



## 150 New Homes for Dumbarton at the Harbour!

**Dunbritton in partnership with West Dunbartonshire Council were delighted to host the formal opening ceremony for Dumbarton Harbour on Wednesday 22 June 2022.**

This new development of affordable homes for rent was completed in March 2021, and all 150 properties have been let. The development comprises a mix of family homes, supported housing, adapted properties, and flats.

A project like this would not have been possible without real vision and partnership working with major financial support. Therefore, we would like to take this

opportunity to thank:

- Scottish Government
- The Bank of Scotland
- The National Lottery

The total cost of the development was £22 million.

The opening event was well-attended by tenants, staff, and all the other contractors/agencies involved in the project.

**Cabinet Secretary Shona Robison said:**

"I was delighted to open the Dumbarton Harbour development. We want to ensure everyone has a warm, safe, affordable

home that meets their needs. It is great to see the outcome of the strong collaborative partnership working between all the partners which has made this transformative regeneration possible. We are proud of delivering 111,750 affordable homes since 2007 with over 78,000 for social rent. Progress has started towards our next ambitious target of delivering 110,000 affordable homes by 2032, of which 70% will be for social rent and 10% in remote, rural, and island communities."

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# 150 New Homes for Dumbarton at the Harbour (continued)

## **Dunbritton's Chief Executive, Allan**

**Murphy commented:** "The development has not been without its challenges, with construction stalled due to the 2020 Covid outbreak, however, it encapsulates Dunbritton's 'together we can' strapline. The Association and its partners worked closely together to overcome such adversaries and to deliver a high-quality development for its customers, and I am very proud of the team at Dunbritton. We have shown a commitment to all our customers in seeing this ambitious project through to completion."

## **Sephton MacQuire, Chair of the Board**

**at Dunbritton detailed:** "This development encapsulates Dunbritton's commitment to providing high-quality social housing within West Dunbartonshire. I wish to thank both the Scottish Government and the Bank of Scotland for their financial support and assistance with financing the project. We have shown a long-term commitment to regenerate this unused and abandoned area of the town, turning it into a place of high demand for those in housing need."

## **Grahame Andrew, relationship director**

**at Bank of Scotland, said:** "The new development at Dumbarton Harbour has provided locals with a range of sustainable properties at affordable rents. At Bank of Scotland, we are always eager to help drive positive change across the country and we're proud to have been able to support Dunbritton Housing Association. Using our funding the organisation is helping to transform a previously derelict part of Dumbarton into a thriving space that we're sure the new tenants will enjoy."



## Customer Interactions with Staff

We at Dunbritton pride ourselves with regard to the great relationships that we have with our customers. The vast majority of our customers are happy with how we are performing as an Association and they find that any issues that they may have, be it repairs, neighbourhood issues, or rent account management, are quickly and efficiently addressed by the Association.

We are however aware that people's homes can be a very emotive issue. People facing the challenge of a serious repair or struggling financially may not be in a great place, and we look to provide extra support and empathy when we are helping customers facing these challenges.

This said we are also aware that we are responsible for

managing the happiness of our workforce. We take a strong line when we hear that staff members are suffering abuse. We believe that everyone has the right to come to work and not face threatening behaviour. Sadly, we have recently been required to put limitations on the interactions we are having with some customers and in a few incidents we have passed this to the police.

Please be aware that all of our staff are here to help you. We will support you through difficult situations. But please ensure to afford us the same respect.

Threatening behaviour or violence towards staff members or contractors may see us being required to reduce your services and could, ultimately result in us ending your tenancy.



