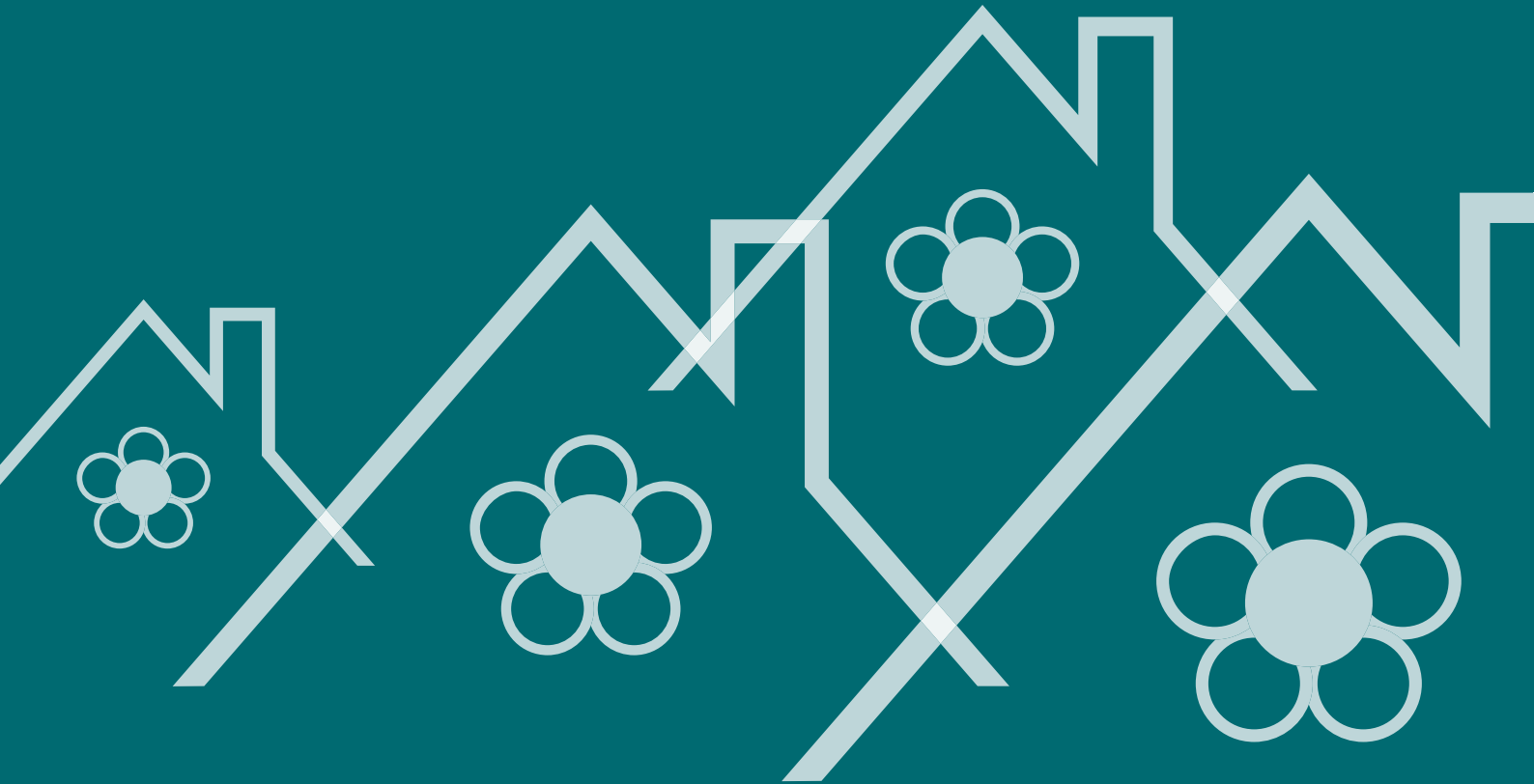




Flax Housing Association



## Annual Review **2010/2011**

“Our aim is to provide good quality affordable housing, and associated services for people in need”

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## Chairman's Report

As Chair of the Association, I share responsibility for effective governance with the other voluntary Board Members. Therefore it is essential to our business operations that the services we provide are of the highest quality and that we deliver in a manner that achieves value for money.

In these times of recession, pressure is due to increase on the Association to demonstrate effective and efficient governance and I am pleased that thanks to our Board we were able to meet these challenges and I look ahead to continuously improving processes to ensure Flax enhances current performance activity.

This report will provide information on how we performed over the past year and as always I thank all our tenants who have given feedback on our services.

Under the direction of the Board, we have reviewed our business plan and set more challenging targets. Progress against the plan objectives will form one of the main reporting processes to the Board. This system will enhance performance management and will focus the Association accordingly.

I thank all those who contribute to our success, particularly our Contractors, Partner Associations in Apex Procurement, the Federation of Housing Associations, the NIHE and the Department for Social Development.

It remains for me to thank all my colleagues on the Board and the staff who work tirelessly to provide high quality services that are tenant focused, efficient and effective.

**Mr John Patterson**  
Chairman



# Senior Management Report

I am pleased to report that the Association's performance during the past year has been good, with many performance objectives being achieved. Details on our performance are contained throughout this report.

