



**VULNERABLE MISSING  
CHILDREN AND  
YOUNG PEOPLE  
*ALERT PROTOCOL***

Updated August 2010

# **ALERT PROTOCOL FOR VULNERABLE MISSING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

## Partners to the Protocol

- Glasgow City Council Social Work Services
- Strathclyde Police
- Barnardo's Safer Choices

This protocol outlines the process for joint working to be followed in the sharing of information by Strathclyde Police, Glasgow City Council and Barnardo's Safer Choices in tackling the problem of vulnerable missing children and young people.

For the purposes of this protocol, the city centre area covered by Safer Choices is the area between Kelvingrove Park and Glasgow Green, North of the river.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Glasgow City Council (Director)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Strathclyde Police (Chief Constable)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Barnardo's (Scotland) (Assistant Director)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair Glasgow Child Protection Committee



## **FOREWORD**

In 1999, Glasgow Child Protection Committee set up an inter agency working group to take forward the issue of vulnerable children and young people within the City of Glasgow. The CPC Sub-group developed the Inter Agency Vulnerability Procedures which highlight 6 key areas of vulnerability.

Work has been ongoing to develop information and associated protocols around these 6 specific areas, and recently the CPC Sub-group focused on the issue of Missing Children and Young People. In addition, the Scottish Government published national guidance relating to Missing Young People, with the expectation that each Local Authority will develop an inter agency protocol for missing children and young people.

This Alert Protocol brings together Social Work Services, Police and Barnardo's and outlines how information will be shared when a young person is reported missing. The Protocol should be used when a young person who is missing is considered vulnerable as defined in Section 4 of the Protocol. This Protocol should be read in conjunction with Glasgow Child Protection Inter Agency Vulnerability Procedures.

**Donald Urquhart**  
**Independent Chair**  
**Glasgow Child Protection Committee**

# 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

## 1.1 PRINCIPLES

Work with children and young people involved in high risk activity / behaviours' needs to be coordinated as part of the multi disciplinary child protection system. Glasgow Child Protection Committee is therefore the appropriate body to take the lead role in the development and evaluation of this protocol. (Vulnerability Procedures Section 4.1)

## 1.2 AIM OF PROTOCOL

The primary aim of this protocol is to establish a formal alert system between Glasgow City Council Social Work Services, Strathclyde Police and Barnardo's Safer Choices. Only those children and young people where there are significant concerns as per the Vulnerability Procedures about their safety and who are believed to be frequenting the City Centre should be alerted using this system.

Many of these children and young people will meet the criteria for Glasgow Child Protection Committee Vulnerability Procedures, and this alert protocol has been developed to minimise significant harm and risk to this very vulnerable group of children and young people.

## 1.3 CONFIDENTIALITY

An information sharing protocol has been agreed by Glasgow City Council, Strathclyde Police and Barnardo's Safer Choices.

Glasgow Child Protection Committee's Vulnerability Procedures clearly state that

***"Confidentiality must not obstruct the exchange of information between agencies / organisations which may be essential to the protection of a young person from serious harm. The rights of the child should be considered at all times, and the sharing of information should be undertaken sensitively" (Vulnerability Procedures Sect 3.7)***

The views and consent of children and young people should be ascertained and considered; however, these views should be balanced with the duty to take positive action to ensure the child / young person's safety.

## **2. TARGET GROUP**

The target groups will include -

- Young people under the age of 16 who are missing from the parental home
- Young people under the age of 18 who are missing and on a Statutory Order
- Young People aged 16-18 yrs who are living in unsettled accommodation
- Young people who are on the Child Protection Register

AND WHO

- Are thought to be frequenting *Glasgow City Centre*

AND

- Meet the criteria/risk factors as identified in the Vulnerability Procedures

Where the child or young person does not fall into this target group the other reporting and recording systems that already exist should operate as normal and should not be superseded by this protocol.

