

# STAFF NEWS

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Keeping the lights on

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A reminder for members of staff who do not have access to the council IT network:

All updates from the council and our department are on the staff pages of the council website. This can be accessed on any laptop, mobile phone, iPad or tablet that has internet access. A couple of times each week, updates are posted as well as briefings, good news stories and copies of this newsletter. It can be accessed by visiting: [www.glasgow.gov.uk/staffupdates](http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/staffupdates)

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### Coronavirus (COVID-19) updates for Glasgow City Council staff

**Latest Update**

- 15 June 2020: Staff News - PEPASS team supporting school hubs, Elder Street Project - supporting women who find themselves homeless, Current Vacancies, Share your story with us [375kb]

**Please read our staff communications issued to keep up to date with our plans.**

The first and most important thing to say is that we can all play a role in delaying the spread of COVID-19.

Please familiarise yourself with and follow NHS Scotland.

**Staff News** >

**Volunteers** >

**Catering and FM Staff-Operational Activity** >

**Neighbourhoods and Sustainability** >

**Related documents**

- Coronavirus - Isolation infographic [36kb]
- Poster - How to Handwash - Step by Step (NHS) [793kb]
- Poster - How to Hand Rub - Step by Step (NHS) [560kb]
- Poster - Putting on and taking off various types of PPE (NHS) [906kb]
- Poster - Correct Removal of Single Use Gloves (HSE) [117kb]
- Poster - Household Isolation [36kb]



## Message from George

Welcome to this fifth edition of our newsletter which has been regularly reporting on the outstanding contributions being made by Neighbourhoods and Sustainability employees to keep essential services running. The fact that each edition has been packed with stories and articles bears testament to your dedication and resilience, and I remain proud of your commitment to delivering critical city services during these difficult times.

It is with a feeling of some relief that I can see we are moving on along the Government's Route Map out of lockdown, but also a feeling of concern, for the virus is still very much with us. I urge you all to listen to the advice being given daily by the Scottish Government and its advisers. You have all made sacrifices to get us this far. They must not be wasted.

I know you will continue to do the amazing work you have been doing and I thank you for it. This newsletter will continue to highlight the enormous range of work being done, often unseen, within our Service and with partners to keep Glasgow moving in the right direction.

As always, if you would like to make a suggestion directly to me, this can be done by e-mailing: [AskGeorge@ls.glasgow.gov.uk](mailto:AskGeorge@ls.glasgow.gov.uk) . I welcome any suggestions or comments from you.

George Gillespie, Executive Director

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# TUMBLEWEED



Maybe it's the product of watching too many post-apocalypse movies, but did you, making a first outing with the easing of restrictions, expect to see tumbleweed blowing down the street? Cracked road surfaces being reclaimed by nature?

Of course you didn't! This is Glasgow. We are Neighbourhoods and Sustainability. And we know, although we may not acknowledge it often enough, that our Roads and Lighting Operations have our backs. Working out of Gartcraig Depot they have continued providing essential services through the lockdown, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Add them to our list of 'heroes'!

Ambulance crews and bus drivers will appreciate the work they've been doing, repairing potholes on strategic carriageway routes. They inspect, report on and react to emergencies such as flooding, oil spills, collisions and damage to street apparatus. They assist with traffic management, closing roads and supporting Emergency Services.

Venturing back onto the roads, you will notice new cycle routes introduced under the 'Spaces for People' initiative, incorporating carriageway resurfacing and road markings. You may even have been motivated to get back on a bike!



Even during the shortest of nights, we still expect our streets to be lit, and keeping the lights shining requires constant attention. This is beautifully summed up by **John Bonner**, Street Lighting Inspector:

*"I had a reality moment the other evening, which made me think. About 9.30pm, the sky was clear(ish) and it was starting to get dark. I was sitting on my balcony where I have a generous view of much of the east of the City, north & south. As I was taking the time to enjoy the sight, I noticed that the lights on my street came on. That's something I notice more these days now that I work in the street lighting projects department. Funny that. As I continued to watch, more lights around the City came on in clusters, some big, others small. All the while the sky was getting darker, the lights got brighter, like little "beacons of hope". (Guess who binge-watched The Lord of the Rings trilogy recently). Anyway, the upshot was, I felt a feeling of pride because I realised that I am part of the department which makes this happen every single evening of the year, 365, and it allows the City and its people to operate, travel, commute and to function in relative safety. It's something that happens in the background so subtly that we often take it for granted, because it's just there. Of course, when it's not, the phone lines will get red hot because people expect their streetlights to work and rightly so. It makes them feel safe. I'm just proud to be a small cog in the very big wheel which helps my City turn. (On)"*



# MANAGING MOVEMENT

Tucked away in the Glasgow Operations Centre at Eastgate is the other Neighbourhoods and Sustainability arm responsible for keeping the show literally on the road. The Traffcom team has been working day and night throughout the pandemic to help to keep our city's road network up and running.



