



Sighthill Area Information (as at June 08)

This paper provides a short summary of the Sighthill study 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 Sighthill which took place in June 2008.

Sighthill is located about a mile north of Glasgow city centre, situated next to the M8 motorway. The estate is bordered to the west by the main Glasgow to Edinburgh railway line, the Forth and Clyde canal and small industrial units; to the north by a main road and cemetery; and to the east by a police station and Springburn Road.

The quality of the land itself in Sighthill is poor with contaminated areas, as a result of the heavy industry in the area prior to the housing regeneration of the 1960s. There is a heavy sulphur smell in certain areas of Sighthill, and poor soil quality makes any vegetable produce inedible and is a barrier to residents establishing allotments or community gardens.

Housing mainly comprises multi-storey flats (MSFs), tenements and deck-access housing. Sighthill is a Transformational Regeneration Area with extensive investment and changes planned including demolitions, refurbishments and possible new builds. The GoWell study area broadly matches Glasgow Housing Association's (GHA's) regeneration area boundaries and covers the whole estate. The study area population is approx 5,000 of which 6% are aged 65 or over (from 2005 CHI adjusted data).

HOUSING

There are two main residential areas in Sighthill:

Fountainwell - consisting of tenement buildings with private and social rented flats, five double MSF blocks and deck-access flats.

Pinkston - consisting almost exclusively of MSFs: there are five double MSF blocks in this part of the estate.

In 2006, the five double MSF blocks in the Fountainwell area and the associated deck-access flats were ear-marked for demolition: two of the double MSFs were demolished in July 2008; three double blocks remain and are to be demolished in 2009. 141 deck access flats remain which are a mix of two, four and five apartments. 96 tenements were re-roofed, insulated and cladded in January 2007. 50 of these were also rewired and had new kitchens and bathrooms fitted in March 2006.

All of the Pinkston blocks have had heating upgrades. The clearance of Fountainwell has increased the population of residents in Pinkston. The future of the Pinkston blocks is still to be decided; options include retention and repair of certain blocks rather than wholesale demolition.

Sighthill and Dalmarnock (in the east end of Glasgow) were both considered as potential sites of the athletes' village as part of Glasgow's bid for the 2014

Commonwealth Games. Consultation and planning for urban regeneration including the prospect of the construction of over 1,000 new homes in Sighthill took place, and there were associated discussions regarding the construction of a new sports facility and community facilities in the area. However, in August 2006 it was decided that the athletes' village would be established in Dalmarnock, based on availability of land and proximity to Games venues. This was a major disappointment to residents and those involved in working in the area.

TRANSPORT LINKS

Sighthill is served by two bus routes – numbers 45 and 89/90. There is a taxi rank behind the Huntingdon Square shops which is rarely used by residents. The nearest railway station is Barnhill which is approximately one mile away. Pedestrian access to the area is limited and largely consists of walkways over the M8 motorway. No changes have taken place in transport services between 2006 and 2008.

SHOPS

Shops in Sighthill are mostly situated in Huntingdon Square (photos below). Little change has taken place in shops between 2006 and 2008. The shops in Huntingdon Square comprise: a mini-mart, pharmacy, licensed grocer, newsagent, post office, solicitor, bookmaker and several takeaways. A Lidl supermarket and Tesco are nearby, across Springburn Road – these are used more often by newer residents such as asylum seekers and refugees while the established population use the Huntingdon Square shops.

SCHOOLS

There are three local primary schools and two designated secondary schools that service the area: Springburn Academy (non-denominational) is around 1.5 miles from Sighthill while St Roch's Secondary (denominational) is around 0.5 miles away.

COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS

A relatively new community education centre, which opened in 2007, sits behind Huntingdon Square. This building houses the KATS (Kids and Adults Together in Sighthill) project, a childcare project and a library with some limited online access available for residents. KATS provides a childcare service which is "a flexible service tailored to the needs of parents/carers in employment, further education and training". Nursery/crèche facilities are available for children aged between six weeks and five years and an out of school care service is provided for children of five years and older. In addition to childcare, KATS also provides accommodation for functions, conferences, training, committee meetings and other community group activities. St Rollox church, in the north east of Sighthill, also provides a community space for meetings and is used by asylum seekers and refugees.

There is no local provision of health care. The nearest GP or health centre is the Springburn Health Centre, with other GP practices in Townhead and Possilpark.

EMPLOYMENT

Income levels of residents are lower than the average for Glasgow. There are no large industries left in Sighthill although in the past it has supported a chemical works, steelworks and rail industry. Local employees tend to leave Sighthill to work,

mostly in offices or the retail sector in the city centre, Bishopbriggs or in the Tesco/Costco site nearby.

NEIGHBOURHOOD RELATIONS AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

Like other similar estates in Glasgow, residential instability is a characteristic of Sighthill. In 2006, 25% of GoWell Sighthill participants had lived in their homes for less than one year and 39% for less than three years. Sighthill has the largest concentration of black and minority ethnic social housing tenants in Glasgow due to the placement of asylum seekers and refugees in the area.

A concierge service exists which enhances the safety and security of residents of the MSFs, particularly the elderly. The concierge has also helped with the integration of asylum seekers and refugees and has worked with the local housing organisation in identifying anti-social behaviour. However, residents continue to be worried about personal safety if travelling around the area on foot.

As with the other transformational regeneration areas in the city, anti-social behaviour and problems with young people concern local residents. LHO housing officers tackle problems with the help of concierges and GHA 'Neighbour Relations' (who have powers to evict tenants). If issues are more serious, community police are involved. Drug dealing in particular Pinkston MSFs during 2008 led to a series of drug raids. 'Operation Reclaim,' launched and supported by Strathclyde Police, remains active in Sighthill tackling youth antisocial behaviour by providing a range of activities including football, basketball, hockey, golf, cricket and dance.

Ongoing issues of antisocial behaviour and lack of community cohesion are blamed on a number of factors including: lack of infrastructure, amenities, employment, and opportunities. The style of housing (MSFs) is also perceived as a barrier to community cohesion.

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