## **3. REPORTING PROCESS**

On the report of a missing vulnerable child or young person to the police, who is thought to be frequenting *Glasgow City Centre*, the information will be shared by *Glasgow City Council Social Work*,

Strathclyde Police and Barnardo's Safer Choices in an effort to trace the child or young person and preserve his/her wellbeing.

#### **4. STRATHCLYDE POLICE**

The missing person report will be made to the police office in the local area in which the missing person or young person is resident / missing from.

If the person is believed to be frequenting the Glasgow City Centre area this joint protocol will apply.

At this time the person making the missing person report, if the person is the parent or person with custody charge or care of the child or young person, provides a photograph of the young person, the officer receiving the report must ask for consent for this photograph to be distributed to the agencies involved in this protocol, namely Strathclyde Police, Barnardo's Safer Choices and Glasgow Social Work Services. This could potentially assist in tracing the child or young person.

The report will thereafter be allocated to an enquiry officer operating from the police office receiving the report and be investigated by Strathclyde Police in accordance with the Missing Persons Standard Operating Procedures.

It will thereafter be the responsibility of the enquiry officer to make contact with

'A' Division Street Liaison Team 0141 532 (714) 3118 or 07733307941

'B' Division Street Liaison Team 0141 532 (710) 4686 or 07880781270

And, the patrol sergeant at Glasgow City Centre Police Office Police Office on 0141 532 (714) 3054.

In line with these procedures contact must also be made with West of Scotland Social Work Standby Service on 0141 532 6940. Barnardo's Safer Choices 0141 243 2393 or 0800 085 2704.

All contact or attempts must be noted on the Strathclyde Police Missing Person Form 5:8:1.

## 5. Barnardo's Safer Choices

There will be three situations whereby Barnardo's Safer Choices will be made aware of young people who are missing and meet the criteria of this protocol.

1. Information from the Police as per the reporting process of this protocol
2. Information direct from the parent/carer AND/OR social worker/residential worker.
3. Direct contact with the young person.

In situations 1 and 2, Barnardo's staff will log this information and will contact the referrer and discuss any concerns that we may have, or action that they would like us to progress.

In situation 3,

- We will attempt to ascertain why the young person has run away/has no fixed abode. We will also discuss with them what interventions are required and what agency(s) we may need to contact.
- If young person has runaway, we will encourage them to either let us make contact or for them to make direct contact with someone from the resource that they have run away from. The purpose of this would be to let them know that they are safe and well and are either willing or not willing to come back. At no point is there an expectation to disclose where they are.
- If the young person is of no fixed abode and is unable or unwilling to return to their settled form of accommodation, with their permission we would negotiate via SW Standby, Hamish Allan Centre or their settled accommodation resources, a safe return to this accommodation or access to an alternative resource. This would also include assistance with transport.

## **Information Sharing**

The service will share information as appropriate with both Strathclyde Police and Glasgow City Council Social Work Services. The service will contact the Patrol Sergeant at Glasgow City Centre Police Office with an update as agreed under the Inter-agency Protocol on vulnerable children and young people.

In order to make an accurate assessment of the situation, the team will contact SW Standby for further information on a young person as and when appropriate.

During the team's contact with young people who meet the criteria of this protocol, we would pass on any information regarding criminal activity/sexual exploitation/grooming to Glasgow City Council's SWS Child Protection Team

