

HOUSING SUPPORT REVIEW

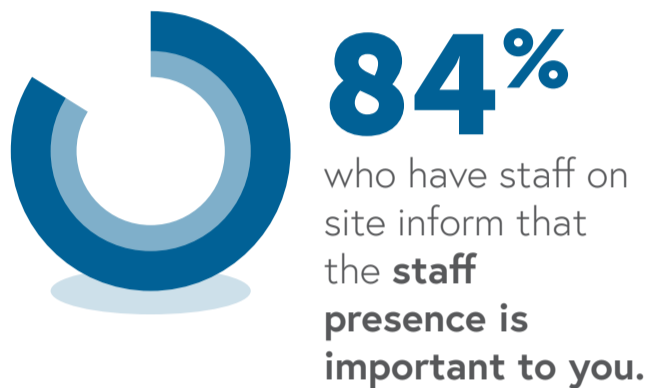
An update from the Project Team

To all of our tenants who took the time to complete the Tenant Insight survey in June, thank you very much for the outstanding response!

We were able to achieve a response rate of 58% across all of our housing types. We are delighted with the rate

of engagement we received. This means the responses and figures we obtained carry statistical importance and were drawn from a truly representative sample of our tenants.

Here are some key findings from what you told us:



The **main reasons** for moving into Sheltered/Retirement Housing are:



Adaptability of the home



To **feel safe**



Affordability of the housing offer



The **need for housing**

The **most important** elements of current services are:



Having on site staff as a point of contact for tenancy matters and communal repairs.



Alarm and inactivity monitoring systems



Receiving **regular welfare checks.**

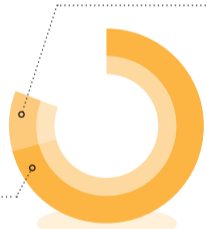


Safety and security of the accommodation



Liaison with other services (healthcare, social work etc.)

71% of you who have a current support plan recognise a need for one now.



This figure increases to **80%** when thinking about future needs.

26% of you who do not currently have a support plan recognise a need for one now.



This increases to **54%** when considering the future.

64%

of you have access to the internet

63%

of you are interested in having Wi-Fi in your home.

55%

of you chose not to respond or informed that no additional charges for services would be acceptable.

To all those who played a role in bringing this valuable insight to life we are truly grateful.

We have been working hard over the summer to combine the findings from this piece of research with other works we have undertaken to assist in redesigning services. We will be writing out to tenants affected by the service review in the coming weeks to provide further information on what the services will look like from April 2022, so look out for these letters arriving soon.

If you wish to read a copy of the Tenant Insight report, you can do so by visiting the News section of Viewpoint's website at viewpoint.org.uk/news or alternatively you can request a print copy of this from your Co-ordinator. Tenants in non-staffed sites can request a printed copy by calling reception on **0131 668 4247**.

If you wish to get in touch with the project team please email at hsreviewproject@viewpoint.org.uk or call **0131 668 0355** during normal business hours.

Pamela & Christopher

Review of the Pet Policy



First of all a big thank you to the 285 tenants who took the time to respond to our review of the pet policy. Your opinions have shaped the changes made during this review.

The policy was approved by the Board of Management, on 16 August 2021, and applies immediately to all pet owners and all visitors to Viewpoint property.

The main themes that emerged from the consultation were as follows:

- Pet ownership is important and should be encouraged to prevent social isolation and promote good mental health
- Make it explicit that cruelty and neglect is the responsibility for all to report
- Dogs should be kept on leads in common areas (internally and externally)
- Dogs should be walked outwith the grounds for toileting purposes
- In most cases one dog or cat was thought to be reasonable and that multiple pets should be in exceptional circumstances
- The policy applies to visitors bringing dogs with them to Viewpoint property as well as tenants

There were some comments that Viewpoint should have a No Pet Policy but we do not feel that this is reasonable as, for many their pet is good company and it is proven that they can be beneficial to good mental health.

The main changes to the policy are as follows:

Dogs are not to be allowed to toilet on Viewpoint Ground

A contentious area has always been about dogs fouling on Viewpoint property and, even if it is lifted, the residue is often left and can cause smells or can be stepped on.

195 respondents felt that dogs should not be allowed to foul any common external area and that dogs should be walked outside of the grounds for toileting purposes. 78 felt that it was reasonable as long as this was cleaned up and 12 gave no response.

One tenant said

"Not at all - how do you clean up runny faeces on grassy areas? People use our green/garden areas to sit, picnic on and allow visitors' babies to crawl/play. So no - not on the lawn - I think no fouling on grass"

As a result the policy has been amended from:

The tenant is responsible for removing and cleaning up dog and cat faeces and other animal excretia; to

Pets must not be allowed to foul in Viewpoint common areas, communal paths, car park areas or grassed areas. If this does happen accidentally, the tenant is responsible for removing and cleaning up dog and other animal excretia immediately. It is recognised that due to the independent nature of some cats, it may not always be possible to clean up their faeces;

Responsible Dog Ownership if Visitors bring their pet to Viewpoint Property

The policy now clearly covers visitors to tenants who bring their pet with them. There were comments about visitors not controlling their pet and letting them do what they wished when on Viewpoint property.

Keeping Dogs on a Lead within Viewpoint Property (internally and externally)

A clause has been added to ensure that dogs are kept on a lead at all

times on Viewpoint property. There were many comments from tenants regarding this - big dogs can jump up on older infirm people and knock them over and smaller dogs can become trip hazards by running around their feet. One tenant said

"Dogs should be kept on a short lead in premises in case a resident trips over them."

Clause has been added to state that:

Dogs must always be accompanied outwith the tenants' own home and kept on a short lead in all Viewpoint common areas, grounds and shared gardens;

A clause has also been added to comply with current legislation,

...dogs must wear a collar and tag. Tenants are required to comply with the conditions of the microchipping of Dogs (Scotland) Regulations 2016 which requires every keeper of a dog that is over the age of eight weeks old to ensure it is microchipped;

Permission for Pets

206 tenants felt that requiring permission to keep a pet was reasonable and that it should be limited to one cat or one dog unless in exceptional circumstances. 62 tenants felt that there should be no limit and 17 did not respond.

In addition, some tenants commented about looking after a pet for someone else and should permission be sought for this.

Permission for pets remains in the policy and details have been added to allow a tenant to appeal the decision if they are refused.

If the tenant objects to our decision, they can appeal in writing to the Housing Team Leader within 14 days of receiving the decision. The decision of the Housing Team Leader will be final and be made in writing within 14 days of receipt of the appeal.

There is also a clause included that if someone is taking on the temporary care of a pet they should request permission in writing:

It is necessary for tenants who intend to care for pets on a temporary basis on someone else's behalf, to request permission in writing to keep the pet stating the length of intended care and the times of day the pet will be cared for at the tenant's property. Where a tenant is required to care for a pet on a temporary basis in an emergency, permission should be sought in the first instance by telephoning the Housing Officer within office hours.

Cruelty and Neglect

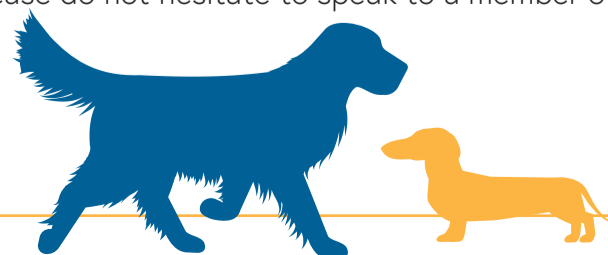
Inclusion of a statement about encouraging responsible pet ownership and ensuring cruelty and neglect are dealt with appropriately and effectively.

