

## Make your own Facemask

**T**hrough Newspoint Extra, an e bulletin emailed out to tenants, we asked if anyone was interested in making facemasks for themselves or others.



We provided the material, the nosepieces, elastic and a pattern. Three tenants took up the challenge and well done to all of them.

One tenant in particular has become a mask-making machine in her own right. Jean Simpson, from Inverard, has made numerous masks and shared them with other tenants in the building. She is currently waiting on more nose pieces to finish the masks she has in progress.

Now I open the challenge up to all of you to make your own facemask. You do not need a sewing machine as it can be sewn by hand. If you want some mask making kits then please

let your coordinator know. If you are not on a staffed site, then please phone our main office and ask for some materials and we can then send them out to you.

You can make masks for yourself, you can make them for neighbours, or if you are like Jean and make loads, we can share them with other tenants who are unable to make a mask.

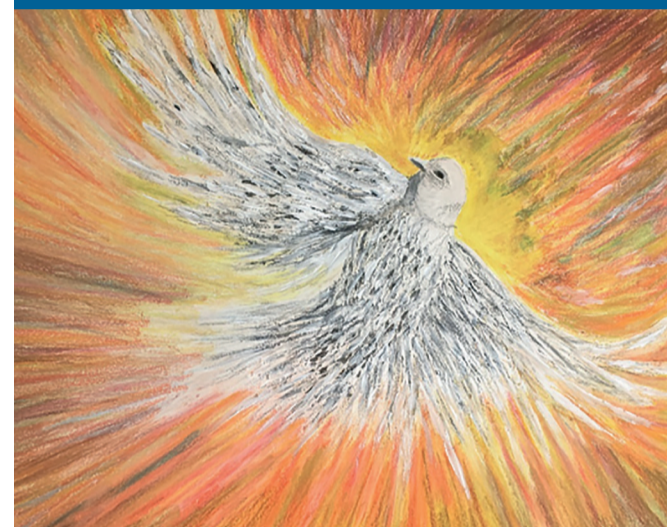
If you would like a re-usable washable mask, let your coordinator know or phone our main office and leave a message and someone will get back to you.

**Happy mask making!**



## Around the Houses

What have you been up to?



Bernadette Suppiah from Northwood House shared this beautiful picture she created using acrylic and pastels.



At City Park, the green-fingered tenants have made good use of their greenhouse. They grew parsley and sold it for 25p a bunch and this helped raise funds for other items for the greenhouse. They have grown tomatoes and spring onions which I am sure have been delicious.



Knitting hats for premature babies at the hospital is a fantastic pastime for Helen at City Park. Well done Helen.



## Marion's lockdown

In the summer edition of Newpoint, there was an article about what staff were missing or had learned to love during lockdown and I asked what your responses would be to the questions.

Marion from Old Farm Court kindly shared her 'lockdown' with me.

Marion is the chair of a choir of 70 members; they all missed singing, and the time spent together. She started a weekly newsletter with puzzles, jokes, quizzes and personal stories and memories, like comics read or games played when younger. Choir members received this at the time the choir would normally have met.

Marion said she also missed the Saturday café and functions in the lounge, and going

to church, although the latter she has been attending through Zoom.

What she does not miss is running about the shops and humphing bags around and is saving lots of money as not having to buy petrol.

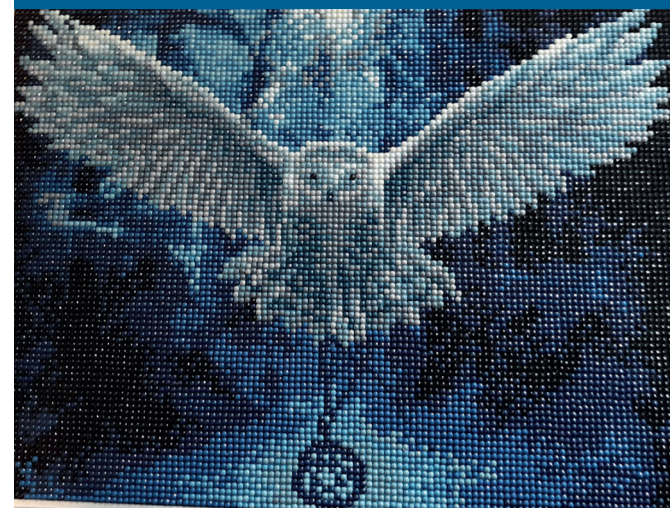
As people were not going far Marion saw more people walk past her window and they waved to each other and she said this was nice.

Marion has always appreciated her family but has done more so in recent months.

Like everyone else Marion adapted to life in lockdown and kept herself busy and in touch with others through technology.

Well done Marion on everything you have achieved and thank you for sharing your story.

## Around the Houses (continued)



Jennifer Wilkinson, from Buchan Gardens created this amazing beaded picture of Harry Potter's owl, Hedwig.

## Lockdown Celebrations

### Happy 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday to Eve

Eve celebrated her 100th birthday with her family on zoom. With all the original birthday plans cancelled, Eve, a Viewpoint tenant, said she was "so happy with her celebrations and enjoyed the day".



### 55<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary

Sandra and her husband Ronnie celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary at Lennox House. A gazebo was put up in the garden to allow them to have afternoon tea. Congratulations to them both.



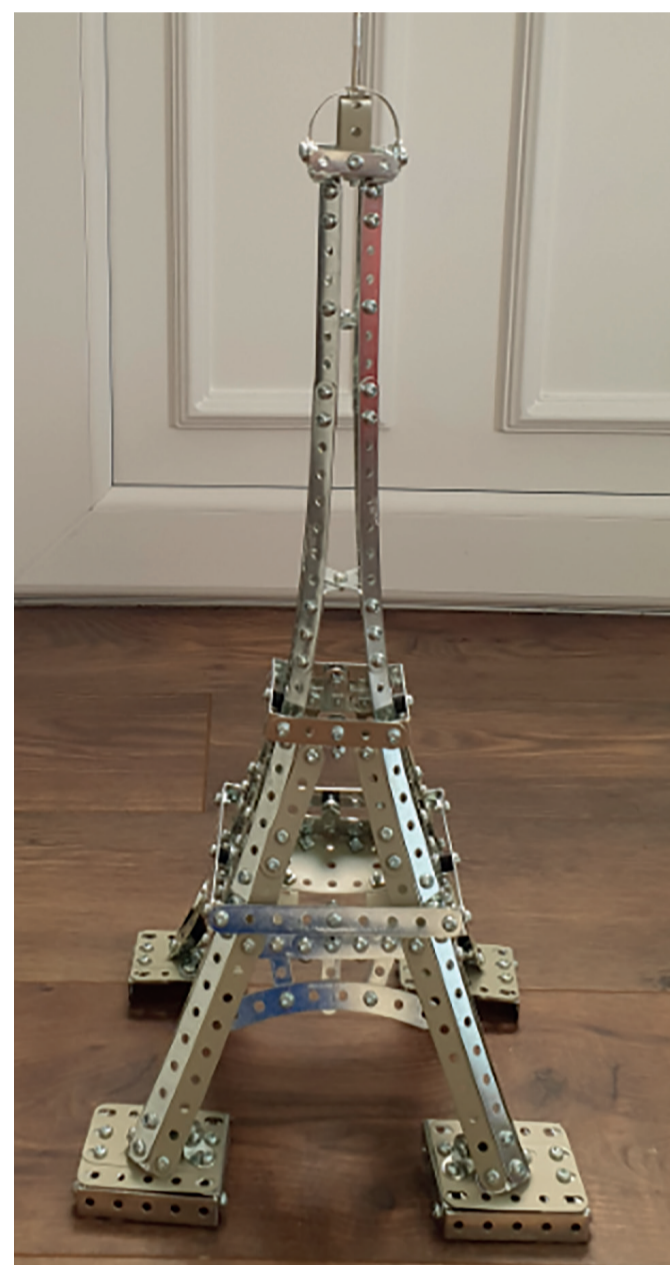
### Happy 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday to Ann

Ann celebrated her 80th birthday during lockdown. Her daughter arranged for a piper to come and play for her as a surprise. She was delighted and, needless to say, the tenants at Buchan Gardens came out to enjoy this with her. It left everyone with a smile on their face.