## **6. British Transport Police (BTP)**

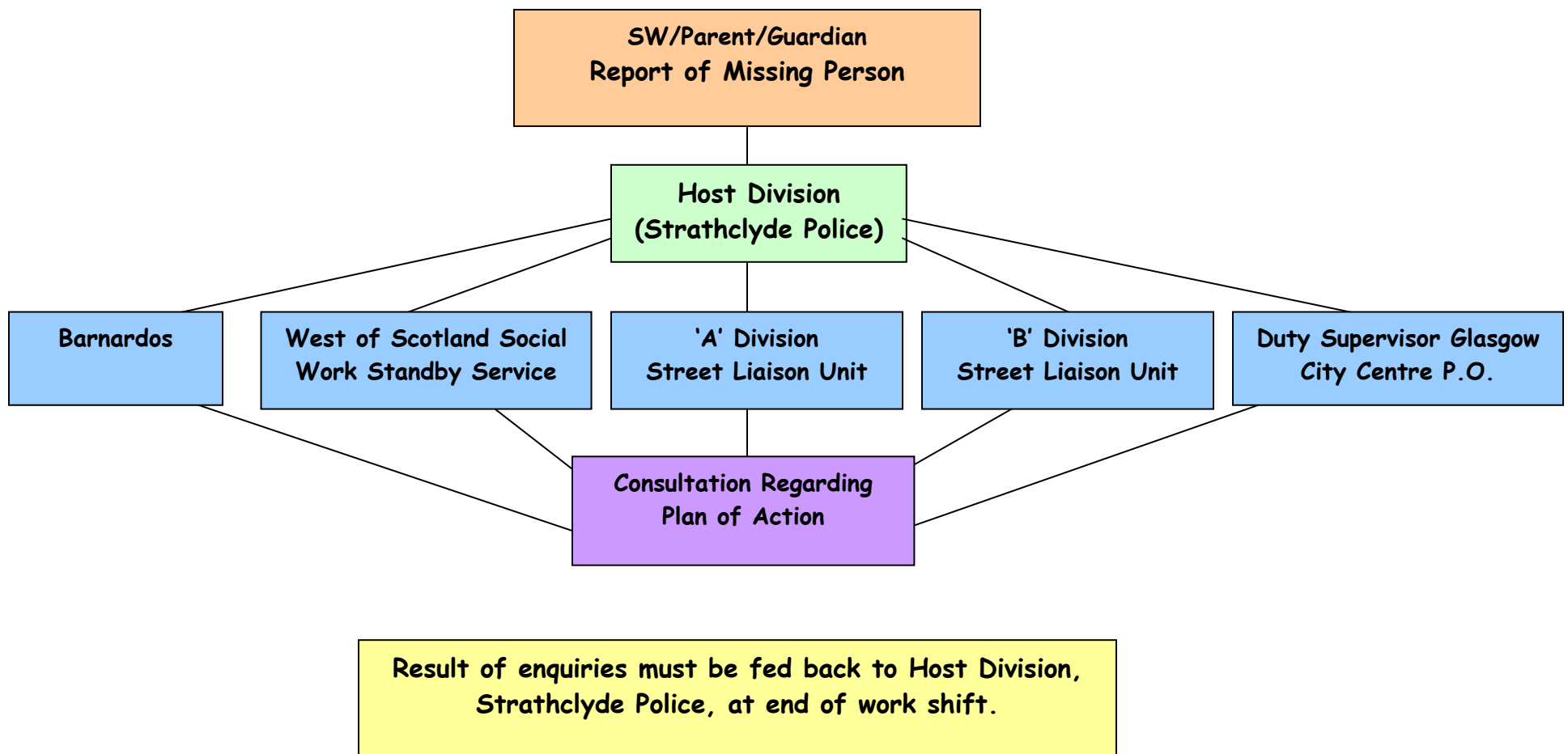
In respect of this protocol BTP have responsibility for policing the various transport networks within the scope of this protocol. In particular BTP have responsibility for Glasgow Queen Street Station and Glasgow Central Station.

BTP can be contacted via their Area Intelligence Bureau which is operational 24hours. 0141 335 2016



## 7. FLOW CHART

### INITIAL RESPONSE TO REPORT OF VULNERABLE MISSING CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON



## 8. USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Police	Glasgow City Centre	0141 532 3054
	London Road	0141 432 4600
A Division	Street Liaison Team	0141 532 3118
B Division	Street Liaison Team	0141 532 4686
British Transport Police		
Area Intelligence Bureau		0141 335 2016
Barnardo's	Safer Choices	0141 243 2393
	(Freephone)	0800 085 2704
Social Work Standby		0800 811 505
North Lanarkshire		0800 1210 4114
South Lanarkshire		0800 678 3282
ROC Project		0141 550 2398
	(Freephone)	0800 783 6686