196 respondents felt that a clause about cruelty and neglect needed to be included. 86 did not respond and only 3 felt that it was not the responsibility of either the tenant or the staff to report this.

The statement reads as follows:

Where we suspect cruelty, neglect of a pet's welfare, mistreatment or unnecessary suffering of any pet, we will notify the appropriate authorities. Where this is brought to our attention by a third party, they will be advised to report it to the appropriate authorities.

If you have any questions about the new policy and procedure then please do not hesitate to speak to a member of staff.



Policy Consultations and our Tenant Volunteers

In addition to the Pet Policy Review, which we sent out to all tenants, our tenant volunteers have been involved in the development or review of some other policies.

Decant Policy

We sometimes have to find temporary accommodation for a tenant if they are unable to stay in their own home e.g. due to a fire. We did not have a written policy or procedure in place for this. As a result, one of our housing officers drafted a policy and we sent it out to tenant volunteers who had expressed an interest in being involved.

The policy is a statement about recognising that decants are necessary with some possible reasons, along with managing voids and legislation requirements.

A group of staff are working on drafting the procedures and once completed our tenant volunteers will be given the opportunity to discuss and comment on these. One tenant has already reminded us that we need to make sure that the decanted tenant has to make sure their home contents insurance company are aware of a temporary move and of a return to their permanent address.

Tenant Involvement in Recruitment Policy

Our policy on involving tenants in recruitment of staff had been in place since 2018 and was due for review.

Our Tenant Participation and Communications Co-ordinator updated the existing policy, discussed with our HR Manager and then sent out to our tenant volunteers for consultation.

The code of conduct and confidentiality agreement has been expanded on and we have committed to providing training for tenant volunteers in recruitment to be done alongside our staff training, where possible, to allow tenants and staff to get to know one another. In addition, we have identified the actual jobs in Viewpoint where a tenant would be invited to be part of the interview panel.

Registering Tenant Organisations Policy and Procedure

The Tenant Participation and Communications Co-ordinator updated the existing policy and procedure. TPAS were consulted on the draft to ensure that we were following good practice, before it was sent out to our Tenant volunteers interested in performance and to the committees of the Fife Viewpoint Tenants Group, the Tenants Action Group (Lothian) and the VTRG (Viewpoint Tenants and Residents Group) for consultation.

The policy has identified that registered groups need to re-register every three years. This is an opportunity to ensure that the groups still meet the criteria for registration and a formal opportunity to review the relationship between Viewpoint and the group. The policy and procedure now include a complaints process and an appeals process.

Following consultation the Board has approved all three policies.

If you would like to see any of these policies, you can find them on our website at <https://www.viewpoint.org.uk/about-us/publications/>. Alternatively, please speak to a member of staff if you require a paper copy.

Would you like to be a tenant volunteer and be involved in the recruitment of staff, discussing performance, reviewing services or in reviewing our leaflets and other communications?

If so, please contact Heather Jeffrie by phoning or texting: **07554 389 180** or email: tp@viewpoint.org.uk or speak to any member of staff.

VIEWPOINT'S ENGAGEMENT PLAN WITH THE SCOTTISH HOUSING REGULATOR

Every year, like all social landlords, Viewpoint provides a range of information to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

The Regulator uses this information to continuously assess Viewpoint and to understand Viewpoint's performance and risk. The Regulator reviews this information to decide how much it gets involved with Viewpoint. The Regulator's involvement with Viewpoint is set out in an Engagement Plan, which describes why they are engaging with us and what we need to do.

The Engagement Plan for each landlord in Scotland is published on the Scottish Housing Regulator's website. You can read Viewpoint's Engagement Plan at housingregulator.gov.scot/landlord-performance/landlords/viewpoint-housing-association-ltd/engagement-plan-from-31-march-2021-to-31-march-2022



The past year at Craft Café has marked some big changes for the project.

Since our reopening in November 2020, we have been working with the residents of St. Raphael's care home within each unit's lounge, bringing Craft Café into these spaces in the safest way possible. While it is different to working in our usual space, we've been so thrilled to be back - welcoming previous members again, meeting new people, and of course, getting creative! The past months have seen an outpouring of artistic work, and we are honoured to witness and facilitate this process. We have explored many themes including creative mask making, illustrated maps, music and art, botanical illustration, landscape painting, fashion, typography, storytelling and mandalas, just to name a few!

Looking to the months ahead, we are hoping to expand our services again and also eventually return to our Craft Café hub. We are also reflecting on new ways to celebrate the artwork that has been created this year, so keep checking in for more updates!

If you have any questions about Craft Café or would like to get in touch, please feel free to contact Sarah Derron at sderron@impactarts.co.uk or on **07813 340 846**.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

FOR TENANTS ON COMMUNAL HEATING SYSTEMS

The following is important information for tenants who pay a service charge for their heating (and for a small number - hot water) supplied from a communal boiler.

Heat Network (Metering and Billing) Regulations have been in place since 2014 with a recent amendment in November 2020 that came into force in May 2021. These regulations now place statutory duties on Registered Social Landlords who supply heating and hot water from a single plant room.

What is a heat network?

We are required to comply where we charge for the supply of heating, cooling or hot water to an end customer via either of the following two methods –

- **A district heating network**
Two or more buildings with at least two end users.
- **A communal heat network**
A single building, with two or more end users.

The November 2020 changes mean we need to define which of our buildings must have heat meters or heat cost allocators installed. However, the regulations are clear that any self-contained social housing that is communally heated does require to have heat meters or heat allocators.

These regulations mean every tenant has to manage their own energy costs and pay only for the energy they use to heat their home. We have until November 2021 to classify all our buildings that have more than one house heated from a communal boiler and submit the information for classification. By the next deadline of September 2022, we have to ensure that where possible every tenant who is on a heat network can pay for their own energy use.

How will we do this?

By September 2022 we will need to have installed either Heat Interface Units (HIU's) & Heat Meters (HM's) or Heat Allocators (HA's) in every house supplied from a communal boiler.

- Viewpoint will still negotiate with an approved gas supplier to obtain the best unit rates and standing charge and pay the bill on a monthly basis.
- A system will be developed and introduced where tenants then only pay for the energy costs they used to heat their home.
- The payments will come to Viewpoint directly or via a third party organisation appointed by us.

It is important you understand Viewpoint has no option but to go down this route- we cannot avoid it.

However, it is not all bad news as the reasoning behind this is we need to address high-energy use and costs as well as reduce the amount of emissions we release to the atmosphere by running fossil fuel systems. In other words, we all play our part in addressing climate change.

- Research shows that measuring and charging tenants based on their own energy consumption promotes more energy efficient behaviour and can create an average of 20% savings on energy costs.
- Tenants are charged fairly, based on their actual energy consumption.
- Carbon dioxide emissions are lowered.

What happens next?

- We will work with an external consultant to submit the required documentation to correctly classify our buildings.
- We will explore and decide the best option for measuring energy use – i.e. HIU's & HM's or Heat Allocators. Whatever option we decide on will be installed in houses that fall into the correct classification.
- We will update you at each important stage of the process, identify what work is required in your home, and agree dates for the work to be carried out.
- We will engage with external energy consultants to ensure every tenant has access to independent energy advice prior to go live date. This date is to be confirmed but you will be notified of this as we progress this work.