### And a 60<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary at John Hunter Court

Jim and Alexandria, from John Hunter Court, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. Unfortunately, we did not get a photograph of them. Congratulations to them on this special day.



Esther, one of our directors, made this iconic structure from meccano. It took her ages and the staff have all been waiting to see this. Well done Esther.



Making boxes at City Park and personalising them to order from Pam. You can fill them with chocolate or anything else you like. Very pretty and creative. Well done Pam.

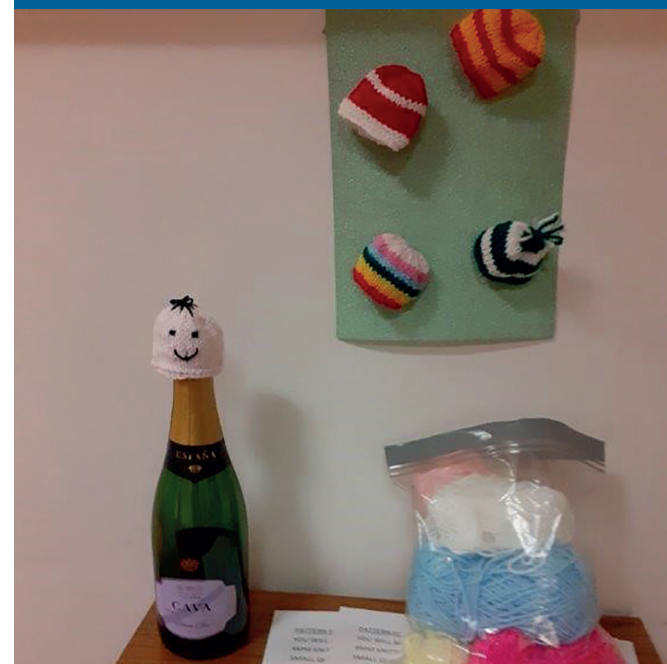


## Margaret's Double Celebration

Margaret recently celebrated two special occasions: She had her 65th birthday and her 20th anniversary of working with Viewpoint in the same week. Margaret is Senior Housing Coordinator at Buchan Gardens in Fife. Congratulations Margaret.



## Around the Houses (continued)



Barbara at Maidencraig Crescent knitted some hats, for innocent smoothie bottles and they will raise money for Age Scotland. Great job Barbara.

## It's the Little Things

### Pizza at Lennox House

Back in May the staff at Lennox House received free pizza from Domino's. It was much enjoyed by all the staff and not a morsel was left – and to prove it here are the empty boxes! Thank you Domino's.



### Maidencraig Crescent

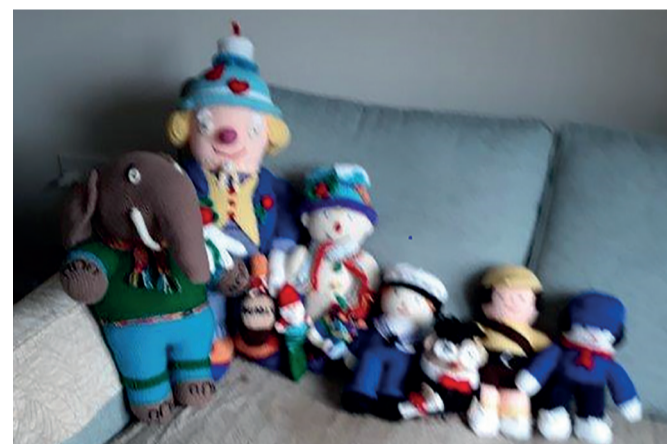
Shirley, the coordinator at Maidencraig Crescent, found these lovely flowers waiting for her one morning. They were from the son of a former tenant who wanted to thank Shirley for everything she had done for his mum. They were much appreciated.



Walter Hamilton at City Park carved some vehicles from wood and painted them. What a fabulous present for a wee one, they look great.

### Haugh Park

The lucky tenants at Haugh Park have not missed out on their monthly coffee morning. Ann, the coordinator, has continued to bake lots of goodies. With the help of Alice, they have put together a lovely treat bag for each tenant with a wee note. This is such a kind thing to do and what lucky tenants you are.



Miss McFarlane of Buchan Gardens knitted this motley crew. They are so cute – well done on this achievement.



Helen, at Balfour House, has been very busy during lockdown by creating an oasis on her balcony. Helen said it has helped keep her sane and happy during the long days. What a wonderful idea. We think it looks fantastic and hope you do too.



## Witness by the Window

By Julie Ann Thomason, Ogilvie Terrace

**Julie Ann Thomason from Ogilvie Terrace wrote the poem Witness by the Window. Reading it makes you think you are at that window and it is a beautiful poem. Thank you Julie Ann for sharing it with us.**

Scene set, yet ever changing,  
Shadows and sunlight slipping through  
trees bare, trees in leaf.  
Gentle hills crisp on horizon, shrouded  
in mist.  
A crafted conduit, still with shades  
of silence,  
A crinkled kaleidoscope kissed by wind.  
A liquid ribbon, patterns fluid and fancy  
Never fixed, always free.

Scene set, yet ever moving.  
Dogs and owners strolling chatting.  
Parents with toddlers feeding  
feathered friends.  
Joggers and cyclists peppering the path,  
Boats and barges gliding along,  
Canoeists cutting and churning.  
Drawn by the magnetic energy of  
The liquid ribbon and its yin and yang.

Scene set, yet ever reflecting.  
Buildings, bridges, barges, and bikes.  
Capturing catching its surrounding,  
Currents swaying back and forth.  
Undulating ripples diverse and defined.  
Sparkling sun diamonds, ruby tow lights  
And moon silver pearls scattered on  
The liquid ribbon flaunting its jewels  
day and night.

Scene set, yet ever creating.  
Swans and cygnets, ducks and ducklings,  
Birds with fledglings flirting with flight.  
Quacking, chirping, whooping,  
and hissing.  
Attracting people stopping  
staring gazing.  
Happy at peace while  
Nourishing the lives dwelling  
On the lively liquid ribbon of life.

Scene set, yet ever sensing.  
Dull, damp, warm and bright.  
Frozen covered in a collar of snow,  
Rain rinsed, cleansing calming.  
Feeling moods diluting pain.  
Memories mingle merge into fascination.  
A chimera fuses into a panoply  
of perfection.  
The liquid ribbon replete with  
daily delights.