PERSON: \* MISSING - \* ABSCONDED -  
\* FOUND - \* WANTED



Division: \_\_\_\_\_ Station: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### DETAILS

DIV. REF. NO.: \_\_\_\_\_ PNC WM NO.: \_\_\_\_\_

**SURNAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

MAIDEN NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

**FORENAMES:** \_\_\_\_\_

ALIAS: \_\_\_\_\_

AGE: \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B.: \_\_\_\_\_ PLACE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_

GENDER \* M / F COLOUR: \_\_\_\_\_ NATIONALITY: \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL / PLACE OF WORK: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NO.: \_\_\_\_\_

OCCUPATION: \_\_\_\_\_

**HOME ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NO.: \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS MISSING FROM:** \_\_\_\_\_

PLACE LAST SEEN: \_\_\_\_\_

BY WHOM (RELATIVE): \_\_\_\_\_

DAY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

**WARNING SIGNALS:** \_\_\_\_\_

SCRO NO.: \_\_\_\_\_ CRO NO.: \_\_\_\_\_

**DESCRIPTION:**

HEIGHT: \_\_\_\_\_ BUILD: \_\_\_\_\_

HAIR: \_\_\_\_\_ EYES: \_\_\_\_\_

COMPLEXION: \_\_\_\_\_ MARKS / SCARS: \_\_\_\_\_

**DRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**POSSESSIONS:**

MONEY: \_\_\_\_\_

BANK / BUILDING SOC. BRANCH & ACC NO'S: \_\_\_\_\_

VALUABLES: \_\_\_\_\_

## **9. AGENCY RESPONSES**

### **Social Work Services**

Residential Child Care Services have existing procedures/protocols advising staff of the action that should be taken when a young person fails to return to the unit. These procedures sit alongside the Missing Persons Protocol for Vulnerable Children and Young People.

When a young person returns to the unit residential workers will undertake the following:

#### **1. Notification of Young Persons Return**

Residential staff will ensure that relevant workers/agencies are advised of the young persons return. This could include:

- Police (if police not involved in the return of the young person)
- Area Team (Social Work Standby Service)
- Young Person's Family
- Residential Child Care Services based at Social Work Services Headquarters.

#### **2. Check Young Person is Alright**

On the return of the young person residential workers will consider the immediate needs of the young person and ensure that consideration is given to:

- Medical needs
- Food
- Bath
- Sleep
- To talk to a member of staff

### **3. Residential Staff will speak with the Young Person**

Depending on the time of day and emotional and physical condition of the young person, residential staff will speak with the young person. Normally the young person's key worker will spend time with the young person, but if they are not available or this is not appropriate, the unit manager will identify a colleague within the unit to talk to the young person. This discussion should take place within 24 hours of the young person's return.

Residential staff will:

- Express relief at the safe return of the young person
- Express concern regarding the safety and well being of the young person
- Gather information from the young person regarding where they have been and who they have been with
- Establish whether they are running away from something in the unit - this needs to be done by the unit manager and may not happen immediately, but as soon as possible
- Ascertain any risk factors
- Record all information

### **4. Log and Share Information with Relevant People**

The young person's right to confidentiality will be upheld at all times, however, following the young person's return it may be necessary to inform:

- Area team social work
- Police
- Barnardo's Safer Choices
- Young Person's Family

Of any relevant information regarding the reasons why the young person did not return to the unit, to ensure a co-ordinated response to the needs of the young person.

## **5. Additional Support**

Arrangements will be made for the young person to speak with a responsible adult they trust. When appropriate Barnardo's Safer Choices or the ROC Project may provide additional support to the young person.

### **Barnardo's Safer Choices (BSC)**

#### **Contact with young person:**

In our contact with young people we will tell them that the service is confidential and that they are the focus of our work. We will explain the kinds of things we would need to talk to someone else about.