Further updates will be sent to affected tenants on each site as they become available.

In the meantime, if you have urgent queries on this issue please contact us on repairs@viewpoint.org.uk or **0131 668 4247** and choose option 1 when prompted and we will reply to you as soon as possible.



What is a Heat Interface Unit (HIU) & Heat Meter (HM)?

A heat interface unit is installed within each house in a communal boiler system. It incorporates controls and valves, which separate the main feed from the boiler into the property, and splits to serve both heating and hot water when requested by individual thermostats. A Heat Meter is fitted within the HIU and this measures how much heat an individual house uses and the energy cost for that house is calculated from this information.

What is a Heat Cost Allocator (HCA)?

A HCA is a simple retrofit solution for measuring heat consumption per radiator and is fixed to the front of the radiator. It measures the heat used by the radiator and data is remotely collected using battery power radio network. An exact bill for energy use is then calculated for each tenant on a communal system based on the combined heat use for all radiators in their house.

Energy Efficiency & Climate Change

Colin Dumma Energy Project Lead

We are all very aware of climate change and the effect it is having on many aspects of our lives including severe flooding, destructive fires and other weather related disasters.

Closer to home and more personally though it also greatly effects how we manage our energy use and ultimately our levels of domestic comfort and running costs. Viewpoint and our tenants are no different and we all need to join together to manage energy use and cost and try and ensure where possible we reduce the use of fossil fuels which impacts on our environment.

To address this the following actions are amongst many, Viewpoint is developing and encouraging: –

- Replacing existing boilers with highly efficient alternatives where gas is the only option.
- Looking at improving insulation of buildings to retain heat and reduce energy use.
- Exploring and developing the use of renewable energy options such as electric heating and hot water systems, heat pumps and other technologies.
- Following government and climate change guidance to reduce energy use and costs.

- Engaging with market leaders to explore the most efficient equipment available.
- Searching to identify available external funding to assist with the more costly alternative heating systems and thermal upgrades. Unfortunately, as it currently stands there is not a lot available.
- Communicating with independent energy advisory providers to see how we can pass on guidance to our tenants to reduce energy use and therefore costs.
- Clarifying the impact of the Heat Metering & Billing Regulations and where this may affect some of our tenants.
- Working with others and peer groups to consider where pooling resources may assist.
- Jointly addressing inconsistencies and contradictions in legislation and regulations.
- Communicate with our tenants to advise them where we currently stand with heating and hot water upgrades.

Covid-19 has prevented us from moving forward with a lot of our proposals over the past 18 months, but as restrictions ease, we now hope to make some progress with heating and hot water system upgrades and renewals. As we move forward with these proposals we need to develop effective communication with our tenants to make them aware of who will be affected and how.

BT Fibre Optic Broadband Upgrade

Openreach are undertaking a programme of installing fibre optic broadband across the UK and are currently making progress in and around Edinburgh including many of our sites.

The upgrade has been completed to some of our sites and others will follow over the next few months.

What is the process?

Openreach will contact Viewpoint for permission to survey sites based on their programme of works. This permission will be granted unless we have a strong reason for it not to go ahead such as an outbreak of Covid-19. Once the survey is complete Openreach's approved contractor KN Circet will submit Risk Assessments and Method Statements (RAMS) for the work specific to each site, which need to be approved by us before a start date is agreed. Once the start date is agreed, notices will be displayed within the sites to make you aware of the work being undertaken and when it will start. All the work will be carried out in corridors, service cupboards and communal areas. No access is required to any flats so you will not be approached by any of the site personnel. KN Circet engineers will wear face coverings and clean down all surfaces during the installation.

What does this mean for our tenants?

KN Circet will install the fibre optic broadband within mini trunking usually fitted at high level within the corridors etc. A connection box will be left above every flat door. Once the work is complete, BT will carry out a leaflet drop to make you aware high-speed fibre optic broadband is available to your home. However, you are under no obligation to sign up to it and are free to continue with your current broadband provider or switch to any supplier of your choice. Openreach are simply providing you with the option of connecting to their service.

What part does Viewpoint have in this project?

Viewpoint have given permission for this infrastructure to be installed and ensure KN Circet submit approved working practices to ensure our tenants safety. We are not involved in any agreement between BT and tenants who take up the offer of BT fibre optic broadband. It is solely the decision of each tenant whether they sign up to BT or not.

BT will supply further information once the service is live within your building.

New Contractors

An Update from the Compliance Team

The Asset Team have started to work with three new contractors from 1st August 2021 who have each been awarded contracts for an initial three-year period.

These are as follows:

McGill Facilities Management Ltd who will undertake service inspections, repairs, out of hours calls and maintenance of all Warden Call & Door Entry Systems & Automatic Doors within Viewpoint properties. They replace SPIE Scotshield Ltd.

Openview Security Solutions Ltd who will undertake service inspections, repairs, out of hours calls and maintenance of all CCTV systems and equipment within Viewpoint properties. They replace SPIE Scotshield Ltd.

Valley Group Ltd who will undertake all inspections for electrical testing of fixed installations and portable appliances within Viewpoint properties. They replace SS Testing Ltd.

An Update from our Asset Team

The Asset Team have worked tirelessly through lockdown with R3 Repairs, our biggest Repairs and Voids contractor, to build up a good working relationship and shared understanding of our expectations and what we are looking to achieve through our day to day repairs work and turning round empty (Void) properties.

R3 locally employ a large group of skilled multi trade operatives and also have reliable and trusted sub-contractors they can call on if required to back up the service they provide for Viewpoint.

We meet with R3 on a monthly basis to appraise everything from KPI's (Key Performance Indicators) to service improvement and continue to develop systems we share to ensure a robust, reliable and good quality service for our tenants and residents.

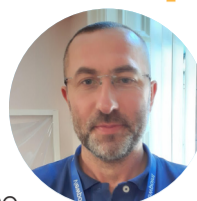
We are currently working with Braisby Roofing to replace roofs on a number of properties in Cluny Gardens and Charterhall Road; this will shortly extend to Melgund Terrace and East Claremont Street with James Breck Roofing.

We also have a number of other VHA properties having detailed roof surveys being carried out to determine works to be progressed prior to the winter.

We are also carefully planning a large contract to install Fire and Smoke Alarms throughout the remainder of our stock. A number of properties had alarms installed prior to COVID restrictions being introduced. Openview SS Ltd are our procured contractor and will shortly be working towards the latest Scottish Government deadline for Fire and Smoke detection in residential properties.

New Staff at Viewpoint

Marek Domogala Mobile Supported Housing Coordinator



Just want to say – 'Hi' to everyone at Viewpoint! I started working as a mobile coordinator in July this year. I have already had many fascinating conversations with our tenants and staff.

Fun Fact: I am a mediocre table tennis player who competes in Edinburgh and Lothians Table Tennis League. My message to all tenants and staff – if you fancy refreshing your table tennis skills or you would like to start playing in a league – please DO GET IN TOUCH!

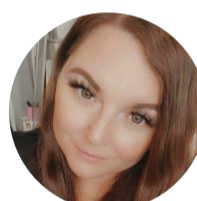
Simon Taylor Procurement & Compliance Team Leader



Simon has been with Viewpoint since March 2020 and took on this new role at the beginning of April 2021. He comes from a Housing background and has worked for both local authorities and Housing Associations in both England and Scotland. Simon has experience across a range of housing services including homelessness, housing strategy, development, repairs, procurement and compliance.

