adults and children can enter.

chocolate	daffodil
flowers	spring
easter	lamb
basket	angel
jesus	donkey
chick	priest
bunny	bread

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Colour me in!



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Special Featu<u>re</u>

COMBATTING CONDENSATION

When it is cold, almost every home is affected by condensation. As well as being a major inconvenience, if not dealt with effectively, condensation can become a huge problem and actually ruin your property. In this special feature we look at condensation causes and cures, so you can wave goodbye to wet windows and damp walls.

What is Condensation?

Condensation comes from water vapour that is produced within a building that cannot escape.

Moisture is always present in the air, even if it cannot be seen. Condensation occurs when moist air comes into contact with a cold surface and water droplets form on windows, mirrors, and cold spots on external walls.

Condensation happens mostly on the colder parts of external walls, particularly where there isn't much air movement. For example, in corners of rooms, behind furniture, beds and even inside wardrobes.

Its presence is often first seen by the development of mould growth on walls and ceilings. In some cases, it can also grow on furniture and clothing. It can also lead to the rotting of affected timbers such as window sills.

Typical causes of condensation

Everyday living adds extra moisture to the air inside our homes, even breathing! (Try breathing on a cold mirror or window and it will fog up.)

Condensation is caused by:

- Too much moisture being produced in your home
- Not enough ventilation
- Cold surfaces (external walls)
- The temperatures within your home

Condensation facts & figures

- One person sleeping adds half a pint of water to the air overnight and twice that when active during the day.
- The larger your family, the more moisture you will produce. The water will stay inside of your home until you take steps to remove it.
- Condensation can happen in any room, but is more likely to occur in a colder room, such as a bedroom.
- If that bedroom has furniture placed on the colder external walls where there is little air flow, then condensation may form on these areas.

How much water we produce at home in a typical 24hour period

- 2 people at home 3 pints
- A bath or shower 2 pints
- Drying clothes indoors 9 pints
- Cooking and using a kettle 6 pints
- Washing dishes 2 pints

This adds up to an additional 26 pints (14.8) litres of moisture in the air!

How to tackle mould growth

- To kill and remove mould, wipe down or spray walls etc. with a fungicidal wash that carries a Health and Safety (HSE) 'approval number'. You can often buy these at the supermarket. Always follow the instructions carefully.
- After treatment, redecorate using a good quality fungicidal paint and a fungicidal resistant wallpaper to help prevent mould growth reoccurring.
- Please note: the effect of fungicidal or anticondensation paint is destroyed if covered with an ordinary paint or wallpaper.
- Dry clean mildewed clothes and shampoo any affected carpets. Don't try to remove mould by using a brush or vacuum cleaner.

How to reduce condensation

Control the temperature within your home

- Do not heat one room and leave the others cold. It's better to heat the home throughout at a medium to low level.
- In cold weather, maintain a low level of heating throughout - it's cheaper to keep your central heating on at a low level and maintain a low heat than it is to suddenly heat the house up twice a day from cold.

Reduce the number of cold surfaces in your home

- Don't push furniture against the outside walls. These are always the coldest walls in the house and areas of low air flow will attract condensation. Make sure there's a sufficient gap to allow air to circulate.
- Don't over fill wardrobes and cupboards. This will restrict air flow.

Increase your ventilation

- Ventilate your bedroom by leaving a window slightly open at night and during the day. Use trickle vents if fitted.
- Keep a kitchen window open when cooking or washing. Use your extractor fan if you have one.
- Ventilate your kitchen and bathroom for approximately 20 minutes after use by opening the window slightly. Use the extractor fan, they are very effective and cheap to use.

Produce less moisture

- Hang your washing outside to dry, if possible, or hang it in the bathroom with the door closed and the window slightly open or the extractor fan on. Don't put washing on radiators!
- Always cook with the pan lids on and turn the heat down once the water has boiled. Only use the minimum amount of water in the pot.
- When filling your bath, run the cold water first and then the hot, this will reduce the amount of steam (which leads to condensation) by 90%.
- If you use a tumble drier, make sure it's vented to the outside or is a condensing type.
- Do not use your gas cooker to heat up the kitchen as burning gas produces moisture.
- Do not use gas or paraffin heaters. They produce high levels of moisture.

Wipe up from the night before

Dry your windows and windows sills every morning, as well as any wet surfaces in the kitchen and bathroom.

"If you've followed all the advice in this feature and you are still having problems please call us on **0141 771 7722** for further advice.