The contact with the young person will focus on risks, keeping young people safe, exploring the cause of going missing and what the worker and young person can do together to address the cause.

In particular, during the contact with the young person we will attempt to establish:

1. Why the young person ran away
2. Where they went
3. How they survived whilst they were away
4. What traumas were experienced by the young person whilst away and
5. What follow- up care/support the young person may need or want

The young person will be offered different resources dependent on their individual circumstances.

- Referral to or liaison with Strathclyde Police, Social Work, Education, Health and or specialist services.
- Work around keeping safe
- Opportunity to meet with staff from Safer Choices when they are missing.
- Opportunity to make contact with an appropriate adult/family member

This process may take several contacts over the period of several shifts and staff will be required to use their discretion in how far to go with each contact. **The most important consideration is to maintain contact while actively working with the young person on options available to them.**

**Our focus is on helping young people to explore and develop strategies for keeping safe. The young person chooses the kind of involvement they have with the service.**

At all times the team will try to establish trust and work with the young person to resolve difficulties. However, there are circumstances beyond the normal limits of disclosure where statutory responsibilities, the public interest or personal health, may override an individual's right to have information kept confidential and may require it to be disclosed.

### **Contact Details**

Barnardo's Safer Choices  
91 Mitchell Street  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Rear  
Glasgow  
G1 3LN

Tel No           0141 243 2393  
Fax               0141 243 2696  
Freephone No 0800 085 2704

### **ROC Project (Running- Other Choices)**

The ROC Project is an Aberlour Child Care Trust Project that works with young people, under the age of 16, in Glasgow and East Renfrewshire who run away or are at risk of running away.

#### **Aims**

We aim to assist young people to find solutions to the circumstances which have caused them to run away from home and to minimise the risks of young people who are running away.

## Activities

The **Outreach** Team provide support to young people who run away or are at risk of running away. This help includes individual support to resolve difficulties and/or build coping strategies, advocacy, mediation, and support around school issues, help to access other services that could resolve difficulties or increase social support and the provision of information. This direct support is provided by two full-time staff, a Bi-Lingual Project Worker and a Mental Health Promotion Worker. Much of this work is carried out in co-ordination with other agencies including Social Work Services, Education Dept. Health Services and other voluntary agencies. It involves setting goals and reviewing these at regular intervals.

Work is usually carried out when a young person has returned home or to a care placement after running away and this support can continue from 3 months to, in some situations 18 months or longer. Young people's views as to the type, intensity and length of support required are central to what is offered.

We also deliver a PSE lesson in schools to help young people think about the issue of running away and help pupils access support before they run.

The **Refuge** provides time-limited accommodation and support to young people who run away and are at risk. Young people can be at risk because they are refusing to return home or to a care placement or because of the risks they would face if they did return. Admission assessments are carried out by Refuge staff but we also share this assessment with Stand-By Social Work Services and Barnardo's Safer Choices to prevent multiple assessments and to enable young people to access Refuge as quickly as is appropriate.

Once young people are in Refuge work begins to help them make and implement plans about their future. Crucial to this is also the involvement of parents/carers and other agencies, in particular Social Work Services. Initially, Refuge is granted for seven days and extensions for a further seven days are given in exceptional circumstances, so co-ordinated work needs to begin as soon as a young person accesses Refuge. Refuge staff contact and work with parents/carers emphasises that, excepting times when there are overriding child protection concerns, the purpose of Refuge



should be to enable people to be brought together rather than driven further apart.

Refuge is provided under Section 38(1)(b) of The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and the accompanying regulations. It is a 3-bedded house in a confidential location registered as a residential children's unit and designated by the relevant local authorities as a Refuge.

## **Referrals**

Anyone can refer a young person to ROC as long as the young person consents to this. Referrals come from young people, parents, education and social work staff and Strathclyde Police. We have a referral protocol with the four Glasgow Divisions of Strathclyde Police which will be live from January 2005 and facilitates the referral of young people who are reported as missing persons to be referred to ROC.