## Gayle and Henrietta

**A lovely wee hedgehog turned up at Balfour House but it was in daylight hours. Gayle, the coordinator, managed to get a photograph and they called her Henrietta.**

However, things were just not right. Henrietta should not have been out in daylight hours and she started falling sideways. Gayle called out the SSPCA, as she was worried about her.

It turned out that Henrietta is a very young hedgehog and she had a huge tick in her ear. This caused her to lose balance, and the SSPCA took her to the animal hospital. They removed the tick and gave her some antibiotics and she has made a full recovery.

Gayle said 'It is strange the way poorly animals will seek help and I feel this is why she was out during the day. Henrietta enjoyed the cat food and meal worms that we gave her and we are glad that she is going to be fine'.



### Vacancies Interested? – Read on...

#### The Job

We publish our newsletter 3 – 4 times per year and need volunteers to be part of the editorial team. We have two tenants who have agreed to be part of the team along with two members of staff, but we need more tenants to make sure that Newspoint is what you want it to be.

Editorial Team is a very grand title but really it is about suggesting possible stories or highlighting things that you would want to know about, or should know about. I am not asking you to write the stories, unless you want to, but to steer Newspoint so it is a source of information about what is happening at Viewpoint, what is happening around and about your homes and about you, our tenants.

#### Working Hours

It would probably involve a couple of meetings for each issue to look at what we are going to put into it and then to review how it looks in print prior to printing. You do not need to commit to being involved in every issue so there is a lot of flexibility and you can dip in and out, as you wish.

#### Benefits

No salary attached but it is an opportunity to have some fun as well as shape the newsletter. You will get the opportunity to join the team in a visit to the printers and the graphic designer (when it is safe to do so). We will also help you in any way that we can to take part e.g. pay travel expenses or provide care for someone you provide full time care for to allow you to attend a meeting or look at ways you can attend online if you are unable to get out.

#### Start Date

In time to prepare for the **December 2020 issue.**

#### Experience

No experience required as we will all be learning together – all you need is some enthusiasm.

#### How to Apply

Speak to your coordinator or any other member of staff and let them know you are interested, or email Heather at [tp@viewpoint.org.uk](mailto:tp@viewpoint.org.uk)



# Viewpoint Services Update

## Empty Houses and Allocations

Due to lockdown, we have not allocated any properties over the last few months and, as a result, we have a number of empty houses.

We have now started to repair and clean these houses and to look for new tenants to live in them. We have developed safe working processes for prospective tenants to be able to view and sign for properties.

In addition, following consultation with some of our volunteers, we will be putting short videos on our website of our empty properties. We are also working on additional information and photographs to support this e.g. common areas, gardens etc. This means that applicants can view on line and then proceed to an actual viewing if they wish. We are in the early stages of this work and will continue to develop this over the coming months. Details of how to apply for a property and our properties that are available can be found on our website at [www.viewpoint.org.uk/housing-support](http://www.viewpoint.org.uk/housing-support)

## Routine Repairs

We have not carried out any routine repairs during lockdown, but we have continued to record these.

We are now prioritising these repairs and arranging for them to be carried out safely, but it will take a bit of time to clear the backlog. If your repair has become more urgent then please do let us know and please continue to report any repairs you may have – we will now be able to process these and our Maintenance Officers able to visit to carry out any necessary inspections.

Thank you to everyone for your patience while we catch up.

## Heating Replacements to Individual Properties

We had planned to replace the heating systems and boilers in approximately 95 properties just before lockdown, and tenants had been notified of the work. We will continue to follow Scottish Government guidelines and will restart the work once it is safe to do so. When work restarts either our staff or our appointed contractor, Saltire, will be in touch with the tenants included in this contract to tell them what is happening.

## Communal Heating Replacement Programme

We are developing proposals to upgrade the communal heating systems in a number of multi-tenanted buildings over the next five years.

At present, these are communal heating systems with tenants paying standard service charges towards energy costs. As part of the design, we are trying to ensure that tenants can have improved control over the heating and hot water in their home. This will include managing their own costs for the proportion of energy they use.

We are looking at renewable energy options to

fuel our communal heating systems. This is in line with Government legislation that encourages us all to play a role in tackling climate change and fuel poverty. We will consider renewable technologies such as Ground and Air Source Heat Pumps, Biomass, suitable electric systems etc. These technologies can be very expensive to install but we can explore external funding opportunities that may be available and utilise these where possible.

There are however some limitations to where we can install some of these technologies as, in general, the plant and equipment required can be quite big. This means that where space is tight we may still have to rely on gas in some buildings.

As part of the overall proposals, we are also considering incorporating other energy saving measures such as improved levels of wall, floor and roof insulation. We will also try to include solar options where feasible.

We are currently remobilising to re-start this survey work safely. The surveys will be carried out externally to the building fabric, internally to communal areas, plant rooms and void flats. No surveys will be carried out in occupied flats at this stage. Notices will be displayed in each complex prior to surveys starting on individual buildings.

Some of this work may change how tenants currently pay for the energy used to heat their homes. We will consult with you before making any changes and you will have the opportunity to discuss this with an independent, impartial, external advisor. Once the current lockdown restrictions ease sufficiently for us to make progress, we will be in touch with all tenants involved to let them know what is happening.

## Cyclical Maintenance

Some essential cyclical maintenance has continued throughout lockdown including Fire Risk Assessments, Lift Maintenance, Gas Servicing and Emergency Lighting checks in block stairwells. All other compliance work will be restarting in the coming weeks, subject to safe working considerations.

Our landscaping and window cleaning contractors are continuing with a reduced level of service - i.e. grass cutting only and external window cleaning on a 6-week cycle. Stair cleaning is ongoing and a deep cleaning rota in our complexes continues. When Government guidelines allow we can return to a full service.

## Planned Investment

The roof replacement works at 47 Gillespie Crescent have started. We have incurred a number of wet days recently and this has caused a slight delay. We are working with the contractor to minimise disruption to the overall programme.

We are currently working on procuring contracts for other roofing works to our properties, as well

as emergency and communal lighting upgrade contracts. Once these have been finalised we will let tenants know.

We are currently working on how to re-start other capital works planned, such as kitchen and window replacements, if feasible.

We will communicate out to you all when we know what we can achieve this financial year.

## Communication by Text

**We know that many of you have a mobile phone and we are, therefore, developing a way to send out texts to groups of tenants or to all tenants at the one time.**

This will allow us to provide you with up to date, important, information. We can also let you know when the gardeners or window cleaners are coming to your area. We will be starting to use this service very soon.

If you do not wish to receive texts, you will be able to opt out of this when you receive the first text. The list will be updated once a week to reflect any changes, such as people opting out, changes in telephone numbers or tenants moving in and out of Viewpoint tenancies. This may mean that you receive another text after you opt out or leave your tenancy until such times as the list is refreshed.

We also want to use texting as a way you can provide us with instant feedback e.g. when the gardener has been in your area to rate the service and provide additional comments if you wish. This is currently in the early stage of development as there are technology issues regarding making sure that the data is easily collected and comments are then forwarded to the appropriate person to deal with any issues as they arise. This information will feed into the regular meetings we have with our contractors.