Fun fact: Simon enjoys sailing in his spare time

Michele O'Donnell Mobile enhanced supported housing coordinator



I have been a coordinator with Viewpoint since May 2021, I used to work with Viewpoint in 2019 before I became a mobile housing coordinator, I worked at Croft-an-Righ working as an @Home care assistant. I come from a Health & Social care background where I completed my SVQ3 and I wanted to progress my career within Viewpoint in the housing & support services. Staff and Tenants have all been very welcoming and I am enjoying my work experience with Viewpoint.

Fun fact: My hobbies include photography and baking (I make lovely cupcakes for special occasions and my speciality is cheesecake)

Lynn Te Rito: Health and Safety Advisor



I am delighted to take up the post of Health and Safety Advisor with Viewpoint Housing Association working within the Business Support Team.

I have worked in a Health and Safety role for over ten years. My previous role as Health and Safety Compliance Officer with Castle Rock Edinvar was very similar in many ways to this new Viewpoint role.

My first week with Viewpoint has been very positive and I have been warmly welcomed into the team. I am looking forward to meeting everyone in the coming weeks.

Vicky Machirant Housing Advisor



I have extensive experience in customer service and business administration. I enjoy working in the Housing sector as I like helping people and am passionate about affordable housing. A people person with a friendly, kind approach to everyone, I like being part of a small organisation that provides a more bespoke, personal approach.

Fun Fact: In my spare time you will find me in my garden or at the beach but at home I love to cuddle my beautiful ginger tabby kitten Cookie.

Eleanor Eccles Welfare Rights Officer



I'm coming to Viewpoint Housing after 6 years with the Department for Work and Pensions, and prior to that a background within Local Authority, working as a Welfare Benefits Advisor.

I've recently moved to Fife from the Highlands with my children, and I'm really looking forward to getting to know everyone and also to meeting you in the near future."

Sarah Morrison Compliance Administrator

Prior to working at Viewpoint I worked with the DWP as a decision making Team Leader for 11 years.

I have worked with Viewpoint since December 2019. I joined as an Agency Temp, and then moved onto a permanent contract in November 2020. I have now moved over to be compliance administrator and I am enjoying my time building up my knowledge.

Fun Fact: I have a daughter who keeps me very busy, however my husband definitely adds to that greatly.

Isobel Goodall Receptionist/Assistant



My working life has always been in an office environment starting way way back as an office junior then as a Building Society teller, raising a family, running a family business, working for a charity, Care at Home provider and now part of the Viewpoint family. I have been made so welcome and feel so supported with such friendly helpful colleagues.

Fun Fact: I regularly get an earworm song stuck in my head and it's there for the day!

Staff Retiring from Viewpoint



Elaine Rosie
Welfare Benefits Officer

Elaine was Viewpoint's first Welfare Benefits Officer and started work with us 13 years ago on 1 September 2021. I caught up with Elaine just before she retired on the 9 September 2021.

What did you do before you came to work with Viewpoint?

I worked for many years with the Civil Service, in what is now known as the DWP (Department of Works and Pension). I had a variety of different roles including Team Leader, Training Officer, Advice and Information Officer and working with Disability Benefits. I have been able to use all my skills, knowledge and experience throughout my time at Viewpoint.

What is the best thing about your job?

The benefits system can be quite complex and I love it when a tenant has asked for a review and thinks they are not entitled to any benefits, and it transpires that they are entitled to claim something like attendance allowance or Pension Credit which opens up access to other benefits. In some situations, I have seen tenants double their income. It's great to see tenants not just having to exist but to be able to live a better quality of life.

And the worst thing?

It might seem a bit of a cliché but I don't think there is a worst bit. I suppose the last 18 months of lockdown have not been as good. Not being able to see people has been difficult not just on a personal basis but also helping tenants to identify the correct information to submit with their claim.

What will you miss the most?

Oh, I think the 'chat' with colleagues over morning coffee. I have always enjoyed that.

What are your plans?

Well I suppose I will just have to do morning coffee with my husband – well at the start anyway. I can also look forward to the birth of my first grandchild early next year – that is very exciting. Then there are many other plans: travelling more, not just in the UK but abroad, meeting friends for lunch, yoga, reading, walking and crafting.....not sure if there will be enough time in the day actually!



Margaret Budge
Senior Housing Coordinator

Margaret has worked for Viewpoint for 21 years, starting work on the 20 August 2000. Margaret retired on 15 September 2021 and I managed to have a chat with Margaret about her time at Viewpoint before she left.

What did you do before you came to work with Viewpoint?

I did a little bit of everything, all connected with care and support for various age groups. I worked in care homes, set up a lone parents support group, youth organisation and a crèche. I also worked for a while for TPAS when the organisation was just up and running and for the community council. Coming to Viewpoint was a different string but still within care and support.

What is the best thing about your job?

I am a people person and love being involved with tenants and making a difference. It was a pleasure to be the point of contact to link tenants with services they needed or wanted.

And the worst thing?

Being in front of a computer all day – a regular occurrence during COVID but it was hard not seeing people face to face. As I said before I am a people person.

What will you miss the most?

I'll miss everyone – tenants and colleagues. I came to Viewpoint as it is approachable and tries to provide personal services and I liked being part of that.

What are your plans?

I think I will be a 'lady who does lunch' - for the first few weeks anyway. I also moved house and have lots of plans for the garden and the house and looking forward to putting them into action. I would also like to visit Orkney and visit the Italian Chapel and Skara Brae. And best of all I can spend more time with my children and grandchildren and look forward to my first great grandchild being born early next year

Money Matters

Viewpoint's Welfare Rights, Housing Benefit and Debt Advice Services

An interview with Elaine Rosie

Did you know that our Welfare Rights Officer brought in direct monetary awards for our tenants amounting to £158,153 in 2019/20 and £130,623 in 2020/21?

Did you know that our Welfare Rights Officer can carry out a benefit check and if she finds there is something that you should be claiming will help you make that claim?

Did you know that if you are in debt and struggling to cope with this then you could obtain the independent services of a debt advice worker through Viewpoint?

In addition, did you know that if you are having problems with a housing or council tax benefit claim that we have access to a revenues and benefits officer within the council who can help?

Welfare Benefits

There is no doubt that Elaine Rosie (Welfare Rights Officer) has done a wonderful job and she will be much missed now that she has retired. Viewpoint have recognised the importance of having a Welfare Benefits Officer and the post is now full time, and has been filled by Eleanor Eccles.

Before Elaine left Viewpoint we asked her more about what Viewpoint have done, and are doing in the future in relation to making sure tenants have claimed all the money that they should.

What does a Welfare Benefits Officer do?

The main duties are:

- Making sure tenants claimed everything they were entitled to
- To help tenants make claims for welfare benefits
- Assisting tenants in the appeals process when necessary
- Helping to ensure that housing and council tax benefit are paid appropriately to our tenants
- Referring tenants to someone who can help if you have debt that you are unable to cope with

Elaine said that although these were the main duties it was much more than that. It was about building up trust with people so they were willing to ask for help or to share their personal financial details with her.

Do you think making the job full time is a good idea?

'The benefits system is very complex in some areas and there is a lot of paperwork. By making the role full-time it means that the Welfare Benefits Officer can spend more time doing all of the above tasks for more tenants.'