# Annual General Meeting (AGM)

**Wed. 21st September  
2022 at 6.00 pm  
The Cruin,  
Loch Lomond,  
G83 8RB**

**We are delighted to announce, that we shall again be hosting the Annual General Meeting in person, and this will be at The Cruin. We will also have facilities for virtual attendance, so members can join via Zoom. This year's AGM will be a special one for Dunbritton as we are celebrating our 30<sup>th</sup> year, to commemorate this we shall be handing out corporate gifts to members that attend and there will be welcome drinks and a buffet on the night.**

The AGM is a formal meeting where members of the Association are given a detailed overview of the past year, including an update from the Chair, the Association's auditors detail our financial position and the Chief Executive Officer highlights how we have performed across our key targets.

Members of the Association will receive a formal invite nearer the time detailing how to reach the venue and also how to attend virtually. It is important to us that everyone who can attend is able to do so, so we are happy to provide IT assistance or transport for those that may struggle to attend.

During each AGM, the Board is elected for the coming year. The Board is made

up of volunteers who work closely with the Management Team to agree on the Association's long-term strategy and to monitor how we perform against our targets. Board Members give their time freely, and without them, the Association could not operate.

If any matters require to be voted upon, the Members of the Association will be able to do so at the AGM.

The cost of becoming a lifetime member of the Association is £1 and with this, the benefits include being entitled to:

- Attend the AGM and vote on important matters.
- Apply to become a Board Member and influence how the Association is run.

If you would like to know more about becoming a member, please contact the Corporate Services Team on **01389 761 486**, option 4, or email: [admin@dunbritton.org.uk](mailto:admin@dunbritton.org.uk)

Each year, one of the highlights of the AGM is the prize draw, and we expect to again be offering some great prizes in our raffle.



## BOARD

Sephton Patrick MacQuire	Chair
Alistair Tuach	Vice-Chair
Sonja Aitken	Member
Gary Mulvaney	Co-Optee
George Morrison	Member
Julie Smillie	Member
Elizabeth McCurdy	Member
Chris Chalk	Member
Fiona Craig	Member
Andrew Cameron	Member

## Near Me for Housing Services

**Dunbritton Housing Association has signed up to a new digital service Near Me, a free video appointment service to communicate with our tenants and customers using devices such as mobile phones, tablets, iPads, and computers with a webcam. This service will allow a virtual appointment to meet to discuss housing matters, such as rent arrears, neighbour disputes, and applications.**

Near Me was created by the NHS originally to aid doctors, nurses, and GPs to meet patients during the covid pandemic to provide help and support. The NHS seen the benefit of virtual appointments and have partnered up with the social housing sector to introduce this service in organisations.

Many organisations including local authorities and housing associations across Scotland are using Near Me and seeing great benefits. Due to our geographical location, it takes up a lot of your and staffs time travelling to appointments, the Near Me tool prevents travel time, costs and enables you to have a longer appointment to resolve any issues.

The service can make communication and exchanges between staff and tenants more personal than over the telephone, which is

great if you are feeling vulnerable or if there is a sensitive issue to discuss.

Becoming more digital will bring several advantages to Dunbritton the main feature increasing interactions with our tenants and increasing our services and support to sustain their tenancies, for them to feel heard and part of the organisation.

If you wish to arrange an appointment using Near Me, please contact us on 01389 761486 and choose option 2 or email [housingmanagement@dunbritton.org.uk](mailto:housingmanagement@dunbritton.org.uk) and a staff member from the housing team will arrange an appointment and send you the details either via text or email to join the call on the agreed date and time.



# Annual Garden Competition and Good Neighbour Award 2022

YOUR CHANCE TO  
**WIN £50!**

## Garden Competition

Summer is here again, and with it, the chance to get back into the garden!

We love the effort our tenants put into keeping their gardens and neighbourhoods looking their best.

If you have a neighbour that keeps a stunning garden, why not nominate them for our annual garden competition? You can do this by contacting your Housing Officer, by e-mail at [admin@dunbritton.org.uk](mailto:admin@dunbritton.org.uk) or by giving us a call on 01389 761 486 and selecting option 2.



## Good Neighbour

We appreciate that some of our tenants go above and beyond to help out within their community. This might be through helping a neighbour with shopping, cutting their grass, or generally just looking out for someone less fortunate than themselves.