If you are suffering from mould please call us on **0141 771 7722** and we will arrange a visit to check your home for any problems" Working Together

...with you

Safety in closes

As your landlord, we have an obligation to do everything we can to keep our customers safe. As part of this, we're increasing our focus on fire safety. This includes making sure that all closes, shared internal areas, landings and stairwells are kept free of all items and personal possessions.

We appreciate that a few items stored in a close may not appear to pose a risk. However, in a dark, smoke-filled area, any item could help fire to spread and cause a hazard which prevents escape.

We've therefore decided to no longer allow any items in our closes and communal areas:

- If you leave items in a close or communal area, our staff will knock your door and ask you to remove them.
- If items remain in the close after we've asked you to remove them, we may remove them ourselves and charge you for the cost of their removal.
- In the event that an item poses a serious hazard or fire risk, we may remove it immediately.

You can help to keep everyone safe by making sure that nothing is left in your close or communal area at any time.

The commof escape



If you have any questions about this, please contact your Housing Officer.

on stair is your only means in the event of a fire.



Have you ever thought what you would do if fire were to break out in your stair? It may not necessarily be in your flat! A fire started in a common stair could kill you and your family. Even a small bag of rubbish can create enough smoke to fill a whole stair. Items left in a common stair are often deliberately set on fire.

Keep it clear

- Get rubbish, old furniture, etc out of the building
- Make sure storage areas are kept locked
- For advice on uplifting items contact your local Council

If fire does start

- Keep doors closed to prevent smoke filling your house
- Dial 999 and ask for the Fire and Rescue Service, giving as much information as you can

For free home fire safety advice CALL 0800 0731 999 or visit our website at www.firescotland.gov.uk



New cost of living payments from Spring 2023

Millions of the lowest-income households across the UK will get up to £1,350 from the Government in 2023/4 to help with the cost of living.

Exact payment windows will be announced closer to the time but are spread across a longer period to ensure a consistent support offering throughout the year.

They will be broadly as follows:

- **£301** First Cost of Living Payment – during Spring 2023
- **£150** Disability Cost of Living Payment – during Summer 2023
- **£300** Second Cost of Living Payment – during Autumn 2023
- £300 Pensioner Cost of Living Payment – during Winter 2023/4
- **£299** Third Cost of Living Payment – during Spring 2024

Those eligible will be paid automatically, and there will be no need to apply. For more information, please visit **gov.uk**.

Cost of Living Crisis

As a community-based Housing Association, we've always tried to find ways to support our community and customers. However, this is especially true with the "cost of living crisis".

There have been opportunities to apply for funding from various sources and we've made every effort to apply for as much support as we can, on behalf of our community.

Below is a list of all of our partners who have offered funding to us and we offer them huge thanks for their support.

While we know we have helped some people in this crisis, we're also aware of the frustration that others are feeling in this very difficult financial climate. Based on the high number of customers who approach our Welfare Advice service, we realised that the funding we were awarded wasn't enough to support all of our customers. So we're continuing to seek additional funding from a variety of sources.

To date, we have distributed over £40,000 and supported over 600 households using the funding from our partners. This has included, for example, access to food, fuel top ups and Christmas parties for our local older people and children. It's also helped with reconnection of gas or electric supplies and supported customers to pay off fuel debt.

We're currently looking at other ways that we can continue to support our customers throughout this difficult time. Please keep a lookout on our Facebook page and website for updates as funding becomes available.

Matters

Sincere thanks to our funding partners for this crucial support shown to our community

SFHA Fuel Support Grant **£20,000** Cruden Community Benefit Grant **£5,000** EVH Cost of Living Fund **£2,500** Glasgow City Council

£8,928 Big Lottery, Community

Anchor Fund **£20,000**











ASSISTED/ OPTIONAL Gardening Schemes

At Calvay, we have responsibility for maintaining common backcourts and open space landscaped areas only – not private gardens.

However, as a goodwill gesture, we currently provide a garden maintenance service for some elderly and infirm tenants who are unable to maintain their own gardens. This is known as the **"Assisted Gardening Scheme".**

We also provide a chargeable service for people who choose to pay to have their gardens maintained, rather than do so themselves. This is known as the **"Optional Gardening Service"**.

Assisted Gardening Scheme

This service is available to Calvay HA tenants who meet the following criteria:

- The tenant is over 70 years of age AND/OR
- Has a medical condition that prevents them from maintaining their garden AND
- There are no able-bodied persons between the ages of 16 and 69 in the household.