Managing a city-wide network and monitoring cameras along with hundreds of traffic signals is no easy job. The team need to be observant and flexible to adapt to situations as they unfold. This includes Road Traffic Accidents (RTA), which may require road closures and diversions to be put in place; planned road maintenance works; temporary road closures; and emergency requirements along with whatever the weather may throw at us. As you'll have read above, the Roads and Lighting Operations Team is there to provide support on the ground.

The team need to be able to try and minimise disruption where they can but also get the information out to all the people who need to know through the Traffic Information Bulletins (TIBS). The TIBS go to all the key sections within GCC but also to Police Scotland and external media sources to allow them to put out the relevant information.

As stated above, the 'Spaces for People' initiative is introducing new developments such as additional temporary cycle lanes, footpath widening and physical distancing measures. The team will keep working to minimise traffic disruption and ensure we are able to move around the city in a safe manner be that in the car, public transport, cycling or on foot.

There's never a dull moment in the operations centre for **Colin, John, Ann, Andy C, Donnie, Stacey and Andy G.**

# SUPPORTING BUSINESS

**The Commercial Team at NS have been working from home since lockdown.**

The team have continued to support local businesses by managing enquiries for their waste accounts and offering guidance and advice to others in need of support from the NS cleansing teams. They have also brought in new business – with customers registering for a bin or trade **sack collection service.**

**Claire Wilson**, Customer Services Manager said: *"Despite having limited kit the team have adapted and stayed in regular daily contact with each other. They have worked hard to make service changes that allowed our collection crews to carry out their job for the key businesses trading during lockdown."*

**Cameron Neil**, Group Manager said: *"I've been thoroughly impressed by the team's dedication, professionalism, hard work and commitment to delivering a valuable service for those businesses relying on us to provide a dedicated waste collection service."*

*"They have shown a willingness to help and overcome the lack of technical kit in inventive ways to continue to perform their usual daily tasks."*

# BUSINESS AS UNUSUAL?

Apart from services specific to COVID-19, including those provided in partnership with Trading Standards, some of which we detailed in the last issue of this newsletter, the Environmental Health team has a role in delivering a number of different services to the residents of Glasgow to protect public health.

## Increased demand

Much of the work in relation to public health is reactive and based on responding to service requests made by the general public via telephone, email or online form. While the number of complaints received by Environmental Health had reduced in some areas, it became significantly busier in other areas as a result of the pandemic.

For instance, the team are getting more complaints about intruder alarms from businesses that are closed as a result of lockdown, the burning of garden waste, fly-tipping, as well as out-of-control dogs. Many of these will be caused by changes in practices and behaviour due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Throughout the lockdown, Environmental Health have continued to investigate service requests covering a wide variety of subjects including emergency drainage and water penetration issues. But what do you do when the restrictions mean you can't enter houses? Staff have had to be flexible in how we deliver our service and their interpersonal and problem-solving skills are being used to full advantage. Officers are having to guide customers into providing relevant video footage where possible or photos that would allow the officer to assess the situation and action accordingly whilst being unable to witness the situation first-hand.

## Life's a Pest

Another partner service that deals with protecting public health of the citizens of Glasgow is Pest Control. They too have had to adapt their working practices to ensure service delivery in challenging circumstances. There has been a significant increase in the volume of service requests relating to rat treatments since lockdown; increased sightings may be partially due to the traditional food sources not being available, which has in turn encouraged the vermin to venture more into domestic settings. Pest Control Operatives have been concentrating on hot-spot areas for treatments to try to address the issues whilst home visits were suspended. Vermin issues can be very distressing for anyone, however having a rat inside your home is especially so. The Pest Control team were keen to come up with a solution that could help people in the meantime until the full service is resumed. A Home Treatment kit was put together to be delivered to householders, whilst having the support of someone from pest control talking them through the process and providing follow up support for disposal when needed.



William McGhee and Mark Robertson



## Moving On

As Scotland moves through Phase 3 and even into Phase 4 of the Government's Route Map, we might find that some of the areas that experienced an increase in complaints will return to normal levels, but there will be balances to this. For example, as construction sites start operating again, with sites potentially increasing their working hours to catch up on lost time, there are likely to be more complaints arising from the impact on surrounding residents and neighbourhoods.