We would love to know who your local hero has been.

If you would like to nominate a neighbour for our Good Neighbour Award, you can also do this by contacting us, again, by e-mail at [admin@dunbritton.org.uk](mailto:admin@dunbritton.org.uk) or by giving us a call on 01389 761 486 and selecting option 2.

The winners in each category will receive a £50.00 gift card of their choice which will be presented at our Annual General Meeting which will be held on 21 September 2022.





# Annual Complaints Performance Report

Dunbritton Housing Association is committed to providing high-quality customer service. We value feedback (negative or positive) as this helps us to ensure that we are providing a service that meets the needs of our customers. If you are unhappy about any aspect of our service, please contact a member of staff who will be happy to assist, a copy of our Complaints Handling Procedure can be found on our website or on request from the office.

Complaints that can be resolved at the first point of contact are called stage one complaints; more complicated complaints that require investigation are defined as stage two. Last year we received 42 complaints, of which 14 were upheld. Where a complaint is upheld, the relevant manager will look at the complaint and ensure that lessons are learnt from this. The details of all complaints are also reported to the Board on a quarterly basis.

We responded to 100% of these complaints within the agreed timescales of five working days for stage one, and twenty working days for stage two.

	1st stage	2nd stage
Complaints received in year	29	12
Average time to resolve	2.48 days	4.9 days
Upheld	9	5
Percent upheld	31.03%	41.67%

We received some complaints with regards to repairs, where the repair was not completed due to parts not being able to be sourced by our contractors. We have discussed this with our repairs contractor and asked that they look to keep a stock of common parts to allow repairs to be conducted at the first contact, however, we understand that there is a current shortage of materials, and this may not always be possible.

We also received complaints with regards to close cleaning. Whilst Housing Officers carry out regular inspections, tenant feedback is essential to provide us with information on the quality of this work and we want to thank all the tenants that have contacted us to detail when this has not been done satisfactorily. Following this feedback, we have appointed a new company to carry out our close cleaning contract, improving the service.

We have received some complaints with regards to repairs being delayed or contractors being late on site. We have apologised to our tenants for these delays as we appreciate how frustrating it can be waiting for a contractor. Covid-19 has provided challenges for the repair industry, including sizeable backlogs and this has had a knock-on effect on the service.

If you have any ideas as to how we can improve our service, why not join our Scrutiny Panel? To find out more please e-mail [admin@dunbritton.org.uk](mailto:admin@dunbritton.org.uk) or give us a call on 01389 761 486, selecting option 2.

## You Said, We Did

**You said** 'The contractor failed to attend the scheduled appointment'

**We did** We investigated this matter with our contractor, although it was confirmed that the contractor had attended the area, the contractor may have gone to the wrong door as they did not leave a 'non-access card.' We have asked all engineers to leave these in future. We apologised to the tenant and rearranged the appointment for a suitable time to try to accommodate the tenant's access requests.

**You said** 'This is the second week the close has not been cleaned'

**We did** We investigated this matter and liaised with both the tenant and the contractor to ensure works going forward were completed to a higher standard. We understand the importance of ensuring that the contractors are held accountable when works are not completed to a satisfactory standard.

# WHAT IS UNIVERSAL CREDIT?



Universal Credit has replaced these benefits for most people:

- Housing Benefit
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Income Support

You might be able to get Universal Credit if you're not working or you're on a low income.

To check your eligibility visit - [www.gov.uk/universal-credit/eligibility](http://www.gov.uk/universal-credit/eligibility)

**When you are making a claim for UC, it is important to contact us so that we are aware of your circumstances and provide you with advice and assistance.**

## How do I make a claim?

All Universal Credit claims are done online at [www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit](http://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit). Communication with Universal Credit is either through your online Journal or by phone; you will not receive any award letters or notices by post. You must check your online "To do list" regularly. Your first payment will be 5 weeks from the date of your claim, but you can request an advance of up to one month, which is recovered over a period of time.

