



Red Road Area Information (as at Jan 09)

This paper provides a short summary of the Red Road and surrounding area, recent changes to the area and future plans. Information has been drawn from the original baseline report, produced in 2006, and from semi-structured interviews with key informants in Red Road which took place in January 2009.

The Red Road multi-storey flats (MSFs) and surrounding area are situated to the north-east of Glasgow city centre. The area is dominated by eight high-rise Red Road MSFs, built in 1965 and amongst the tallest tower blocks in Europe at the time they were built.

The surrounding area lies mainly to the east, north and west of the MSFs and consists of tenements and low rise housing. To the south, is a large area of derelict land, with a railway line which separates Red Road from the adjacent neighbourhood of Provanmill. Mixed tenure cottage estates in Balornock and East Springburn are situated to the north west of the area; Barmulloch lies to the east. New private housing has been developed in Petershill, to the west of Red Road.

GoWell's study area boundaries broadly match those of Glasgow Housing Association's (GHA) regeneration boundaries and like GHA, GoWell differentiates between the 'core area' (consisting of the Red Road flats and neighbouring tenements scheduled for demolition) and the surrounding area consisting of Balornock, Old Balornock, Petershill and Barmulloch. The Red Road 'core area' has a study area population of approx 3,400 of which 4% are aged 65 or over; while the surrounding area has a population of approx 9,200 of which 20% are aged 65 or over (from 2005 CHI data).

Local green space and open space provision is limited and poor quality. Directly adjacent to the MSFs is an area which was formerly used for gang fights but which is now used for sport and recreation.

There are high levels of litter, vandalism and graffiti. Local teams spend three to four days per month cleaning up graffiti. An estate action group formed by local people meets regularly with Council representatives and the Police to discuss maintenance issues and plans for redevelopment.

HOUSING

The MSFs consist of eight high-rise blocks. Two of these blocks are 'slabs,' much wider in cross-section than they are deep. Six are 'points' — more of a traditional tower block shape. The slabs have 25 floors, the points 31, and collectively were designed for a population of 4,700 people. As Red Road has been designated a priority area by GHA, a demolition programme is underway and one of the 'slab' blocks' (153/183/213 Petershill Drive) was cleared by the end of 2008 for demolition to start in early 2009.

The unusual construction of the flats from steel and asbestos means rapid demolition is not possible; asbestos removal will take several months. Once all the asbestos is removed, the demolishers can make an assessment of the remaining steel structure of the buildings although they do not have access to the original construction drawings which will impact on their assessment. Controlled explosions are the preferred method of demolition but this method will not be confirmed until all the asbestos is removed and full assessments completed. It is estimated that complete demolition will take seven to ten years in total, with five to seven years needed to clear all blocks of residents. Clearance of other blocks is underway at present and no future lets will be made to GHA tenants. Some GHA tenants will be rehoused in newly built properties in the surrounding area when the new build there is complete. One of the MSFs (33 Petershill Drive) is let to the YMCA until 2011 and so there are no demolition plans for this block at present.

Investment and regeneration in the surrounding area is also planned or underway. New door entry systems will be installed and closes painted in tenements in the surrounding area. 63 unpopular one apartment houses are currently being completely refurbished and converted into 2/3 apartment flats. A number of other 'four in a block' houses in the area which are popular with tenants are also being completely refurbished.

Work has started on a GHA new build programme which will provide 239 new homes to help relocate families from the MSFs. There is potential for up to 50 more new build houses and discussions are taking place regarding this possibility with a private developer.

TRANSPORT LINKS

Red Road area is near to the M8 motorway. The nearest railway station is Barnhill which is around 10 minutes on foot; Springburn Railway Station is around 30 minutes on foot. Local people do not generally feel safe walking to the station after dark. One bus service runs past the MSFs; a number of other bus services run along Royston Road. These services mostly provide radial routes into the city centre, very few cross the north area of Glasgow.