**Linda Laurie**, Assistant Manager, said *"As well as dealing with business-as-usual matters, as lockdown eases up over the coming weeks, additional demands will be placed on Environmental Health and Trading Standards. Officers will be assisting businesses that are re-opening by providing advice and guidance. They will also be monitoring the on-going situation to ensure businesses are adhering to the strict principles of physical distancing and any other required measures."*

## DOWN IN THE DUMPS



One area of antisocial behaviour to suffer a substantial increase during lockdown is fly tipping. It is certainly a practice that has been the subject of increased complaints to Environmental Health.

The practice is illegal and extremely contrary to the community spirit that many feel has strengthened during lockdown.

A number of Neighbourhoods and Sustainability services work together to tackle the problem. Environmental Health teams monitor fly tipping hotspots, Public Space CCTV are doing their bit to try and catch the individuals involved, whilst Cleansing Operations are called upon, regrettably, to clean it up.

## RETURNING TO WORK

Moving forward on the path of recovery, the prospect of making a safe return to the workplace moves closer. All managers have been sent guidance on planning returns to the workplace. This guidance will be used in conversations with you about service renewal plans and when the time is right to arrange for you to come back into the workplace. All the guidance to support your return to work planning is also available at [www.glasgow.gov.uk/staffupdates](http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/staffupdates).

# HIGH ACHIEVERS



We would like to congratulate four young scientists at Neighbourhoods and Sustainability Scientific Services for not only carrying out essential work over the last 3 months but also excelling academically.

**Ashley Dailly** (far right)

Awarded a 2:1 in Food Bioscience.

**Emma O'Halloran** (middle right)

Attained a distinction in her ordinary degree Applied Bioscience.

**Olivia Bennett** (middle left)

Straight A's in her 2nd year university exams Bioscience with Forensics.

**Connor Blair** (far left)

Passed his HNC Applied Science.

**Well done to you all!**

# MOWING ON



**Before...**



**...After**



Throughout the lockdown, Molendinar Family Learning Centre has been one of the establishments staying open to provide nursery education to vulnerable and essential workers' children. However, the growth of grass around the Centre was restricting opportunities for children to get into the open to play and learn. **Lisa McPhee**, Depot Manager at Neighbourhood and Sustainability's St Rollox depot was approached by **Irene Muldoon**, the Head Teacher, and **Richard Rooney**, **Ian Reynolds**, **Robert McDougall** and **John Anderson**, grass-cutters on the blue shift, stepped forward.

This is **Irene's** response:

*"I would just like to take this opportunity to thank you and your staff for the excellent work that was carried out at Molendinar Family Learning Centre. The overgrown grass for sure was a challenge, which the skilled staff conquered with a smile on their face, due to the work being carried out at the nursery this will enable the staff to provide learning opportunities for our children in exploring the outdoor environment."*

*"Thank you from all the staff & children"*

# KEEPING A LOOK OUT



We've referred earlier in the newsletter to the role played by Public Space CCTV in spotting fly tipping and identifying culprits. They will provide information and intelligence (when and where it can be captured), hopefully leading to some people getting some large fines.

The Glasgow Operations Centre in Eastgate has remained open throughout the COVID-19 crisis, with our CCTV operators working around the clock to keep the city and its citizens safe. So, thanks are due to **Connor, Peter, Martin, John, Paul, Peter F, Willie, Stephen, Jim, Sandy, Tommy and Mark K** - well done to them all.

Of course, every team needs its 'backroom' staff and thanks are also due to our CCTV Engineers who have worked throughout keeping our systems up and running - **James, Willie, Ryan & Kieran** supported by **Ken & Keith**.

Have you ever considered that in lockdown someone who depends on an income from shoplifting must find an alternative? Criminals do not just stay on message and stay at home.

An example is this piece of great work from CCTV operator **Paul**. This involved **Paul** observing individuals involved in a serious incident with weapons and then tracking and locating the car that was involved. With this information and the images captured, Police Scotland were able to trace the owner and at the address found significant amounts of drugs, along with firearms and ammunition. Without the work of the operator this would not have been possible.

This Spring and early Summer a number of large demonstrations have taken place in the city centre. CCTV have worked tirelessly with colleagues in our GCC City Centre teams, Resilience team and Police Scotland, to monitor, observe and help manage these. CCTV Operators play a key role in helping to identify any offenders, draw the attention of colleagues to any ongoing incidents, and to provide critical evidential images if required. Managing large-scale demonstrations requires keen observation skills and lots of patience. So well done to all the teams involved in keeping people safe.

## CORONAVIRUS

If you are looking for information

visit [NHSinform.scot](https://www.nhs.uk/infocentre/coronavirus) or call the helpline on 0800 028 2816

If you have returned from an affected area and have symptoms

**STAY HOME**

and call your GP or 111