Finally, we are considering using texting as a reminder for housing issues, such as an appointment with Viewpoint or the date your keys are due to be returned at the end of your tenancy.

If you have any comments, or other ideas, about how texting can be used for your benefit then please let us know.



# Ensuring your Safety

Visits by staff and contractors to your home

It is important that you remember to inform us of any change in circumstances before the date we are coming to see you.

COVID-19  
Safety Measures

To help us prepare for our visit there are a few **simple questions** our staff will ask **before** coming to see you:

COVID-19  
Safety Measures

- 1 Are you or any members of your family displaying symptoms of Coronavirus, such as high temperature, new and near persistent cough, or loss of taste or smell?



- 2 Are you or any of your family considered vulnerable or have you been self-isolating?

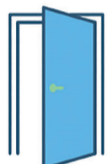


- 3 Are you happy for us to enter your home and do you understand that we may need further access within it?



**Before** our staff member enters your home there are some **simple steps** you can take to help us do so safely. **If possible, please:**

- 1 Leave all internal doors open



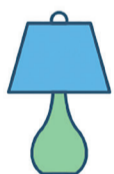
- 2 Leave windows open for ventilation



- 3 Keep clear pathways within the home, and free of any obstructions



- 4 Keep all areas well-lit and open window coverings



- 5 Where possible other occupants of the house should vacate the property and stay together in one area such as the driveway or garden or, congregate in one other room



- 6 Shut pets away safely within another room



**8 simple steps** our staff **always** take to ensure everyone's safety

COVID-19  
Safety Measures

- 1 At all times, our staff will ask questions from a safe distance and where possible will do this from outside of the property.



- 2 Our staff will wash or sanitise their hands before and after every home they visit.



- 3 Our staff may wear a fresh pair of disposable gloves at each home they visit. They will dispose of used gloves safely without compromising you.



- 4 Similarly, where required, staff may wear a fresh face covering at each home they visit. They will dispose of these safely without compromising you.



- 5 Any equipment our staff may use will be disinfected before and after each use.



- 6 To minimise the time we spend within your home, we will try to complete our notes and forms outside of your property.



- 7 Our staff will take care to keep their own clothes clean during visits and will also wear fresh workwear daily.



- 8 Where we have to spend a long time (or stay overnight) in your home, it may not be practical to stick rigidly to all of the above standards (for example keeping pets locked up overnight), but we will do all that we can to minimise risk to everyone within the home, including our own staff.



## Gardener Specifications

Our contract gardeners' specification was to be included in this edition of Newpoint, however as our normal services have not resumed we decided that this will be included in a future newsletter.

## Viewpoint Staff Update

There have been a few changes in staff over the last few months.

**Terry Martini-Yates**, our void repair officer, left Viewpoint on 24 August 2020 after fourteen and a half years. Many of you will know Terry and I am sure you will wish him well in his new job.

**Monika Bacmaga** was the manager of our care home at St Raphael's and she left Viewpoint on 14 August 2020 after working for us for nearly two years. Monika will be very much missed by staff and residents.

**Jeannie Garing** is the new manager at St Raphael's and she previously worked as charge nurse at Lennox House. We wish her well in her new role.

## Big changes for Business Support Team

Four new colleagues have recently joined the Business Support team:



**Bianca Culbert** joined us in January as Corporate Support Administrator, providing administrative and governance support to Jean, our Directors and the Board. She also tweets all the lovely photos from our complexes and helps to make sure our staff have all their PPE. After 15 years of working for local government, Bianca is very excited about the new environment within Viewpoint. In her spare time, she is studying towards a degree in Business Management.



We now have a Head of Business Support - **John Rankin** joined us in February from ARK Housing Association, where he had worked for 10 years. He oversees our IT, HR, Organisational Development and Corporate Support functions. John is looking forward to getting to know the organisation and its people (staff, tenants and residents) a bit better as he settles into his new role, not least by visiting a few of our locations. A father of two, John has also been studying and, within days of joining Viewpoint, passed his final exam for a Masters degree in Business Administration with distinction. Congratulations, John!



March marked the arrival of **Aileen McKie**, our new HR/OD Manager (Human Resources and Organisational Development) – after several years of outsourcing this vitally important function, Viewpoint finally has a HR manager again! Aileen brings with her lots of experience in various HR roles, most recently working with Edinburgh University. Apart from the usual HR processes like recruitment, Aileen will be managing organisational design, learning and development for our staff and job evaluation.



**Fiona Donaldson** also joined the team as Senior HR Officer on 25th August, for one year, to support the transition of bringing the HR/OD function back in-house. Fiona is a very experienced HR professional, with previous experience of working in both local authority and university settings.

Although other team members have been with us for many years, it feels like we have just established a completely new team to support colleagues in all other areas of Viewpoint to deliver your services.



## Going Digital

Nothing beats the personal touch, but the world is changing. Love it or hate it, being online would have been a benefit to many of us during the pandemic, whether that be for keeping in touch with friends or family, participating in online activities, shopping, searching for information or playing games.

We have recognised the problems some of our tenants have faced and we are looking at how we can give tenants the opportunity to have the benefits of Wi-Fi.

In recent weeks, we have carried out a survey of all our tenants in alarmed (non-staffed) sites to identify if they are online and if they need any assistance to carry out any activities. The survey asked the tenants who were not online

whether they would like to be and what kind of things would they like to do. We are now analysing this information to see what we can do. We will be widening the survey to all our tenants sometime in the future.

### What kind of things are we looking at?

1. Having a tablet, laptop or computer to go online with. We applied to Connecting Scotland, a Scottish Government funded initiative, and have been given tablets and free mobile Wi-Fi for a year for 25 tenants: 20 in Edinburgh, 3 in Fife, 1 in East Lothian and 1 in Mid Lothian. We are in the process of identifying possible recipients for these tablets. We are also looking at other sources for computer equipment.
2. Having the skills to use the tablet, laptop or computer to go online with. We already

work in close partnership with Tap Into IT, an Edinburgh based charity who provide support to help people get online and support to those already online who would like to learn more. This service is free for Viewpoint tenants.

3. Broadband connections are not cheap and for some people it is just not a priority. We are in very early discussions to see what is available that would enable all our tenants to have a Wi-Fi connection if they wished. The outcome of the survey, described above, will help determine the way forward.

If getting online is something that you would like to do then please contact us and let us know. Even if we cannot help you right away, it does mean that we know what the demand is and enable us to make plans to try and meet your needs.

## TV Licence Changes for the over 75s

**As you may know, free TV licences, funded by the government, for all those over 75 years or over ended on 31 July 2020. Not everyone over 75 will have to pay for their TV licence.**

### Exceptions

#### If you are entitled to Guaranteed Pension Credit

If you are receiving guaranteed pension credit you will still be entitled to your free TV licence, however you have to make an application for this. TV licencing will post out an application form to all existing over 75s. You can also download the form from their website at [www.tvlicensing.co.uk](http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk). If you have not received a form and do not have internet access you can contact them on **0300 790 6117**.

Pension Credit is a means tested benefit: there is no savings limit although any capital of £10,000 or more can affect the amount paid. You can claim pension credit online at [www.gov.uk/pension-credit](http://www.gov.uk/pension-credit) or by telephoning **0800 991 234**.