Please note:

- You must also provide proof of eligibility i.e. medical letters, DWP award letters, etc.
- Household compositions will be checked by Property Services Officers, to make sure that records are accurate and up to date. We'll also carry out an annual review before any new season commences.
- No authorisation will be given until the household records have been verified. So if you have a change in household composition, you must inform the office.

Optional Gardening Service

This service is available to tenants, owners and sharing owners within Calvay HA, for a charge. This service includes grass-cutting, hedge trimming, weeding and weedkilling, which is carried out via regular visits throughout the season.

Who provides the garden services?

This year John O'Conner (GM) Limited, will carry out this service from **1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024**.

Repairs: see it, report it!

Our staff do their best to monitor communal areas and report repairs such as trip hazards to be attended to.

If you notice a hazard or anything you feel poses a risk to safety, then please let us know by emailing repairs@ calvay.org.uk and providing a picture where possible.

Or, you can report a hazard by calling the Repairs team on 0141 771 7722 (Option 1) and speaking to a member of the team.

Where there are faults with street lighting, public paths and roads condition, please report this directly to Glasgow City Council via the following routes:

- My Glasgow App
- GCC My Account
- Roads and Lighting Faults (RALF) 0800 373635

There is currently a waiting list for this service

Unfortunately, due to high demand, both the Assisted Scheme and Optional Gardening Service are already full for the coming year. However, you can still apply and be put onto a waiting list until any vacant places become available.



Social Security Scotland Tèarainteachd Shòisealta Alba

What family benefits does Social Security Scotland deliver?

Benefit	Payment	Eligibility
Scottish Child Payment A payment per child to help towards the costs of supporting a family.	£100 every four weeks	Children under 16
Best Start Grant Pregnancy and Baby Payment A payment to help towards the costs of pregnancy or looking after a baby	£642.35 payment for a first child and £321.20* for subsequent children.	Apply from the end of the 24 th week of pregnancy until the baby is 6 months old.
Best Start Grant Early Learning Payment A payment per child to help with the costs of early learning.	One-off £267.65 payment	Apply when a child is between the ages of 2 and 3.5 years. People can still apply if their child is not taking up a place at nursery.
Best Start Grant School Age Payment A payment per child to help with the costs of preparing for school.	One-off £267.65 payment	Apply in the year a child is first old enough to start school. People can still apply and get the payment if a child is deferring starting school.
Best Start Foods Money on a pre-paid chip and pin card to buy healthy food including eggs, milk, fruit, vegetables and pulses.	 £18 every four weeks during pregnancy £36 every four weeks from birth until the child's first birthday £18 every four weeks for any child from 1 until they turn 3. 	Apply from pregnancy until a child turns 3.

* In some circumstances, people may be able get the higher payment of £642.35 for subsequent children. These include people forced to leave their home due to domestic abuse, some people granted refugee status and some carers who took on responsibility for a child over the age of 1.

Fact Sheet

mygov.scot

Automatic payments of Best Start Grant's Early Learning Payment and School Age Payment

We can now make automatic payments for certain benefits without the need to apply. If people get Scottish Child Payment and their child meets the age conditions, Social Security Scotland also automatically check if they can get Best Start Grant Early Learning Payment and Best Start Grant School Age Payment.

Who can get these payments?

People can apply for these payments whether in work or not. People may be eligible if they, or their partner, are the parent or full-time carer of a child and if they get tax credits or certain other benefits.

For Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods, people who are under 18 do not need to get any benefits to apply. People who are 18 or 19 also and do not get any benefits or payments can still apply for Best Start Grant or Best Start Foods if their parent or carer is getting certain benefits.

How do people apply?

We take applications via our freephone helpline on 0800 182 2222, by post or online at **mygov.scot/benefits**.

What are the qualifying benefits for these payments?

Universal Credit, Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit, Income Support, Pension Credit, Income-based Jobseekers Allowance (JSA), Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Housing Benefit (Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods only)

For Best Start Grant and Scottish Child Payment, we do not need to know about your income. For Best Start Foods, some of the benefits have an income limit.

What evidence will be required?

Most people will be able to apply without sending any evidence. This is because we check with the Department for Work and Pensions and HMRC that you are on a qualifying benefit or tax credit.