## How much will I receive?

Your claim is made up of elements. These include your personal allowance, housing element, child element(s) and other elements related to your circumstances. You may have deductions from your award for any debts due such as for advances, rent arrears etc. The amount remaining will be your payment.

The Child Element is limited to two children unless your third and subsequent children were born before 6 April 2017.

## How and when will Universal Credit be paid?

Universal Credit is paid monthly. The date of your payment depends on when you made your claim but should be the same each month. Your payment is made to your nominated bank account.

## What about my rent?

Your rent is included as a Housing Element in your claim and will by default be paid to you. When entering your housing costs in your claim remember to enter the rent amount. It is your responsibility to pass the rent on to your landlord. You can request your rent is paid to your landlord directly by requesting this through your Journal. DWP do not pay your landlord at the same time they pay you so your rent account may be in arrears awaiting the benefit payment.

## Anything else I need to know about?

If you don't have internet access you can ask for assistance from the Job Centre, Libraries or Citizens Advice Offices.

You need to supply quite a lot of information when you make your claim, this should be gathered beforehand.

You can elect to have your payment twice per month if you have difficulty budgeting, this is requested through your Journal. You can get independent advice on budgeting from the Money Advice Service.

You must comply with your work commitments or you may face a sanction on your claim. Monitor your to do list regularly and update UC and the Job Centre if you cannot attend an appointment.

Universal Credit does not cover Council Tax Reduction (previously Council Tax Benefit), you still need to claim this yourself from your local Council.

You may have a reduction on your Housing Element if you have an extra room (Bedroom Tax). If so, you still need to claim this yourself from your local Council, it may be possible to make an application for a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP), speak to your Housing Officer about this.

If you are having difficulty with your online claim you can speak to the Universal Credit Service Centre on the phone: **0800 328 5644**.

If you would like any help or advice with Universal Credit, or any other benefits, please contact by calling **01389 761486** or by emailing [admin@dunbritton.org.uk](mailto:admin@dunbritton.org.uk)

## Useful Links;

**DWP** - [gov.uk/universal-credit](http://gov.uk/universal-credit)

**Working 4 U** - <https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/jobs-and-training/working4u/get-in-touch/>

You can also access the **benefit calculator** online at <http://www.entitledto.co.uk> where you can check to see if you may be entitled to any benefit.

You can also access universal credit and apply online at: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit>.

# Ways to Pay Your Rent

Rent is due monthly in advance. You can pay your rent and/or arrears in whichever of the following ways suits you best:

- Direct Debit
- Credit or Debit cards by phoning or in-person
- Bank Standing Order
- Housing Benefit direct payments
- Universal Credit direct payments
- Deductions from your passported benefit in respect of rent arrears.

The easiest and preferred way of paying your rent, if you have a current bank or building society account, is by Direct Debit. Rent is due on the 1st of each month, payable in advance by you on or before the first day of each rental period. There may be occasions when we would accept payment on another date that may suit your needs. Any change to payment dates should be first discussed with your Housing Officer.

If you want to set up a Direct Debit please contact our office on **01389 761 486** and select option 3 where a member of the Finance Team will be able to assist you.

If you prefer you can still pay your rent by using your Debit or Credit card, please note the processing time for transactions is **3 working days** – please ensure your payment is made 3 days before the rent due date.

If you require any further information, please call **01389 761486** and select option 2 and ask for your Housing Officer.



## Dunbritton's Tenant Scrutiny Group: Why you should get involved...

**Tenant scrutiny is about tenants being actively involved in reviewing how housing services are being delivered, and even more importantly, how they can be improved.**

Tenants of housing associations and councils across Scotland have been part of scrutiny groups for many years now, leading to improved housing services, policies, and procedures. At Dunbritton, the

scrutiny group is looking for new members to get involved, following a hiatus during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

We would love to see more tenants join the group to review how Dunbritton's services are working, how satisfied tenants are, and to give their views on how Dunbritton could improve.