Elaine, Viewpoint's Welfare Benefits Officer can help you check if you are entitled to pension credit, or any other benefits.

Contact Elaine on **0131 662 5144** or email her at [elaine.rosie@viewpoint.org.uk](mailto:elaine.rosie@viewpoint.org.uk).

#### You live in a complex with preserved rights

Some of our complexes have tenants who have preserved rights for a concessionary licence and have nothing to pay. Tenants who qualify are those who moved in prior to a certain date. If you moved in after the preserved date then, unfortunately, you will need to pay for your own full TV licence or apply for a free licence if in receipt of guaranteed pension credit. This has always been the case for tenants under 75 in preserved sites; however, tenants over 75 will now be subject to this as well. The date is different for each complex and if you are unsure then please contact us on our main telephone number, **0131 668 4247** and we can check and let you know.

#### You live in a complex with full concessionary rights

Some of our complexes are classed as having full concessionary sites. For these sites, you will retain your free TV licence if you are 60 years or over, regardless of the date you moved in. A notice has been put on the notice boards if you live in a full concessionary site and on the Screen Cloud information board, if you have one.

This is a lot of information to try to take and can be quite very confusing so if you need any further information on your position regarding the TV licence changes then please call our offices and we will be happy to assist.

## Reporting Accidents and Near Misses

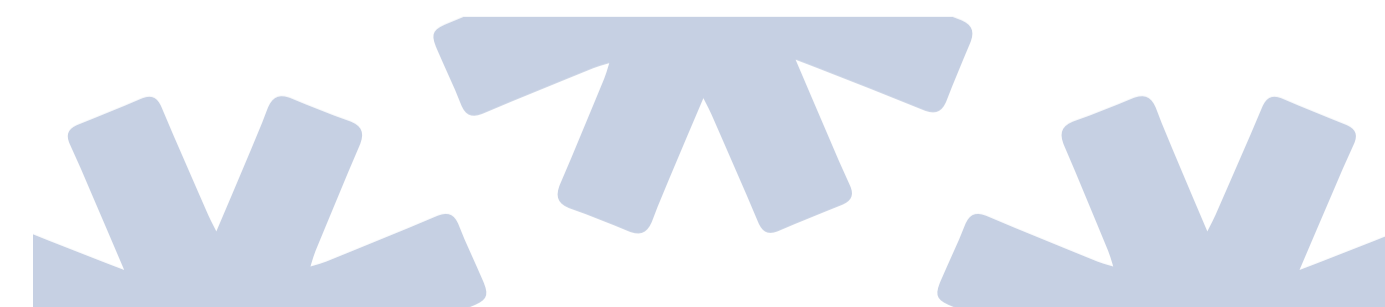
**I am sure that you are all aware that if you have accidents in any of our communal areas, including the gardens, then you need to report this to a member of staff. However, are you aware that you should also report near misses?**



A near miss is an unplanned event that did not result in injury, illness or damage – but had the potential to do so. Only a fortunate break in the chain prevented injury illness or damage. An example of a near miss is that you trip on the loose edge of a rug and manage to steady yourself by grabbing the handrail. If the handrail had not been there, you may have fallen and injured yourself.

By reporting these near misses, the Association can review what happened and can make any necessary changes to prevent it happening again. In our example, the removal or replacement of the rug may be the appropriate action to prevent this happening again.

So please let us know about any accidents or near misses so that we can ensure that our communal areas are as safe for you as they can be. You can report these to your coordinator or to any other member of staff.



## Compliments and Complaints Summary - 1 April 2019—31 March 2020

**This article summarises our compliments and complaints received between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020.**

From 1 October 2019 we started to formally record compliments in addition to recording expressions of dissatisfaction as another way that tenants can log that they are unhappy.

We are looking at ways to encourage tenants to make suggestions about the delivery of our services. We need to have a process in place to ensure that any suggestion received is followed up and the person making the suggestions is advised of the outcome—especially if it is something we are not able to do. We want to provide you with the best service that we can so that you do not need to make a complaint. We apologise if you have had to make a complaint in the past and will endeavour to ensure that you do not feel the need to do so in the future.

### Timescales—Our Targets

We aim to deal with Stage 1 complaints within 5 working days. We aim to deal with Stage 2 complaints within 20 working days