Housing and Council Tax Benefit

In 2016 Viewpoint entered into a partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council to purchase the services of a Transaction Officer two days per week from the Revenue and Benefit department.

What difference does this partnership mean for tenants, and how did it affect your job?

'It was becoming apparent that I was spending a lot of time dealing with housing benefit suspensions and overpayments through liaison with the Council and this directly affected the time I had to spend on maximising income for our tenants through other benefits.'

We have a Revenues and Benefits Officer assigned to Viewpoint for two days a week, which means continuity for tenants claims. They deal exclusively with Viewpoint's Edinburgh tenants housing benefit and talks to our staff about

- Discuss specific and general housing benefit queries from staff
- Discretionary Housing Benefit payments
- Council Tax benefit queries

Working with the council has ensured backdating claims, revisions, changes of circumstances, discretionary housing payments, overpayments and write offs are all much more quickly dealt with.

However, as this only affects Edinburgh tenants, where the majority of our houses are, I still deal with Fife, Mid Lothian and East Lothian Council but this is manageable.

Having the Revenues and Benefits Officer means that I have been able to spend more time on other things like Attendance Allowance and Pension Credit claims.'

Debt Advice

In January 2021 Viewpoint were part of a successful ARCHIE (Alliance of Registered Co-operatives and Housing Associations Independent in Edinburgh) funding application in securing Scottish Government Communities Recovery funding to fund access to a Debt Advice Officer from CHAI (Community Advice and Help Initiative).

The ARCHIE funding ran from January through to May 2021, with additional funding secured for the rest of the financial year within Viewpoint budget.

How do tenants access the debt advice service?

'Tenants can ask their Housing Officer or Welfare Benefits Officer to see the Debt Advisor, who does not work for Viewpoint.'

The Housing Officer will pass the referral to the Welfare Benefits Officer in the first instance. This is so that a full benefit check can be carried out to make sure tenants have the income they should. This in turns means that the Debt Advisor's job is easier as they know from the start exactly what the tenant's income is.'

CASE STUDIES

Elaine gave us a few examples of how the service works in practice.

CASE STUDY 1

'An 80-year-old tenant made contact after their family encouraged them to do so. I helped the tenant make an Attendance Allowance claim and Pension Credit claim, which were successful, resulting in full housing benefit and council tax benefits being paid. This increased the tenant's income by £241 per week.'

CASE STUDY 2

'A tenant contacted me after they received a letter to say they owed money to the council as too much housing benefit had been paid to them. I contacted the Council's Housing Benefit officer. An input error was discovered and resolved quickly. I also discovered through conversation with the tenant that they should be claiming Attendance Allowance and I helped them make that claim.'

CASE STUDY 3

'A tenant contacted me as they had not heard anything about an Attendance Allowance claim that had been submitted by someone else several months earlier. I made a new claim and followed up on this when it was refused. I requested a mandatory reconsideration, which unfortunately had to be chased several times and involved me helping the tenant establish dates they were in hospital. Finally, an award was made and the tenant received £7,308 in arrears. As Pension Credit was in payment, I then ensured that this was taken into account, as this would increase the money due to the tenant. The tenant received a further £6,500. Finally, I applied for a taxi card for the tenant making it easier for them to get around.'

And the great thing about these three stories is that there are loads more we could tell.....'

The Future of Dementia

In an ideal world, dementia would not have a future. It would be eradicated. How possible is this sort of future just now? The answer is (cautiously) optimistic.

There is a lot of research currently being carried out into dementia – both looking for a cure but also trying to find out why it develops, what causes it?

For many years, dementia research has been the poor relation attracting very little funding compared for example to cancer research - as well as fewer research projects. This is still the case according to the dementia statistics site (www.dementiastatistics.org/statistics-about-research)

1:4*

is the approximate ratio of dementia researchers to cancer researchers.

However, in recent years, there is clear evidence that the dementia research field has grown since 2008. It is hoped that this progress will continue.

And the good news is that a lot of this research is being done in the UK.

12%*

the UK produced 12% of the world's dementia papers from 1980+2013 (13,166 of 109,858) the second most in the world behind the USA.

* Source: www.dementiastatistics.org/statistics-about-research

In Scotland, Edinburgh is one of the world leaders in research into dementia – tucked away near the new ERI in Little France is the University of Edinburgh's Centre for Dementia Prevention (www.edp.ed.ac.uk).

This team of scientists, doctors, psychologists and social scientists has three key aims:

- **Understanding**
To understand the causes of dementias particularly in the early stages, and how lifestyle choices and new medicines can mitigate onset.
- **Diagnosis**
To create a range of tests to assess people at risk and measure degradation of the brain.
- **Empowerment**
To work with the public to improve understanding of dementias and their causes and suggest lifestyle changes that may stop or slow the conditions.

There is lots of evidence to show that your risk of developing dementia can be reduced and that our lifestyle choices affect our risk of developing dementia. This is especially true of activities linked to cardiovascular health, so 'What's good for your heart is good for your head'.

Studies of large groups show that dementia risk is lowest in people who have several healthy behaviours in mid-life – e.g. –

- regular physical exercise
- not smoking
- drinking alcohol only in moderation (if at all)
- maintaining a healthy diet and weight.

So there's lots going on research wise & lots we can do ourselves to help reduce our risk. A future without dementia could certainly be possible. We just need to keep the momentum going.

If you're interested in volunteering to help out in some research why not contact "Join Dementia Research"

You can register online

www.joindementiaresearch.nihr.ac.uk

or give their partner charity

Alzheimer Scotland a call on

0131 650 4340

Climbing Ben Nevis

Why it was worth it

By Alex Edwards, Housing Officer

Like everyone else, during the various lockdowns, and shut ins during 2020 I had gained weight, got de motivated, and schlepped around the house into 2021.

With no idea of what the world would shape up like in the upcoming months, when I saw an advert for Alzheimer's Society looking to challenge people to trek up Ben Nevis, it called out to me. Climbing a mountain was something that I could do. I don't particularly like running unless it's toward something, or away from someone. I get chills thinking about running a marathon, or biking further than Tesco and back.

But mountain climbing, that I could do. I had in my youth, even climbed a mountain. A Munro even, so I felt that Ben Nevis would be something to work on. This was February, the climb was in July, six months to get fit and capable and climb ready, what could be so hard, I thought?

Dementia, and Alzheimer's play a big part in my working life at Viewpoint, but it also affects me close to home, both my grandmothers have it, one passed away a few years ago, and with my other grandmother now in her 90's, the fact that the proceeds of the sponsorship would be going to the Alzheimer's Society was a motivation. Something I HAD to do, I really needed to get to the top.

Ben Nevis is obviously climbed by thousands of people every year. It's not Everest, and it's not an alpine tipped mountain. People have climbed in kilts, climbed naked and even pushed a car up it. That is not to say it is an easy thing to climb. Underestimate these things at your peril. I certainly treated training for it very seriously.

The morning of and the evening before I was anxious. This was the biggest thing I had climbed in my life. I can walk a good distance, and I had trained and prepared quite well by climbing some hills whenever possible. Nothing as near to high as Ben Nevis though. Its 1,345 metres high. That's over 4,000 feet. It starts at sea level, bottom to the very top and it is not a fun experience. Was it worth it?