Meetings are once a month for a couple

of hours, and options on how to join in the activities can be developed to suit you. If you would like to find out more and get involved, please contact the Housing Team on **01389 761 486**, selecting **option 2**.

This is a fantastic opportunity to meet fellow tenants, Dunbritton staff and the Tenant Information Service and to share your views and ideas. So, go on, why not give it a go?

## Equalities Questionnaire

**The Scottish Housing Regulator has required that we collect information on the protected characteristics of all of our customers. This requires that we contact our tenants and carry out a questionnaire. We are aware that this will include asking personal questions.**

We will look to protect all tenants' privacy through

carrying out this questionnaire anonymously and by using an external contractor to undertake the questionnaire. None of the information collected will allow for the identification of any individual. We shall use this information to help shape our services going forward and to ensure equality of access to all our services. Please be on the lookout for a text or e-mail link to this survey.



# Community Support Fund



There is more to Dunbritton than bricks and mortar, we are committed to improving the communities in which we have housing. The Dunbritton Board oversee our Community Support Fund which provides grants to local groups that are improving the communities.

So far this year the Community Support Fund has provided grants to:

Garelochhead RDA,

Haldane 2008's,

Dumbarton united 2015's,

and Helensburgh and Lomond Foodbank.





Garelochhead Riding for the Disabled Association provides riding opportunities for disabled children and adults. When their horse, Ralph, required veterinary work, we were happy to provide them with a grant to help cover these costs and to get Ralph back to his day job.

We appreciate the importance that sport provides in developing and looking after the health of young people in our community, so we were delighted to be able to provide grants for equipment to both the Haldane and Dumbarton youth football teams.

In these challenging financial times, we are aware of the essential work undertaken by the local foodbanks, and we are happy to once again link in with the Helensburgh foodbank to support the essential service they are offering. The Foodbank is located at the Helensburgh Community Hub, (former Red Cross Hall) on 116 East Princes Street, Helensburgh, G84 7DQ. Opening times are Monday, 10 am – 12 noon and Thursday, 3 pm till 8 pm. No referrals are required and people requiring assistance are welcome to drop in.



If you are part of a local community organisation and would like to know more about Dunbritton's Community Support Fund, please contact Daniel Wilson, Corporate Services Manager, at [dwilson@dunbritton.org.uk](mailto:dwilson@dunbritton.org.uk).



# Planned works update

Following the interruption to our major works programme due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we are now back on track, and continue to carry out improvements to our properties.

## Kitchen upgrades

Following the completion of phase 1 of our kitchen replacement programme, we moved to phase 2, which included properties at Peters Avenue, Dumbain Road, and McGregor Avenue.

Our tenants had the opportunity to pick from a choice of three Magnet kitchens: a white gloss finish, a cashmere finish, or a cream shaker style, each with contrasting splashbacks and worktops.

The Association undertook post-inspections of these works, which detailed that this was carried out to a high standard and further satisfaction surveys produced positive feedback from tenants.



## Lift Upgrade

In accordance with our planned maintenance programme, we engaged Classic Lifts Ltd to carry out an upgrade to the lift at 58 John Street. The work was completed successfully, and on time, and the lift is now operating efficiently.

## Electrical Upgrade

We engaged Ledgerwood Electrical Ltd to carry out an electrical upgrade to our properties at Churchill. 80 of the 122 houses have now been rewired and the contract will be completed this year.

If you stay within Churchill and have yet to allow access for the rewire, please contact the Association to arrange this on 01389 761 486, selecting option 1.

## Grounds Maintenance

Grass cutting and strimming is carried out fortnightly over the season. There will be fourteen to seventeen grass cuts per season.