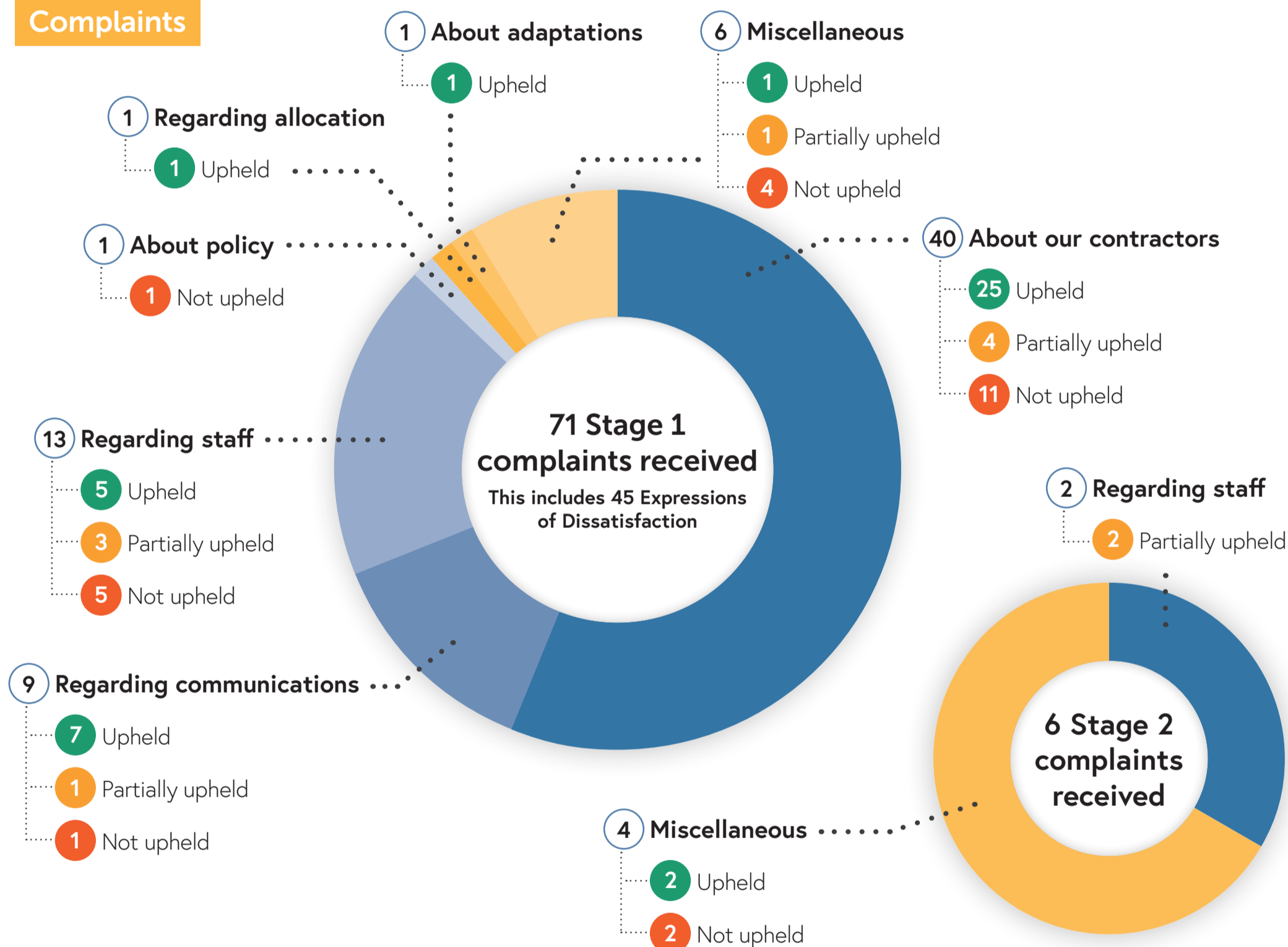
#### Stage 1 Complaints

Average time in 2019/20 was 4.59 days ✓

#### Stage 2 Complaints

Average time in 2019/20 was 20.69 days ✗

### Complaints



### Lessons Learned

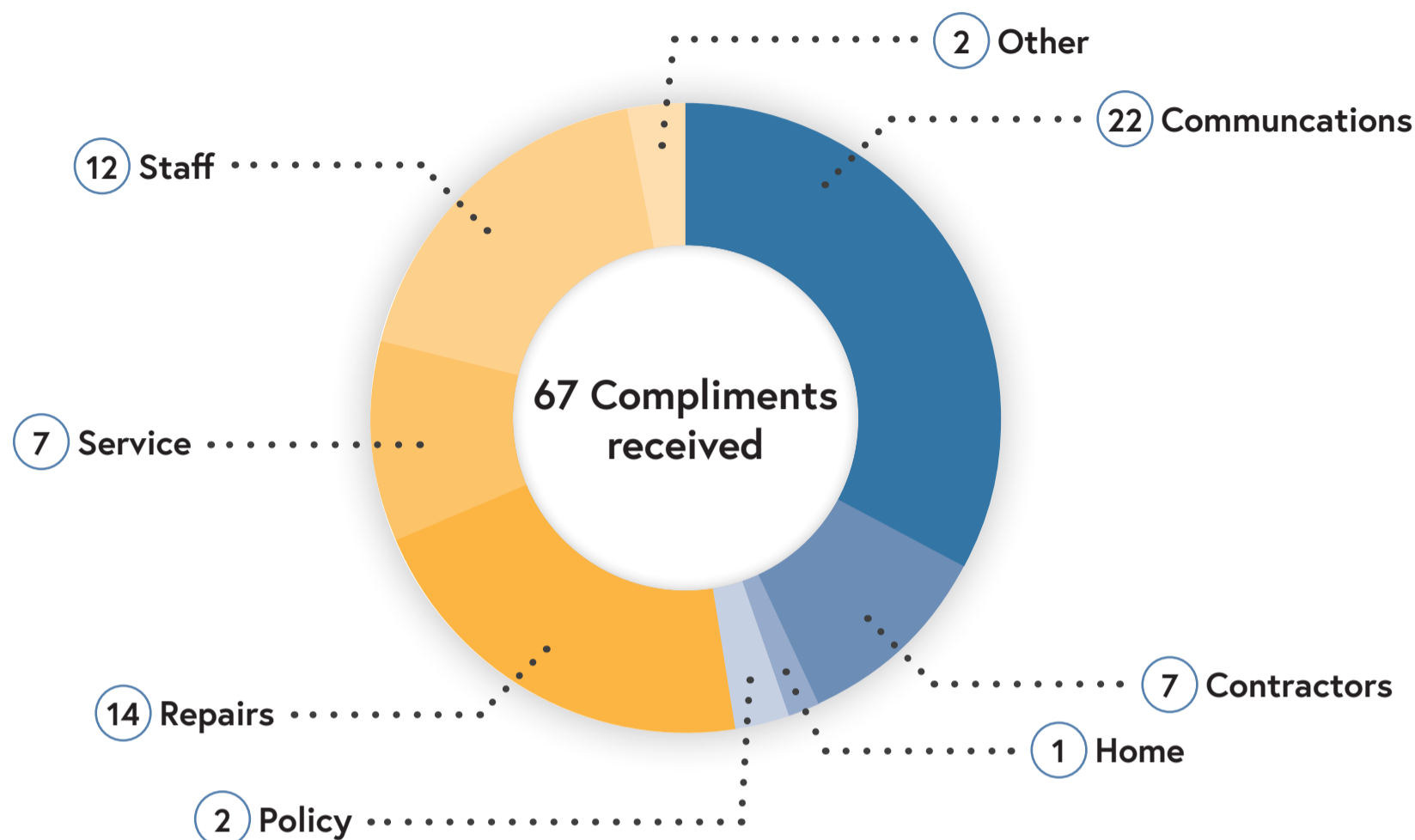
As a result of your complaints we are looking at various aspects of service to make things better and to try and ensure that we do not make the same mistakes again.

- We have a new repairs contractor and set up a robust monitoring system including monthly meetings, opportunities for more proactive discussions and the contractor can be penalised for poor performance.
- We have set up an Operations Committee, who among other operational matters, will receive quarterly reports on complaints received and the lessons learned and what changes have been made as a result of this.
- We are going through process of reviewing all our policies to ensure that they are consistent and fair and comply with legislation.
- We have plans to review our communications strategy and customer charter. We will be involving tenants in this process in order to provide the best service possible

## Compliments

It is just as important for us to know what we do well as it is to know where we go wrong. Compliments allow us to look at what you like about the services and build on that in other areas of the work that we do.

Recording of compliments only started on 1 October 2019



### Find out more...

You can get a copy of our complaints handling process on our website at <https://www.viewpoint.org.uk/search-results/?searchTerm=complaints> OR speak to any member of staff who will arrange to get a paper copy of this for you.

## Dementia – a carer's experience Written by a member of staff

**You may have seen the news reports recently about Dame Barbara Windsor moving into a care home. I daresay some folk may have read that and thought badly of her husband, Scott Mitchell, for not being able to keep her at home – after all he is a bit younger than her and they have (presumably) enough money for private help.**

But I am guessing that folk who have direct experience of caring for someone with dementia – be it a husband, wife, mother or father or other family member or friend – will have been able to relate all too easily to his distress at having to take this step.

Caring is hard – whether 24/7 or when done at a relative distance. I cared for both my parents (who both had different forms of dementia) for a number of years - I visited twice each week, cleaning the house, doing laundry, shopping, cooking & helping sort out bills; and occasionally going into another room when it all became too

much and silently screaming. I sometimes lived in with them for a week or so at a time - for example, when mum got home after one of her many stays in hospital. Caring for someone on these terms was stressful and tiring but caring for someone 24/7 must be exhausting both mentally and physically.

My experience of caring for my parents was from about 20 years ago, but I suspect it was not much different to someone's experience just now. There are theoretically more sources of help but I expect carers still rely very heavily – as I did – on the support of friends and family not to "go under".

So if you are reading this and are currently caring for someone with dementia (or for someone with any kind of chronic illness) and you are struggling, then please, **reach out & ask for help**. It does not mean you have failed or that you are useless. By asking for help you are safeguarding yourself and the person you are caring for – you need to look after your own health and mental wellbeing in order to be effective looking after them.