The day started as pretty warm. I rose for a starting time of 7.30 wanting to get it out of the way as quickly as possible. About 200 other trekkers were climbing that day as well, starting at various times, we walked in groups of 5, packed in a bag were my supplies of scones, crisps, water and flapjacks everything I needed to get all the way to the top. Half an hour of climbing and I was sweating, the heat of the day, and the endless steps to start were hard to get over. I felt it in my legs, stomach and back every step of the trek. A fog moved in and obscured the way for the first half of the journey. Once I reached halfway however, the clouds moved, and the valleys of Glen Nevis were below me. A beautiful sight. Was the view alone worth the trek?

As you get to last quarter of the trek, you zig zag through stone scree, and while the elevation isn't difficult, the constant rising of the land starts wearing you down. It was here that I felt like giving up, I was trudging slowly, Was it really worth it?

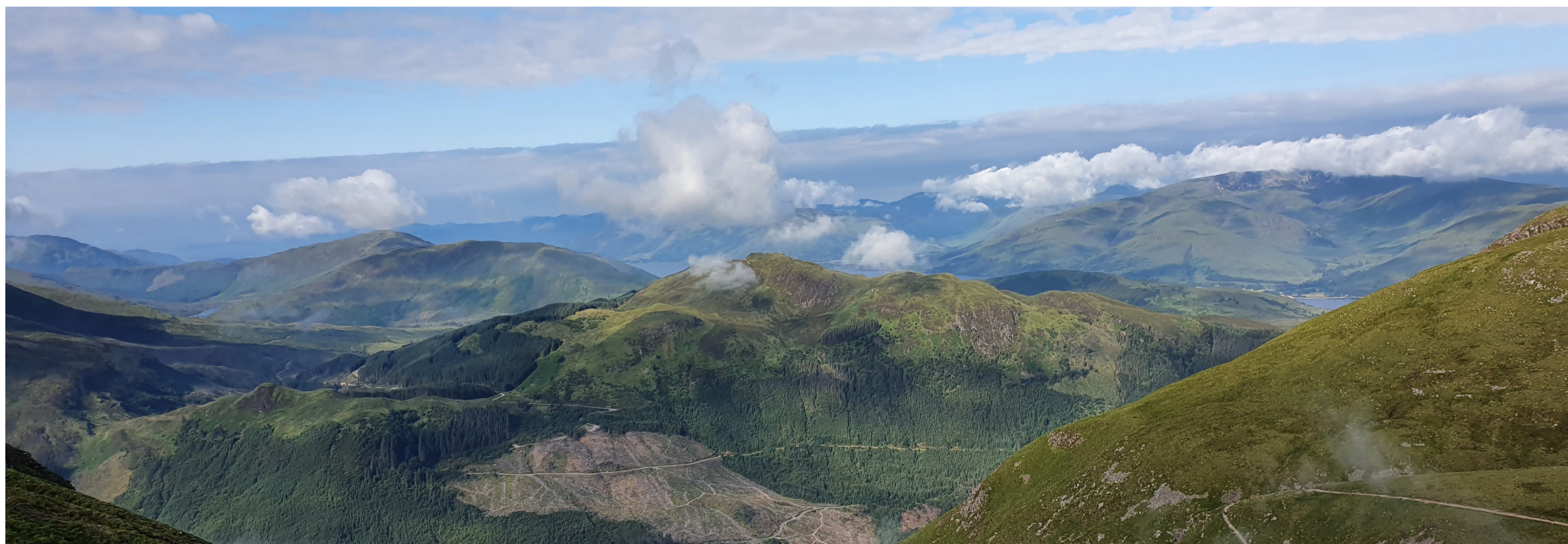
Yes, I told myself. Deep down I knew I had to do it, I had raised so much, and so many people had told me that I could do it; I pulled myself together and kept going. The ascent at the top was emotional. To know that I did it, that I had made it up there I realised it was worth it. A mix of euphoria, and adrenaline. I could say that getting there, the feeling of being there after training for it, it was worth it.

For me the climb down was just as bad as the way up. The steps on the way down, with every gruelling drop of my legs, step after step just after I had spent so much energy climbing to get up there, I was exhausted, but the road down stretched on forever, each and every step I wanted to sit down and not move again.

But I did it.

Why did I do it? Motivation, I got fitter, dropped a stone in weight picked up football on the weekends, and some new friends who encouraged and gave advice. Not just that, I did it because dementia is a cause that hits close to me, at work and personally, and that for every single pound that I raised went to a cause that will impact on our future. I accomplished something this year, and I walked up to the top of the UK. I did it motivated by the money that Viewpoint tenants donated. My target for fundraising was £300. I wasn't sure that during a pandemic, and without the ability to speak directly, I would get to the total. Instead, I raised £432.00 absolutely magnificent. Which combined into the total of everyone else who raised money to a current total of £164,000.

I did it, it hurt, I struggled. But yes, it was worth it, and I would do it again.



Around the Houses

Despite lockdown and all the restrictions you face you have still managed to send me some stories and photographs. I have loved them all'.

Getting Through Lockdown

By James Thomson (Tenant at Mill and Lade Court)

To some people the thought of flying is enough to induce a panic attack. To others – like me – it's a passion we can't get enough of.

I first flew in 1972 from Prestwick to New York City to spend the summer with my sister who had moved there in 1967. It was a PanAm flight, and that was a great airline. It's very sad that it no longer exists.

What an adventure for a 15-year-old boy to be undertaking on his own! Going anywhere on a large airliner would have been exciting enough, but going to NYC was a dream come true.

I remember the aircraft very well – a Boeing 707, which isn't universally loved by the pilots who flew them, but was the backbone of commercial aviation for many years. The US Air Force One of the day was a 707.

First time flyers are all a bit apprehensive. We don't know the routine at all and everything is new and a bit anxious-making. Mind you, security was much less strict back then, so getting to the aircraft was relatively quick and easy.

Once aboard, I was lucky enough to be sitting next to a lovely couple who 'looked after' me during the flight, and of course, the flight attendants, aka trolley dollies, were great.

Seven hours later and I was disembarking in JFK, which was huge and completely bewildering to a flying virgin like me. Once again, very friendly strangers shepherded me through to catch the train into Manhattan. Actually, that's something I've always found – travellers recognise someone who looks a bit lost and do their best to help them. That's why I make sure I do the same nowadays. It's nice to be nice, isn't it...

So my love of aviation was born, and it has not diminished one iota since then. Of course, once you've been bitten by the bug, your thoughts turn from being a mere passenger to actually sitting up front as a pilot, the captain even – at the controls! All those lovely dials, switches and buttons for me to play with, those massively powerful engines roaring away. Lovely!

Unfortunately getting a Private Pilot's Licence – the lowest level of certification – is a very expensive business. When I looked into it about 20 years ago, the minimum cost was about £10,000. Even when I had the money, I couldn't really justify that sort of expenditure for what would never be more than a hobby. The nearest I have ever got to doing the real thing was being in the captain's seat of the only remaining Concorde simulator, which is housed at Brooklands, Surrey. My co-pilot was a former British Airways Concorde training captain, so I was – as you can imagine – in heaven. One of my proudest possessions is the certificate I got for 'Flying at the Controls of Concorde'.

Then as computers became more powerful and affordable, I realised that a reasonably good compromise would be to get into flight simulators. Microsoft started taking them seriously and came out with MS Flight Simulator, which was developed through several versions to the reasonably good FSX. (For computer geeks, they were all 32 bit, which limited their possibilities quite a lot).

