



in your neighbourhood

Winter 2013

BIRNESS DRIVE

Welcome to the latest edition of the GoWell newsletter for Birness Drive...

We send two newsletters each year to keep you updated on what's been happening in GoWell and to let you know what residents have been telling us in our surveys. If you're a bit unsure of what GoWell is, the box to the right describes briefly what we are about. We are interested in how people are affected by housing or neighbourhood improvements and whether these changes are making a difference to health, wellbeing and community life.

In this issue we have highlighted some of the responses to our questions about homes and neighbourhoods. As you will see there are some really positive findings relating to how people feel about their homes and their neighbourhoods. Almost all the participants who took part in our most recent survey said they were happy with their home and various aspects of the neighbourhood. What's more, these percentages have increased over time, indicating that the quality of your homes and neighbourhood appears to be improving. However, in the current difficult economic climate where budgets are being cut and there may be less money to spend on housing and neighbourhood improvements and maintenance, it will be difficult but crucial to maintain these high levels of satisfaction.

Members of the community may also be affected by a reduction in income due to the welfare reforms and we have included in this newsletter some of the survey responses to our questions about affordability difficulties. We know that finding it difficult to pay bills and being in debt can impact on mental health and wellbeing. On the back page you will find contact details for organisations that can provide information and help.

We hope you find this newsletter of interest. As always, we would welcome any thoughts or comments you may have on it. You can find our contact details on the back page.



GoWell is a ten-year research and learning programme that aims to find out from local people what they think of the efforts to improve their area and if this has an impact on their health and wellbeing. We have now completed two surveys in Birness Drive, in 2008 and 2011, with another one planned for 2015. From these surveys, we have built up a picture of what and how changes are taking place in your community; whether things have got better or worse; and what changes are important to residents.

We share and discuss these findings with a range of organisations that plan and deliver services in your area and wider, including housing associations, the local health board, Glasgow City Council and the Scottish Government. The findings are being used to help shape and improve services and regeneration efforts both now and in the future.





Overall satisfaction with home

In 2011, 94% of residents were satisfied or very satisfied with their home. This has increased since 2008.

Overall satisfaction with home	2008	2011
Satisfied/very satisfied	86%	94%

Overall condition of home

In 2011, 99% of residents were satisfied or very satisfied with the overall condition of their home. This has increased since 2008.

Overall condition of the home	2008	2011
Satisfied/very satisfied	90%	99%



Housing improvements

In **Birness Drive**, 84% of respondents said they had received some form of improvement works since 2008, and the majority of these improvements had been in the form of a new kitchen and / or bathroom.



Main types of home improvements	Bathroom / shower / toilet	Kitchen	Rewiring / electrical repairs
% received	82%	80%	59%

Of these residents, 94% were either very or fairly satisfied with these improvements.



Attractiveness of neighbourhood environment

82% of people thought that the attractiveness of the neighbourhood was very or fairly good in 2011. This was an increase from 67% in 2008.

Attractiveness of neighbourhood environment	2008	2011
Very/fairly good	67%	82%

Satisfaction with neighbourhood as a place to live

In 2011, 87% of participants were very or fairly satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live. This has increased slightly from 85% in 2008.

Satisfaction with neighbourhood as a place to live	2008	2011
Very/fairly satisfied	85%	87%





Quietness and peacefulness of the neighbourhood

83% of people thought that their neighbourhood was very or fairly quiet and peaceful in 2011. This was an increase from 77% in 2008.

Quietness and peacefulness of the neighbourhood

Very/fairly quiet/peaceful

2008	2011
77%	83%

Household budgets

Our survey asks not only about how people feel about their home, neighbourhood and community but about their personal circumstances. This includes some questions on household budgets and we specifically ask participants whether they ever have difficulty meeting the cost of a selection of household items. In **Birness Drive** in 2011...



16% had difficulty paying their rent or mortgage

21% had difficulty paying for fuel (gas, electricity or other bills)

14% had difficulty paying their council tax

20% had difficulty paying for clothes or shoes

15% had difficulty paying for food

While some effects of the austerity measures introduced by the UK coalition government may already have been felt within communities, the main effects of austerity measures and associated welfare reforms may only become apparent in coming years. This raises the question of whether these percentages will have increased by the time of our next survey in 2015.

The welfare reforms mentioned in this newsletter include a whole range of changes to the UK's welfare system, the most well known of which are the changes to Housing Benefit and the introduction of Universal Credit, which will see a range of benefits such as housing benefit, income support, employment and support allowance, jobseekers' allowance and child tax and working tax credits bundled up into one single monthly payment and paid directly into recipients' bank accounts.

A lot of work is going on in your area and in the city to help support people through these changes, so if you are unsure or worrying about how the changes will impact on you, the following organisations will be able to provide you with information and support.



If you are a GHA or Cube tenant you can contact their welfare reform hotline on freephone **0800 597 3777**; or if you are calling from a mobile you can call **0141 444 0110**. Additionally, if you are struggling with high fuel costs, debt or budgeting issues then their fuel or money advisors may be able to help – speak to your housing officer or visit the GHA website at **www.gha.org.uk** for more information.



If you are receiving Housing Benefit but are still having difficulty meeting your rent payments, you may be able to get extra help from the Discretionary Housing Payment Fund. This fund is available through Glasgow City Council with assistance from the Scottish Government. There are special rules about applying so to get more information you can contact your local benefits office by phone on **0141 287 5050** or visit them at 24-36 Shawbridge Arcade.



GAIN is a network of agencies including the citizens' advice bureau and legal, housing and independent money advice agencies. GAIN offers free, confidential and impartial advice on a wide range of financial issues including debt, money management, benefits advice and housing issues, as well as providing free legal advice.

The GAIN Helpline is a freephone helpline for people living and/or working in Glasgow. GAIN Helpline advisers will give you initial advice (including a full benefit check if appropriate) and refer you to a GAIN agency for more in depth advice if required.

For free advice call the GAIN Helpline on **0808 801 1011**.

Opening hours are Mon - Fri 10am – 8pm and Sat 10am - 2pm.

Their website is www.gain4u.org.uk

What's next?

We'll send you another newsletter early next year. If you have any questions or queries meantime though please don't hesitate to contact us.



We have also now joined the world of Twitter so you can follow us at: **@GoWellOnline** for all our latest updates and news.

For more information on GoWell, please contact:

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All the personal information we collect is completely confidential and anonymous and is not shared with anyone outside the research team