The permeable paving blocks and walkways are litter picked, swept and weeds removed, and a weed killer is applied to keep things under control.

Our Grounds Maintenance contractors are working on the shrub beds and hard landscaping this month, turning over the soil and edging up the shrub beds.

## Communal Internal Painting

After consultation with our tenants at 12 East Montrose Street, we engaged Bell Decorating to undertake internal painting works at this location following consultation. The paint colour was decided by a majority of residents.

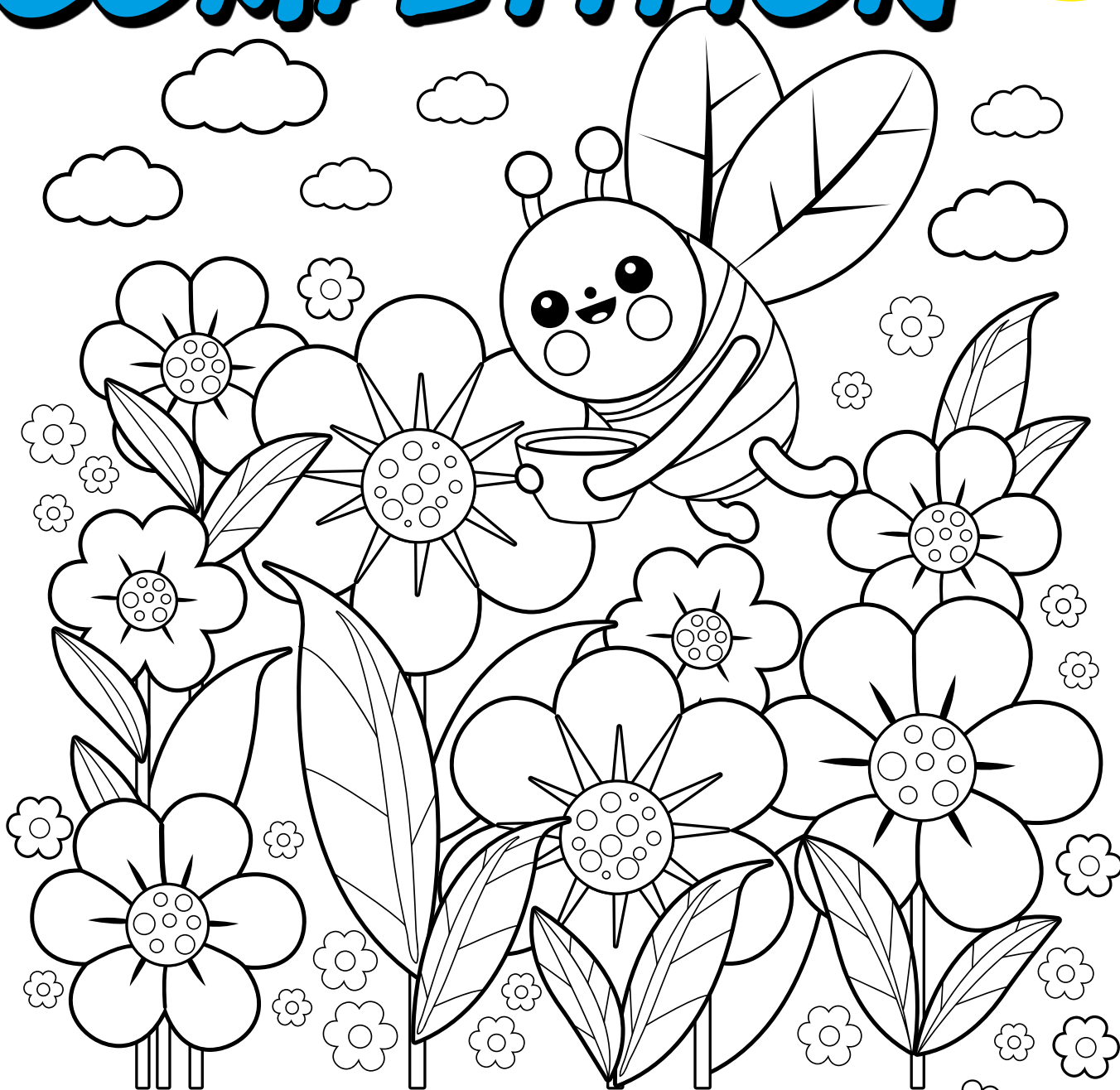
Painting took place over the four floors of the block, including the stairwells and the front entrance. The standard of work was excellent, and the tenants were delighted with the end results.