We need evidence that the person applying is responsible for the child, usually through the child being named on a benefits claim. Kinship carers can demonstrate responsibility for a child with a certain legal order, written agreement with a local authority or in certain circumstances, a letter of support from a local authority.

Will they need their partner's information?

Yes if they live in the same household and are:

- married to each other
- civil partners of each other
- living together as if you are married.

What happens if someone's circumstances change after applying?

People need to let us know if their circumstances change at any point. This is to make sure that they are getting everything that they are entitled to. This could include changes to what benefits or tax credits someone gets or where they live.

How will people be paid?

Eligible families will be paid into their chosen account. Best Start Foods will be paid onto a card.

Do these payments affect other benefits?

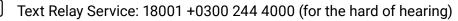
No, they will not be taken into account for UK benefit and tax credit assessments.

Visit The Scottish Government's cost of living website for further information on support available for families: **gov.scot/costoflivingsupport**



How can people contact us?

Call us free on: 0800 182 2222



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British Sign Language users: contactscotland-bsl.org

Webchat: chat.socialsecurity.gov.scot

Follow Social Security Scotland

Scottish House Regulator

CALVAY WORKING TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE

The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) issued an Engagement Plan for Calvay in December 2022. The Engagement Plan can be found on both the SHR's website and also Calvay's own website (look in the Documents section under Governance).

Our regulatory status is currently 'Working Towards Compliance' and Committee and staff are working together to address the issues highlighted by the SHR and return us to full compliance. When the SHR is satisfied we are once again fully complaint, our status on the SHR's website will change from 'Working Towards Compliance' to 'Compliant'. The Committee does not take this situation lightly, however we are not alone in having our status changed to 'Working Towards Compliance'. There are currently seven other housing associations who share this status.

We'll update you on our progress in our Summer newsletter.



Annual Assurance Statement

Each year, the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) requires all housing associations to submit an Annual Assurance Statement. Ours is published on both the SHR's website and Calvay's own website (look in the Documents section under Governance). The last Annual Assurance Statement we submitted was at the end of October 2022.

Our Annual Assurance Statement is a bit different this year because we've identified some areas which need improvement. Normally we'd expect to be able to confidently state that we're compliant with all the regulatory standards. This year, our Annual Assurance Statement includes the following: "...we note there are some areas of non-compliance in particular governance issues...". These will be addressed via an agreed action plan which will be discussed and agreed by the Board and the Director and his staff team. This will then be shared with the Scottish Housing Regulator so we can obtain their acceptance of our improvement plan..."

Committee and staff are currently working together to address the shortcomings which have been identified.



Add your voice, help us improve services...

Would you like to help improve social landlord services in Scotland? Add your voice to the National Panel of Tenants and Service Users!

The Panel is one of the ways that the Scottish Housing Regulator can hear what tenants and service users think and make sure it focuses on the important things. Members receive occasional surveys and invites to take part in other feedback exercises. Participation is always optional and you can leave at any time.

We want to include a diverse range of people on the Panel, including those who are not involved in other ways of giving views on landlord services. Members include **council and housing association tenants**, people who have used **homeless services**, homeowners who receive social landlord **factoring or common repairs**, and people living on social rented **Gypsy/Traveller sites**.

Ready to join?

Online at <u>www.bit.ly/shr-panel</u>

Call 0800 433 7212

Get a printed form on natpan@engagescotland.co.uk or call 0800 433 7212

STOP PRESS

Wednesdays

NEW SCOTS WEDNESDAYS

Kelvin College ESOL, Cooking, and Conversational English Classes

Kelvin College ESOL Class for Beginners: 9.30-11.30am English Class for All (children welcome): 12.30-2.30pm

Easterhouse Baptist Church, 18 Westerhouse Road, Easterhouse, G34 9DN



Useful Telephone Numbers

Gas Repairs (All tenants) – Gas Sure 01294 468 113 All other Emergency Repairs 0800 595 595 Cleansing 0141 287 9700 Gas (Scottish Gas Networks) 0800 111 999 SP Energy Networks (Power Cuts & Emergencies) 0800 092 9290 or 105 Water Mains Leakage or Bursts 0800 077 8778

Road & Lighting Faults 0800 373 635 Out of Hours Homelessness Services 0800 838 502 Police Scotland 01786 289070 Environmental Protection-Noise Pollution 0141 287 6688 or 0141 287 1060 Abandoned Cars 0141 276 0859 Crime Stoppers 0800 555 111

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