SHOPS

Local shopping provision is fairly poor: there are four shops at the base of the MSFs (shown opposite). Slightly further away from the flats, there is a grocer, laundrette, pub and garage. The nearest supermarket is in Robroyston. There is a Tesco Extra, Lidl and Costco in Springburn which is a bus journey away.

SCHOOLS/HIGH EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

All Saints Secondary School is the local denominational secondary school. It has a number of high performing pupils, many of which are from the refugee and asylum seeking population. Springburn Academy is the nearest non-denominational secondary school. Primary schools include Balornock (which also includes a nursery), Barmulloch and St Catherine's. Bonnybroom nursery is located at the base of the MSFs. Barmulloch primary school is earmarked for closure as part of recently announced closures of primary and nursery schools by Glasgow City Council. There is strong parental opposition to this proposed measure as the school is held in high regard locally and sits in the heart of new build in the area.

Red Road is situated relatively close to a number of higher education institutions which include Strathclyde, Metropolitan and Caledonian universities. North Glasgow College has just moved to a new campus in Springburn and offers training courses in internet and computer skills. There are also six local apprenticeships through "City Building". These apprenticeships are oversubscribed and there is a rigorous selection process to recruit suitable applicants.

COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS

The Red Road social work office hosts "Alive and Kicking," a project which works with elderly people in the area. Culture and Sport Glasgow deliver activities in the local recreation centre, a small hut like building near the MSFs. The nearest library, which is combined with leisure facilities, is in Springburn but public transport links to Springburn are poor. A private leisure centre, in Petershill park is located around 20 minutes walk away.

The Red Road Women's centre, situated at the base of the MSFs, runs a number of projects including a nursery/creche, provision of financial advice, and cultural activities. The "Fab Pad" project run by Impact Arts has been running during the past year. This project works with people at risk of losing their tenancies and teaches them how to maintain and decorate their flats. It has been funded by GHA and the Fairer Scotland Fund until March 09.

The nearest health centre with an on site pharmacy is in Springburn. A new GP practice has been set up on Petershill Road.

EMPLOYMENT

Income levels of residents are lower than the average for Glasgow. Many major employers in the area have closed. Stobhill Hospital and Tesco in Springburn provide employment opportunities although a recent labour market survey for north Glasgow highlighted inadequacies in public transport between Red Road and Springburn. There are a small number of businesses and small and medium enterprises in the local industrial estates. Glasgow North Regeneration Agency works with local housing organisations across the north of the city, including in Red Road. It provides access to a range of initiatives including money advice. There is also a modern apprentice programme which employs 12 people from the north of the city. GHA and the local regeneration agency run a community janitors scheme.

NEIGHBOURHOOD RELATIONS AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

The surrounding area has a relatively strong stable community with many long standing tenants in contrast to the more transient communities housed in the MSFs. However, one MSF block does have a well established Kosovan community and the asylum seeking community is fairly cohesive. Racial tension and racism is perceived to be low in the area. One explanation cited for this is the fact that overseas students have been accommodated in the MSFs for many years so residents are used to a multi-racial resident population in the area. Refugees and asylum seekers are also perceived to have contributed to a better atmosphere and less violence. A new parish minister in St Mary's church has recently opened up the church hall to various community groups and activity, including a credit union. North Glasgow Housing Association provides training/employment opportunities and North Glasgow Regeneration Agency is involved in a large scale employability initiative. Other activity includes learning groups for adults on numeracy and literacy.

A local initiative for young people - Operation Reclaim - was launched in Red Road in 2007 by the LHO, Strathclyde Police, Glasgow City Council and a sports coaching agency. It delivers supervised sport and play and provides young people with the opportunity to volunteer, learn coaching skills and gain work experience. The initiative has been very successful; it has remained popular with young people and is perceived to have contributed to less youth disorder and gang activity. Operation Reclaim expanded in 2008 and now operates in five sites across the north east of Glasgow.

We are continually working to keep our information about this area up-to-date. If you know if anything which has happened in the area recently (for example things opening up or closing down) please get in touch and we will update our information. To do this contact Jennie Coyle on 0141 287 6268 or at jennie.coyle@drs.glasgow.gov.uk