In recent years with 64-bit technology running in all modern home computers, powerful simulators have come on the market, and the main one I use now is Laminar Research's A-Plane 11. Microsoft have also recently

got back into the growing market for simulators and produced Flight Simulator 2020.

Some people think that flight simulators are 'games' that are just about jumping into a virtual cockpit, taking off, flying around for a bit, and landing smoothly.

If Only!

They are in fact extremely realistic simulators of all types of aircraft from single props like the Cessna 152 to large jets, helicopters and even spacecraft. Some of them are so good they are used by commercial training companies to train their pilots.

And for me they have got me through this lockdown nightmare. (I won't get into the politics of it; suffice it to say that every time I think of politicians my blood pressure gets dangerously high).

Over the last 12 months I've been flying the world in several aircraft – the Dassault Falcon FA50, the Boeing 737-800, 777 and 787 and, without doubt the love of my life, Concorde. Actually, Concorde has been an ongoing simulator project of mine for years now. She's been available for MS FSX (32 bit) for many years, and it's one of the best-simulated aircraft on the market. Just recently, a 64-bit version has come out for X-Plane and it's very good indeed. But Concorde was a very complex aircraft, which had a crew of 2 pilots and a flight engineer who were fully employed from the time they arrived at the departure airport to the time they left the destination airport. So there's a huge amount for little old me to be doing on my own. No aircraft has ever had so many and such long checklists as she had!

And make no mistake, these simulators require you to do everything professionally, just as real flight crews would so. You have to generate a proper flight plan, check real world weather for the route, prepare the systems of the aircraft properly, get pushed back, taxi, take off, climb to cruise altitude, monitor progress en route, descend, land, taxi to the gate and shut down the aircraft properly, all using the self-same checklists that the real crews used. If you don't do it right you'll find out very quickly! Then there is Air Traffic Control to listen to, and you can even network with people all over the world to make it a joint venture. There is a huge amount of websites, software and tutorials available, most of it free, contributed to fellow 'simmers' out of sheer generosity. Smashing people.

Now, back to the point of this article. That flying my virtual fleet is a very time consuming business has been a godsend when there's been nothing else to do for the last year. I've spent hundreds of hours flying these beautiful, wonderful machines around the world from Heathrow to JFK, Milan to Gatwick, Santiago to Mexico city, and even St Petersburg to Edinburgh!

Frankly, without the wonderful, absorbing world of flight simulators, I think I'd have gone nuts during the last year. Edinburgh is a wonderful city, but with everything shut and the streets devoid of normal life, it's pretty depressing. Thank God for my flight simulators!!

Now, time to prepare for the next flight....chocks away!



Around the Houses (continued)

Concert at Buchan Gardens

By Danny Rankin (Tenant at Buchan Gardens)

As we can't use our hall for anything yet, because of Covid, the committee of the Buchan Gardens Tenants' Group decided to organise a little surprise for our tenants.

We approached our local 'Mary Bradford Singers' to see if they would be able to help us out. (They very kindly gave us a sing song over the Christmas period last year.) This was then organised for a Saturday afternoon when the weather was supposed to be good. We were very lucky and picked an excellent day.

A flyer was passed round all the residents' houses to let them know the time and place of the concert. We are lucky that we have a 'turning circle' just outside our hall. The road was closed off and tables and chairs were placed in the 'turning circle'. These were placed according to government instructions 2 metres apart. Our singer, Lily Mentiplay, arrived with her mother, Susan, and Mary Bradford and set up their equipment outside ready for the concert to begin. 10 of our residents decided to all sit together. This gave them a chance to have a chat after a long time not seeing each other.

Lily then started to sing her collection of songs. These were hits taken from the 40's, 50's and 60's. Lily sang for just over an hour with our residents joining in. We also had a few residents sitting at their own doors listening, with one, Sadie, singing from inside her house while she lay in bed. She sang every song!

Everyone who heard Lily singing had a great time and it brought a wee bit of cheer to this horrible time. We intend to have Lily back again later in the year and hopefully once we get back into our own hall. We all thanked Lily for cheering everyone up with her lovely singing. Also for her mother and Mary for supplying the 'dancing girls'.



Charlie's Bench

By Danny Rankin (Tenant at Buchan Gardens)

Charlie Newton was a resident in Buchan Gardens, staying at number 14 for many years.

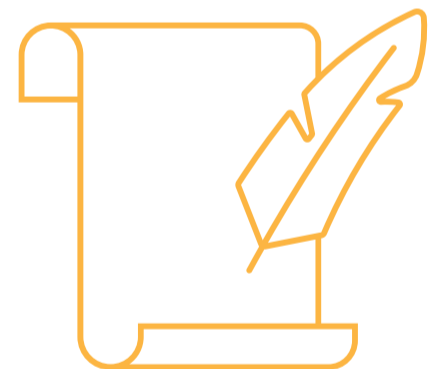
When Charlie left, his son Ron made a donation for us to use as we saw fit. It was decided, at our last committee meeting, that we would buy a bench and dedicate it to Charlie. Because of the Covid outbreak this has taken longer than expected, but now a bench has been purchased and put in place. The inscription reads : 'Charlie's Bench' Charlie Newton, previous tenant at Buchan Gardens, always sat here after a walk round the town.



Good Health To All

by Irena Bunce (Tenant at Balfour House)

Within the pandemic lockdown duration
I send this heartfelt communication.
To wish good health to people everywhere.
A sincere expression to show I care.
In the Power of Good may we find a way
to protect self and others each day.
May priority to hygiene and health
lead to new creative wealth,
and bring peace and security to life,
releasing humanity from disorder and strife.



Desperate Dan

Made by Mr Edward Shiels
(Tenant at Lynedoch House)

We have seen some of Mr Shiels' work before and I am delighted to be able to show you one of his more recent creations – Desperate Dan.

You are a very talented man Mr Shiels, and we look forward to seeing more of your woodwork in the future. As for Desperate Dan - he is so lifelike!



Around the Houses (continued)

Mary Celebrates her 70th Birthday



Mary Tattersall from City Park in St Andrews recently celebrated her 70th Birthday.

Congratulations to Mary from all at Viewpoint.

Haugh Park Coffee Mornings

Ann Lawrie, the Coordinator at Haugh Park, continues to provide a goody bag for her tenants every month. Delightful treats include scones and strawberry tarts. Well done to Ann for continuing to keep the Haugh Park tradition alive all through lockdown.



Gifting Art Space

Bernadette lives at Northwood and finds a great deal of pleasure in her art work, and never more so than over the last 18 months.

Bernadette wanted to give something back to the community and can now be found on a Saturday at the tree stump on The Meadows sharing art with children and adults alike. Bernadette says this is her way of giving back and sharing with others.



Sandra's Walk in the Rain

Sandra loves walking her wee dog, even in the rain.

Whilst walking around Blackford Pond she has taken some photographs, which she is kindly sharing with you. They are both stunning. Thanks Sandra.



An Oasis at Balfour

Last year Helen, one of our tenants at Balfour House, created a beautiful garden on her small balcony.

She has continued to create her balcony and as you can see it is now a tranquil oasis that must be a joy to use. Well done Helen.



Around the Houses (continued)

Fun Times at Marian House?

Marian House held their annual summer fair on Tuesday 10 August 2021. It was originally planned for Saturday the 7 August but they were rained off – well it is Scotland.