# COLOURING COMPETITION

FOR  
AGES  
3-12  
YEARS



For the chance to win £10, please enter your details and return by post to  
Dunbritton Housing Association, 1 Hatters Lane, Dumbarton, G82 1AW, or by  
e-mail at [admin@dunbritton.org.uk](mailto:admin@dunbritton.org.uk)

Name .....

Age .....

Address .....

Telephone .....

## GEMMA STEPS UP

We are delighted to advise that Kirsty McGlashan, Housing Officer, will soon be starting her maternity leave.

Kirsty has been with Dunbritton for the last ten years and is currently one of two Housing Officers that manage the Lochside and Dumbarton area. We eagerly anticipate meeting the newest member of the McGlashan family.

In Kirsty's absence, Gemma Connell will be stepping up from Housing Services Assistant to manage Kirsty's patch. Gemma has a wealth of housing experience and can't wait to take on the new challenge of working on-site and getting to know our tenants on their doorsteps.

Gemma will be working alongside Lindsey Reid, and these two Housing Officers will look to ensure that we continue to provide the same great service across this patch.

If you live in Lochgoilhead, Arrochar, Kilcreggan, Rosneath, Garelochhead, Rhu, Gartocharn, Cardross or Dumbarton, your Housing Officer's contact details are as follows:

Monday – Thursday, Lindsey Reid – 01389 310 892 or 07976 708 077

Tuesday – Friday, Gemma Connell – 01389 310 908 or 07849 830 003



## UPDATING YOUR HOUSEHOLD DETAILS

It is important that we have your most up to date details. This allows us to efficiently keep in contact with you and to reduce postage costs.

If you have changed contact number, or have a new e-mail address, please let us know by either speaking with your Housing Officer or calling the office on 01389 761 486 option 2.

If your household composition changes, to ensure you do not lose any of your rights to assignation or succession, please ensure that you contact us to make us aware. If you wish somebody to move into your property, you are required to contact us to seek permission.

It is particularly important that we have your e-mail address, as future survey's will be conducted in this format. Sending e-mails allows us to save on paper and postage, which is both better for the environment and helps reduce the Association's costs.

We appreciate that your personal information is important, and we will ensure that all details collected are managed in line with our policies and the General Data Protection Regulation.

## “Homes of the Future” competition winner!

We would like to thank all the pupils at the Vale of Leven Academy who entered our “Homes of the future” competition. We are delighted to announce the winner of the competition was Logan Flynn, congratulations Logan!

Aleeza Haider, Jack Mullen and Logan joined us in celebrating the opening of our Dumbarton Harbour development in June and had the opportunity to meet with the Housing Minister.

When we caught up with the pupils, they told us they are hoping to pursue a future career in architecture and design and can envision a future within the property and construction sector. We are happy to have inspired so much enthusiasm and wish them all the best for the future!



Having difficulty reading this? Our newsletter can be made available on talking book or as a text only large print version. Please contact us if you would like to be added to our list for either of these, for this and all future newsletters.



Dunbritton Housing Association Ltd, 1 Hatters Lane, Dumbarton, G82 1AW

Serving the Communities of Helensburgh & Lomond, Dumbarton and Vale of Leven since 1992

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**Opening Hours:** Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday: 9am – 5pm

Wednesday: 9am – 12.30pm (closed in the afternoon for staff training)

