

# West of Scotland HOUSING OPTIONS HUB



## Connecting Housing Options across the West of Scotland

With so many housing options developments happening across the West of Scotland, Hub members had long been keen to hold a stakeholder event to bring everyone together. Being mindful of how busy everyone is, we wanted to make sure that when we asked for your time we had plenty to share with you!

So many thanks to the almost 150 people who took the time to participate in the 'Connecting Housing Options across the West of Scotland' event in Glasgow's Trades Hall on 10th June 2016. We had representatives from Local Authorities, Health Boards, Registered Social Landlords and the Third Sector.

On the day we heard from:

- **Julie Hunter** of North Lanarkshire Council, providing an update on the work of the Hub;
- **Marion Gibbs** of the Scottish Government, setting out the national picture in relation to Housing Options and Homelessness;
- **Liz Cooper** of the Scottish Prison Service, focusing on key developments in relation to the importance of housing within the work of Community Justice Authorities;
- **Andrew Jackson** of the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, talking about the role of Registered Social Landlords in delivering Housing Options; and
- **Gary Quinn** of Glasgow's Health and Social Care Partnership providing a case study of delivering Housing Options as a partnership between the Local Authority and RSL's.

There was also plenty of time for discussions about wider developments and the key issues that the Hub should prioritise over coming months.

So thanks again for all your contributions and we look forward to making more progress on our shared priorities.



## Housing Options Guidance

In the last edition of our newsletter we provided an update on the production of national guidance on Housing Options and the contributions made by Hub members to shape it.

The guidance was published in March 2016 and, as Marion Gibbs from the Scottish Government described at our stakeholder event, it provides:

- A strategic focus on the role of Housing Options in preventing homelessness;
- An operational focus on the interface between Housing Options and homelessness rights as well as issues such as customer service standards; and
- A consideration of Quality Assurance and Performance Management.

The full guidance can be found online at:  
<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0049/00494940.pdf>

Marion also noted on the day that work was ongoing to develop specific Housing Options Guidance for Registered Social Landlords with the Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations. The guidance will look at the specific role RSLs can play in preventing homelessness.

If you have any questions or comments about the HUB please e-mail [claire@ghn.org.uk](mailto:claire@ghn.org.uk)

## Training Toolkit for Housing Options

In her presentation Julie Hunter provided an update on developments in relation to the Training Toolkit for Housing Options. What started out as a development within the West of Scotland has grown into a national priority that will see staff delivering Housing Options undertake high quality, consistent training.

As well as the four other Housing Options Hubs covering the rest of Scotland, other partners include:

- NHS Health Scotland;
- Scottish Prison Service;
- Skills Development Scotland; and
- The University of Stirling.

The Scottish Government announced the commitment of additional resources to the development of the Training Toolkit which has been warmly welcomed by partners, and allows for the tender process to be initiated to appoint a provider in the coming months.

As always, we'll keep you updated on further progress.

## Keys to Learn across the West of Scotland

Through the awarding of additional funding from the Big Lottery Fund, Glasgow Homelessness Network has been rolling out Keys to Learn – a well-established, successful course in Glasgow which promotes tenancy sustainment – across the West of Scotland.

Courses have now been completed in conjunction with local partners in North Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire, with plans underway for delivery in the remaining areas.

In Paisley a partnership was formed with Invest Renfrewshire and Renfrewshire Council to bring together people from the local area to build self-confidence and employability skills.

John, one of the participants, is now starting an HNC in Social Care at Glasgow Kelvin College and has spent the summer volunteering to help others resolve their housing and welfare issues.



John told us that he came along to the course information session as he wasn't doing anything else that day – he had no idea that a few months later he would be helping others and looking forward to his first day at college.

In North Lanarkshire 7 young people from Motherwell and Wishaw took part in a course to help them deal with day-to-day housing issues while learning new skills.

The course covered advice on maintaining tenancies, computing, DIY, healthy eating, team building and personal development. The students also planned, produced, performed and recorded their own music DVD.



Rebecca, one of the course participants said:

**“I recently took on my own tenancy and being on the course has helped me learn about the range of support in the community to help me ... I've also learned some great new skills including cooking.”**

Julie Hunter (Housing Strategy Manager, North Lanarkshire Council);

**“We are delighted that this new integrated approach to preparing and supporting young people has had such success. For the first time we can offer a well-balanced and blended learning experience for people considering the daunting responsibilities of taking on their first tenancy.**

**Congratulations to all the young people who completed the course.”**



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