If your decision is that you cannot carry on caring for the person at home anymore and they need the extra support of a care home then no one has the right to judge you or make you feel bad

for that. Only you (and sometimes the person you are caring for) know how difficult your situation is.

If your loved one does move into a care home then you will likely feel **guilt** and you may feel **relief** – & this (believe me) will re-start the feelings of guilt again. That is often just the way it is and we just have to rationalise each decision we take and say, "I did my best". And you know what – sometimes in these situations, even our best is not enough and that's not anyone's fault. It's just Life.

Caring is incredibly hard – especially when you have an emotional attachment to the person you are looking after. So be kind to yourself as well as to them; and **do not be afraid to ask for help!**

### Some sources of help:

- Ask your GP or social worker
- Phone the Alzheimer Scotland helpline tel. **0808 808 3000**
- Ask another family member or a friend for help
- Contact Age Scotland for advice tel. **0800 124 4222**
- Ask your Housing Officer or Coordinator to signpost you to local help



## Paying for your TV Licence

### Advice from Age UK

If you are due to pay then TV licensing will only ask you to pay using the following options:

- By post to TV Licensing, PO Box 578, Darlington DL98 1AN
- Online at [tvlicensing.co.uk/75pay](http://tvlicensing.co.uk/75pay) or [tvlicensing.co.uk/75apply](http://tvlicensing.co.uk/75apply)
- Over the phone on **0300 790 6151**

Beware of any scammers asking you to do anything else and if you are not sure tell them you will phone back. Wait for at least 10 minutes and, if possible, call from another phone using this number **0300 303 9695**. This is the official number that TV licensing have provided for enquiries.



## Social Media and COVID

**T**here is a lot of stuff out there on social media and, right now, a lot relates to the constant changing position of our governments: how we are all handling the Covid situation and, more recently, how some people's behaviours are just downright inconsiderate and thoughtless.

However in between all the usual moans and groans someone sent this to our chief executive. Jean shared it with staff and, in turn, I am sharing it with you. I am sure it will make you smile or even laugh aloud, but there is a lot of truth mixed in for us to consider.

1. So let me get this straight, there's no cure for a virus that can be killed by sanitizer and hand soap?
2. Is it too early to put up the Christmas tree yet? I have run out of things to do.
3. When this virus thing is over, I still want some of you to stay away from me.
4. If these last months have taught us anything, it's that stupidity travels faster than any virus on the planet.
5. Just wait a second – so what you're telling me is that my chance of surviving all this is directly linked to the common sense of others? You're kidding, right?
6. If you believe all this will end and we will get back to normal just because we reopen everything raise your hand. Now slap yourself with it.

7. Another Saturday night in the house and I just realised the rubbish goes out more than I do.
8. Whoever decided an off licence is more essential than a hairdresser is obviously a bald-headed alcoholic.
9. Remember when you were little and all your underwear had the days of the week on them? Those would be helpful right now.
10. The spread of Covid-19 is based on two factors: 1. How dense the population is and 2. How dense the population is.
11. Remember all those times when you wished the weekend would last forever? Well, wish granted. Happy now?
12. It may take a village to raise a child, but I swear it's going to take a whole vineyard to home school one.
13. Did a big load of pyjamas so I would have enough clean work clothes for this week.

Now reading those I bet a few of you went 'yip, agree!...



## Care Inspection at St Raphael's Care Home

**O**n 12 March, St Raphael's had an unannounced visit from the Care Inspectorate who inspected us on our support for people's wellbeing and planning of care and support.

Having rated St Raphael's "very good" -in both areas inspectors said: "... Residents were treated with respect and cared for in a supportive manner. Residents and relatives spoke highly of staff... Staff had a very good insight to residents' care needs which was reflected in care planning, observations and what people told us."

Comments from residents, relatives and staff included: "Regardless of position and experience, everyone supports the residents in achieving their wishes no matter how large or small"; "The craft café [which is run by Impact Arts and on the premises] is a great asset"; "I had a welcome party, so I had the chance to meet people"; "Great activities twice daily and good outings"; "This is the best home I have



worked in"; "Management are very supportive and approachable"; "Great training so we can maintain competency and knowledge".

Inspectors noted the wide range of activities and outings on offer, ranging from exercise, entertainment, music, church services, nationality days and individual time with activity staff. "There's always plenty to do ", said a resident.

Furthermore, inspectors observed a very high standard of infection control, cleanliness, skincare, medication and falls management and nutrition. Menus are created with both health and enjoyment in mind, and there is always a wide range of alternatives on offer. Health and other professionals visit regularly to meet residents' needs for oral health, podiatry etc.

Each resident has a detailed health assessment and individual care plan outlining likes and dislikes. The plans are reviewed on a 6-monthly basis, always involving residents and their families, and staff are taking into account their choices.

Monika Bacmaga, Care Home Manager, said: "Having an inspection in the home is always a very stressful time for everyone. However, I do believe that everything we were doing; the satisfaction of our residents and their families will be recognised and appreciated by the inspector. I am very proud of my staff and I thank you very much for all the hard work and dedication. Without it, we would not be able to achieve all we have. It's all of our success!!"



# Advocacy Services for You

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

This may be needed because you are not in a position to do this yourself due to mental or physical health problems, learning disability or just through a 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 can help you understand your rights and help you talk to us. An advocate does not make decisions for you but makes sure that you have as much information as possible to make these decisions yourself.

