



Glasgow and West of Scotland
Forum of Housing Associations

Annual Conference 2026

Community Based Housing Associations - At the Coalface of Public Service

Tuesday 24 November

9.00am – 3.45pm

Radisson Blu Hotel, Glasgow

GWSF members £225; non-members £285



Programme

9.00 Registration and exhibition viewing

9.45 **Welcome and introduction** – **John Hamilton**, GWSF Chair

9.55 **David Bookbinder**, GWSF Director

10.15 How can Scotland become a fairer society?

How ambitious can Scotland be in wanting to become a genuinely fairer, more equal society? What are the main injustices we should be prioritising, how are these influencing people's lives and what needs to change for them to be tackled? Is public opinion backing the changes needed, or might the Reform agenda and other factors be making us less tolerant?

And if we legislate to improve people's rights, will the money be there for long term implementation or do we risk giving people rights which can't properly be met?

We also hope to address the recent protests targeted at housing associations and at how social media-fuelled misinformation – most notably about how homes are allocated – can have devastating consequences in our communities.

Talat Yaqoob, Campaigner, Researcher and Writer; **Ailsa Henderson**, Professor of Political Science, University of Edinburgh, in conversation with journalist **Kirsteen Paterson**

11.10 Break and exhibition viewing

11.40 **Workshops** – choice of 6 (see below)

12.40 Lunch and exhibition viewing

13.40 **Workshops** repeated

14.40 Panel Debate – Getting Real about Retrofit

Even if we still don't have the final Social Housing Net Zero Standard by November, we pretty much know what it'll be, and that it's likely to be a less ambitious standard than originally proposed. Our sector prides itself on innovation, so how much can social landlords really do to achieve or even go beyond the standard, and what needs to happen to enable work at scale to begin? Have your questions ready!

Helen Shaw, Director of Regulation, Scottish Housing Regulator

Jonathan Grant, CEO, Williamsburgh HA

Gillian Campbell, Director, Existing Homes Alliance Scotland

Susan Hanlin, Principal Officer – Housing Retrofit, Glasgow City Council

Colleen Rowan, Research and Policy Lead, GWSF

15.40-15.45 Closing comments from the Chair and close of event.

Workshops

1 Managing threats to good governance

Effective governance is our sector's hallmark, but when threats or challenges to this arise, how do we deal with them? If there's unrest or dissatisfaction within a governing body, how do its members deal with that? Are the principles of collective responsibility properly put into action?

With plenty of opportunity for input from delegates, this session looks at some challenging situations which might arise and how they can best be managed. It also considers whether current constitutional and governance frameworks are sufficient to ensure the best possible practice.

Linda Ewart, Governance Consultant

2 AI - keeping up with what it can do for housing associations and tenants

What can AI actually do for a housing association, and how do you tell a good idea from an expensive one? This session offers a practical, jargon-free tour of what associations are really using AI for, how the technology behind the credible tools works, where the regulatory lines sit, and the watch-outs worth knowing before you commit. And we hear about one association's use of AI to tackle a significant backlog in housing applications.

Kieron White, Leading AI Ltd and Alistair Reid, Customer Service and Engagement Team Leader, West of Scotland HA

3 Maintaining community cohesion in the face of change, challenge and misinformation

Community cohesion has always been a key priority for community based housing associations. The summer protests may have shown the more extreme end of the spectrum, but beyond the protests many communities have been seeing significant changes in recent years. Embracing those changes can bring some real challenges for CBHAs in terms of their engagement and communications with their tenants and residents. This session looks at the issue from the perspective of two associations in very different types of area.

Clair Malpas, CEO, Cassiltoun HA; Jennifer Cairns, CEO and Claire McGraw, Director of Tenancy Services, Govanhill HA

4 Acquiring and improving failed private housing

Sometimes whole private housing estates fail. This session puts the spotlight on what can happen when a local housing association works with the local council to start the rescue process through acquisitions and improvement, transforming both homes and lives.

Alan Hume, CEO, and Mark Tedford, Operations Manager, Provanhall HA

5 Saving our older tenements – the work goes on

Older tenements are such an iconic part of the heritage of our towns and cities, but maintaining them is a huge challenge, and even more so in mixed tenure blocks. This session puts the spotlight on two associations' successful efforts to overcome significant challenges and work with their local council to carry out major works to tenement blocks – one from Glasgow and one from Renfrewshire.

Craig Reid, Head of Asset Management, Paisley HA; Daniel Wedge, Technical Director and Craig Orr, Technical Manager, Glasgow West HA

6 Tenants and trauma, and how can we respond?

A wide range of factors can cause trauma – it might have been a long time ago or more recent, but the impact is still very much there for people. This session explores how we can better understand what it means for tenants, but also the impact it can have on staff who are faced with managing it.

Anthony Morrow, Community Connector Manager, Sanctuary Scotland HA