The summer fair has been a feature at Marian House for many years for family and friends of residents, and light refreshments are served. This year there was a strawberry theme, so strawberry tarts were the order of the day – yummy!

Normally there is a raffle and tombola, but not this year. It was just good to be able to meet.

During lockdown, the residents have also been keeping fit. Chris Wilson is a choreographer, director and dance tutor who has been facilitating dancing for dementia in association with dance base. Chris has visited Marian House to lead exercise classes on a weekly basis over the last 3 – 4 years. Chris continued to offer his classes using Zoom throughout lockdown, keeping everyone fit and healthy. Chris will be returning in person to Marian House on 1 September 2021.

In addition, if that was not enough there has been some outdoor entertainment at Marian House by Stephen Quinn and Sarah Laing, both professional singers.



Congratulations Esther!

Esther celebrated her 100th birthday at St Raphael's. Congratulations from all the staff at Viewpoint.



Quick Quiz

To test your knowledge on Edinburgh and Fife

1. What are the names of the Omni Centre giraffes?
2. What is the first name of Trainspotting character, Renton?
3. Edinburgh Zoo is home to the only giant pandas in the UK. What are their names?
4. Who is the Patron Saint of Edinburgh?
5. What time does the 1 o'clock gun fire on a Sunday?
6. Edinburgh was the first city in the world to have which emergency service?
7. Which market town was the county town of Fife until Local Government reorganisation in 1974?
8. Which Fife town was the capital city of Scotland for over 500 years?
9. The town of Kirkcaldy is an industrial centre synonymous with the manufacture of which product?
10. Ian Rankin is famous for his Inspector Rebus novels based in Edinburgh, but where was Ian Rankin born?



ANSWERS

1. Martha and Gilbert
2. Mark
3. Tian Tian and Yang Guang
4. St Giles
5. It doesn't
6. Fire Service
7. Cupar
8. Dunfermline
9. Linoleum
10. Cardenden

Craft Café continued

Art Technique to try out:

Continuous Line Drawing

This is a fun and easy drawing technique, great for warming up before further drawing or as a project in itself! Continuous line drawing teaches us to focus on observation and let go of any preconceived notions of how a drawing should look. This is an exercise that anyone can try – we hope you enjoy it!

1. Choose what object/scene you would like to draw and take a seat in front of it. Place some paper and a drawing tool of choice (pencil, pen, marker, charcoal stick, crayon, coloured pencil, etc.) in front of you on a table or board.
2. Start by settling into your space and taking a few deep and mindful breaths before beginning.
3. Take some time simply looking at your object or scene. Try to take in as many details as you can, looking at the colours, shapes, light, shadows, and forms. Observe the positive space (the space within the object) and the negative space (the space around the object). Stay with your deep breathing as you take your time simply observing.
4. Begin your drawing. The idea with this type of drawing is to keep your drawing tool always in contact with the page throughout the whole course of the drawing. This will mean that lines will overlap and cross over each other, but that's ok – this is the idea! Try not to worry too much about the end result and simply enjoy the process, and remember to keep observing your object/scene as much as possible as you draw.
5. You can try as many drawings as you like, maybe testing different materials or working at different speeds. If you want an extra challenge, you can try the process with your non-dominant hand.
6. If you'd like to share your continuous line drawings with us, please take a photo and send to sderron@impactarts.co.uk with "Continuous Line Drawing" in the subject header. We'd love to see your work!

Featured artists to check out:

Every month at Craft Café, we feature the work of an inspiring artist and try out techniques based on their work. Here are some of the artists we have explored – maybe you'd like to check out their work!

- **Andy Warhol and Eduardo Paolozzi** – Pop art
- **Katie Paterson** – Conceptual art
- **Antoni Gaudi** – Art Nouveau architecture and mosaic art
- **Bob Ross** – Inspiring art through teaching
- **Alexander Calder** – Continuous line drawing and sculpture
- **Mary Delany** – Botanical illustration with collage

Some Great Creative Resources:

- **Luminate@Home** – A great resource of free instruction videos for different creative activities. www.luminatescotland.org/project/luminatehome
- **Interactive Exhibits at MoMA**
Explore famous works of art with audio captions. www.moma.org/audio
- **Chatty Wednesdays with Arts4Dementia**
Online social and creative sessions for those living with early stage dementia and their carers. www.arts4dementia.org.uk/join-chatty-wednesdays

Joy In Later Years

An Update from Jean Gray, Chief Executive

Further to the long and consultative approach taken on trying to agree a new strapline for Viewpoint we have found that the outcome to this whole exercise has brought some really negative feedback as well as a majority stating that this is a waste of money and none of the options really represented the tenants and residents views.

Bearing in mind at the beginning of this we asked all staff and tenants/residents to make suggestions and then had a panel with tenant and staff representatives from housing and care to be part of the shortlisting, I think we have been very inclusive in our approach.

Due to the pandemic, the time that this has taken has not helped and the momentum has been overtaken by frustrations. This whole exercise came about as we considered tenant feedback regarding the 'later years' part of the current strapline at the last Tenants' conference.

As CEO, I will be pragmatic in what we now do in relation to the tenants, residents and the organisation. Value for money is important and so going ahead with a new strapline and rebranding at this time with little backing from those that matter most, our customers, seems a waste of money.

I want to thank everyone involved especially Heather, our Tenant Participation and Communications Co-ordinator, who has tried continuously to get people to participate.

In the meantime, we did promise someone would get the opportunity to donate £100 to their favourite charity and the winner is Marion Marshall from Old Farm Court who suggested 'Safe, Secure and Comfortable'.

How to make a complaint or give us a compliment

You can make a complaint or give us a compliment by speaking to any member of our staff, by telephone, in writing, by email or via our complaints and compliments forms on our website..

It is easier for us to address complaints if you make them quickly, which allows us to deal with them and to prevent the situation worsening or anyone else experiencing the same issues.

When complaining, please tell us:

- Your full name, address and contact details
- As much as you can about the complaint
- What has gone wrong
- What you think we need to do to sort this for you

Contact Details for Complaints and Compliments



Speak to us

Speak in person to any member of staff



Telephone us

0131 668 4247



Use our online form

www.viewpoint.org.uk/make-a-complaint



E-mail us

feedback@viewpoint.org.uk



Write to us

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

Draught Excluder Giveaway

We have received a supply of draught excluders through our partnership working with the ARCHIE housing group, which is made up of five Registered Social Landlords, including Viewpoint. The draught excluders come with the relevant fire safety labels and come in the variety of colours you can see from the photo; pink, green, turquoise, velvet pink, cream and red.

We are giving these away to tenants who feel they would be able to make use of them to keep their home cosy by laying them along the bottom of your doors as shown in the photo.

To enter, all you need to do is tell how many colours are in the well-known song, "I Can Sign a Rainbow"?

Send your answer along with your name and address by text or leaving a phone message to Heather on **07554 389 180** and we will contact you to arrange delivery. Be quick now cos it is first come first served!

Good luck!



Newspoint's editorial team hope you have enjoyed reading Spring Newspoint.

What would you like to see in the next issue of Newspoint? If you have a story, or if there is something you would like to see in Newspoint you can email us at Newspoint@viewpoint.org.uk, write to us at Viewpoint Housing Association's offices or telephone

Heather (Tenant Participation and Communications Co-ordinator) on **07554 389 180**.

Editorial Team: Anne, Yvonne, Melody, Grace and Heather