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

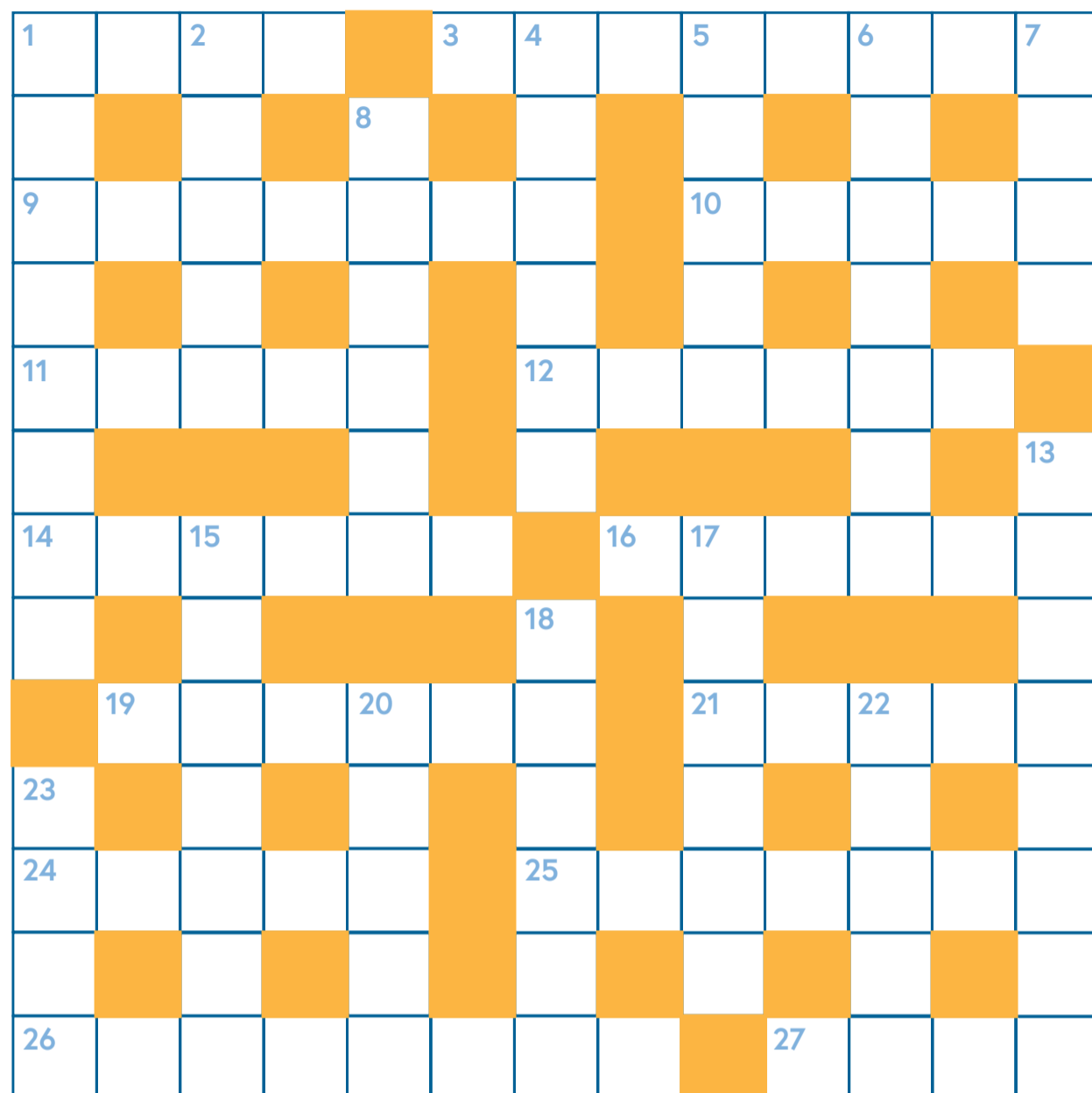
There are some local organisations offering advocacy services as well as organisations that operate nationwide. Listed in the table below are some contact details if you feel you need the services of an advocate.

Name of organisation	Contact details	Operational Areas	Whom they can help
Citizens Advice Fife	www.cabfife.org.uk 0345 140 0095	Fife	Everyone
Citizens Advice Edinburgh	www.citizensadviceedinburgh.org.uk 0131 510 5510	Edinburgh	Everyone
Citizens Advice Mid Lothian	www.dalkeithcab.org.uk 0131 660 1636  www.cas.org.uk/bureaux/penicuik-at-advice-bureau 0800 032 7077	Mid Lothian	Everyone
Citizens Advice East Lothian	www.haddingtoncab.org.uk 01620 824471  www.cas.org.uk/bureaux/Musselburgh-and-district-c-a-b 0131 653 2748	East Lothian	Everyone
Fife Advocacy Forum	www.fva.org.uk  admin@fifeadvocacyforum.org.uk	Fife	Those with a disability, chronic illness, mental illness, dementia, learning disability or personality disorder
Circles Network	www.circlesnetwork.org.uk info@circlesnetwork.org.uk 0159 264 5360	Fife	People who have a mental health issue, learning or physical disability, acquired brain injury, dementia, autistic spectrum disorder, personality disorder or chronic ill health
Dunfermline Advocacy	www.dunfermlineadvocacy.org.uk enquiries@dunfermlineadvocacy.org.uk 0138 362 4382	Fife	Those with learning, mental, physical or chronic disability
Equal Voice in Central Fife	www.equalvoice.org.uk info@equalvoice.org.uk 0159 265 3754	Fife	Those over 16 with a learning, physical, mental or chronic illness
Include Me	www.includeme.org.uk contactt@includeme.org.uk 01334 656 242	Fife	Advocacy for those age 16 – 65 with a physical, mental, learning disability, autism spectrum disorder, personality disorder, brain injury, early onset dementia or chronic illness
Advocard	www.advocard.org.uk advocacy@advocard.org.uk 0131 554 5307	Edinburgh	Users of mental health services in Edinburgh
EARS Independent Advocacy Service	www.ears-advocacy.org.uk info@ears-advocacy.org.uk 0131 478 8866	East Lothian	Older people and stroke survivors
		Mid Lothian	Older people or those aged 16+ with a physical disability
		Edinburgh	Stroke Survivors
Partners in Advocacy	www.partnersinadvocacy.org.uk edinburgh@partnersinadvocacy.org.uk 0131 478 7723	Edinburgh	Over 65 years of age or those 16+ with a physical or learning disability
		Mid Lothian and East Lothian	Adults 16+ with a physical or learning disability
Edinburgh Carers Council	www.edinburghcarerscouncil.co.uk info@edinburghcarerscouncil.co.uk 0131 322 8480	Edinburgh	Carers – paid or unpaid
Shelter Scotland	www.scotland.shelter.org.uk 0808 800 4444 (Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm)	Scotland	Anyone with a housing issue



## Win a £25 shopping voucher

Complete the crossword and then send to **Heather Jeffrie, Viewpoint Housing Association** at **4 South Oswald Road, Edinburgh EH9 2HG** by **31 October 2020**. Winner will be drawn from all correct entries.



### Across

1. Deficiency (4)
3. Dubious (8)
9. Local language variation (7)
10. Audacity (5)
11. Wood used by model makers (5)
12. Former name of Sri Lanka (6)
14. Actually (6)
16. Mystery (6)
19. Entertainment (6)
21. Signalling code (5)
24. Aida, for example (5)
25. Cradle song (7)
26. Amaze (8)
27. Cowshed (4)

### Down

1. Colourful beetle (8)
2. Go on hands and knees (5)
4. Science of light (6)
5. Rabbit (5)
6. 220 yards (7)
7. Vegetable emblem of Wales (4)
8. Remember (6)
13. Bronte heroine (4,4)
15. Smarter (anag.) (7)
17. Agile (6)
18. Grown-ups (6)
20. Killed (5)
22. Prepared (5)
23. Hindu system of physical and mental discipline (4)

## Contact Us

Most of our staff are still working from home but this does not mean that you cannot contact us.

If contacting by telephone we are not able to transfer your call, however we will take a message and pass it on and the person you wish to speak to will call you back.

If you are writing to us our mail is being opened by a member of staff, scanned, and emailed to someone to respond to you.

Viewpoint Housing Association, 4 South Oswald Road, Edinburgh, EH9 2HG

**0131 668 4247**

[admin@viewpoint.org.uk](mailto:admin@viewpoint.org.uk)

[www.viewpoint.org.uk](http://www.viewpoint.org.uk)



## Shared Ownership at Oswald Road

Shared ownership is another way to buy a home without having to fund all of it. You choose to purchase 50% or 75% of the property and pay a monthly occupancy charge for the part we own. These are 1 & 2 bedroom properties in the Grange area of Edinburgh.

If you would like to know more, or request an application pack, phone **0131 662 4247** option 2 or email [admin@viewpoint.org.uk](mailto:admin@viewpoint.org.uk)