## **Contact Details**

ROC Project (Running-Other Choices)  
The School House, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor,  
217-229 Orr Street,  
Bridgeton,  
Glasgow,  
G40 2BN

Tel 0141-550 2398    Freephone 0800 783 6686

E-mail [roc@aberlour.org.uk](mailto:roc@aberlour.org.uk)

Fax 0141-554 0455

## **Culture and Sport Glasgow**

Culture and Sport Glasgow's Area Services Teams provide a range of streetwork services outwith the City Centre, in some areas as a single agency in others in collaboration with the voluntary sector. These workers do on occasion come into contact with young people who have run away and are not accessing the city centre.

### **Aims**

To engage with those young people who do not engage with organised youth activities both as a youth work delivery method in its own right and also to "signpost" young people to activities / groups which they may not have been aware of.

### **Activities**

Streetworkers engage with young people wherever they encounter them and each Area Team has its own programme of days and times when streetworkers are engaged, normally in the evening and weekends. Workers will arrange activities on the street, act as a conduit for information, advocate on behalf of young people with service providers and direct and accompany (signpost) young people to activities or groups which they may wish to join.

### **Referrals**

Streetworkers tend to work with those young people whom they encounter directly; however, anyone could refer a young person to a local streetwork team.

### **Contact Details**

As each team's delivery is different it is difficult to provide a single point of contact, the team's contact details are listed below:-

#### West Area

Drumchapel/Anniesland and Garscadden/Scotstounhill

Drumchapel Pool

Drumry Road East

G15 8NS

Tel: 0141 276 1516 Fax: 0141 276 1520

Email: [norman.ferguson@csglasgow.org](mailto:norman.ferguson@csglasgow.org)

Partick West, Hillhead/Anderston/City

St Peters Primary

42 Chancellor St

Glasgow

G11 5QN

Tel: 0141 276 1525 Fax: 0141 276 1526

Email: [alan.dick@csglasgow.org](mailto:alan.dick@csglasgow.org)

#### North Area

Maryhill and Springburn

Petershill Community Initiative

30 Adamswell Court

Springburn

Glasgow

G21 4DD

Tel: 0141 276 0920 Fax: 0141 276 0922

Email: [bob.ullah@csglasgow](mailto:bob.ullah@csglasgow) or [colin.strangeways@csglasgow.org](mailto:colin.strangeways@csglasgow.org)

#### East Area

East End and Easterhouse

Blairtumnock House

20 Baldinnie Road

Easterhouse

Glasgow

G49 9EE

Tel: 0141 276 1785 Fax: 0141 276 1786

Email: [eileen.bell@csglasgow.org](mailto:eileen.bell@csglasgow.org) or [sarahstocks@csglasgow.org](mailto:sarahstocks@csglasgow.org)

South East  
Govanhill  
The Adelphi Centre  
12 Commercial Road  
Gorbals  
Glasgow  
G5 0PQ  
Tel: 0141 276 1330 Fax: 0141 276 1589  
Email: [Kevin.leahy@csglasgow.org](mailto:Kevin.leahy@csglasgow.org)

Lynn and Cathcart  
Jennieburn Centre  
307 Tormusk Road  
Castlemilk  
G45 0HE  
Tel: 0141 276 1700 Fax: 0141 276 1701  
Email: [gary.macleod@csglasgow.org](mailto:gary.macleod@csglasgow.org)

South West  
Govan and Craigton  
Pavilion 1  
Rowan Business Park  
Ardlaw Street  
Govan  
G51 3RX  
Tel: 0141 276 8770 Fax: 0141 276 8941  
Email: [gary.maguire@csglasgow.org](mailto:gary.maguire@csglasgow.org)

Greater Pollok Newland and Auldburn  
75 Househillwood Crescent  
Pollok  
Glasgow  
G53 6BG  
Tel: 0141 881 0555 Fax: 0141 881 4616  
Email: [roy.glen@csglasgow.org](mailto:roy.glen@csglasgow.org)