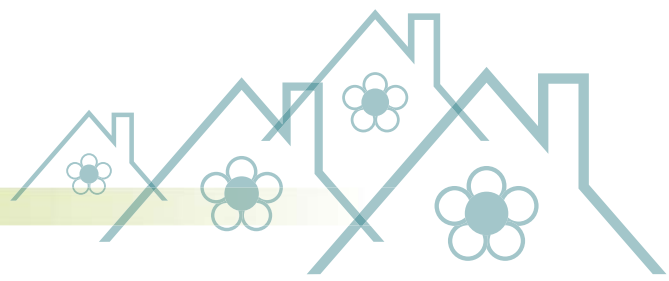
Although performance has been good, the Association is committed to reviewing our processes to improve internal reporting structures and management over all areas. This year the Association focused on its business plan and redesigned the format of the plan so that the Board and Staff can effectively manage processes to achieve the results necessary. The objectives within the plan are embedded into the performance structure to ensure we are all working to maintain improved services for our residents.

We rely on the views of our tenants to shape our priorities and for this reason I encourage all tenants to highlight areas where improvements can be made. Tenants can do this on the annual survey, by writing to me or by sending an email to [Donal.Conway@flaxhousing.com](mailto:Donal.Conway@flaxhousing.com).

I am pleased to report that despite the current difficult economic conditions, the Association continues on a sound financial position and that we are well placed to meet our short and long term commitments and investment needs of our stock.

I thank all of our team for their dedication and commitment and that their efforts have contributed to the successful performance of the past year.

**Mr Donal Conway**  
**Senior Management**



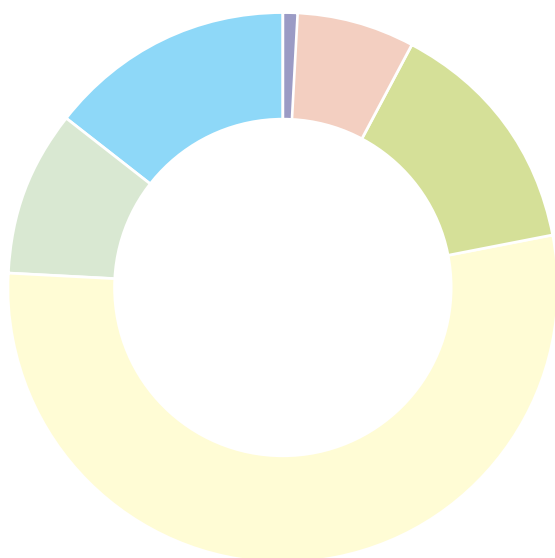
Key Performance Indicator	Actual	Target
<b>Housing Management</b>		
Percentage of rent receivable actually collected	100.68%	>96%
Non Tech. Rent Arrears as a % of rent receivable	2.6%	<3.0%
Percentage rent loss through voids – General Needs/Sheltered	0.22%	<1%
Percentage rent loss through voids – Support	0.58%	<2.0%
<b>Development</b>		
Number of units on site	43	40
<b>Maintenance</b>		
% emergency repairs completed within 24 hrs	98.82%	95%
% repairs completed within 4 days	99.36%	95%
% repairs completed within 28 days	99.80%	95%
<b>Tenant Satisfaction</b>		
% tenants satisfied with the services	81%	80%
<b>Management &amp; Maintenance Costs</b>		
Total Management Costs per dwelling	£383.00	£500
Total Maintenance Costs per dwelling	£481.00	£500



# Housing Management Report

## Housing Stock

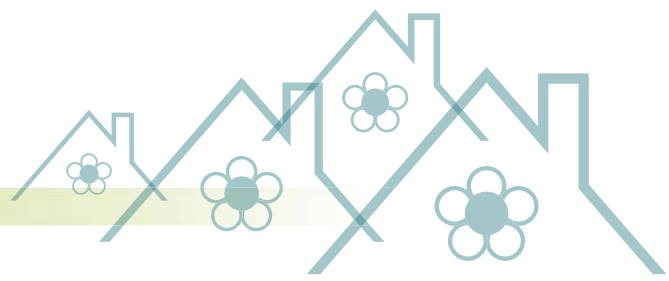
Flax Housing has 446 units of accommodation providing homes for the elderly, general family and young people



- General Needs (Bungalows)
- General Needs (Maisonettes)
- General Needs (Flats)
- General Needs (Houses)
- Supported Living
- Sheltered Living

11 of these units are managed by the Salvation Army and they provide support to vulnerable families through a management agreement.





## Housing Allocations

A total of 109 allocations were made during the year.

## Re-let Targets

Average void re-let times were reduced from the previous year.

2009/2010			2010/2011		
G/Needs 14 Days	Sheltered 23 Days	Supported 26 Days	G/Needs 13 Days	Sheltered 26 Days	Supported 14 Days
Average number of weeks that dwellings had been empty and available for letting					
1.6 Weeks			0.9 Weeks		

## Voids

Voids at 31st March 2011	
General Needs & Sheltered Housing	0
Supported Housing	2

## Rent Charge

Rental charges were increased by 1.9% in April 2010.

Average Rent Charge per Property	
One Bedroom	£48.83
Two Bedrooms	£61.62
Three Bedrooms	£77.89
Four Bedrooms	£83.45
Five or more Bedrooms	£83.96



## Rent Collection

The Association collected 100.68% of rent charged during the year.

Rent Charged	£1,843,204
Rent Collected	£1,855,828

## Supporting People

The Association received Supporting People Income of £252,274, towards the cost of providing support services to the elderly and young people living in the Flax Foyer and Holyrood House.

## Arrears Breakdown

	Non-Technical	Technical	Total
Current Tenant Arrears	£33,894.92	£31,519.28	£65,414.20
Past Tenant Arrears	£14,045.93	£00.00	£14,045.93
Total Arrears	£47,940.85	£31,519.28	£79,460.13

Technical arrears are made up of owed housing benefit and other payments due. Technical arrears take account of the frequency and timing of payments.

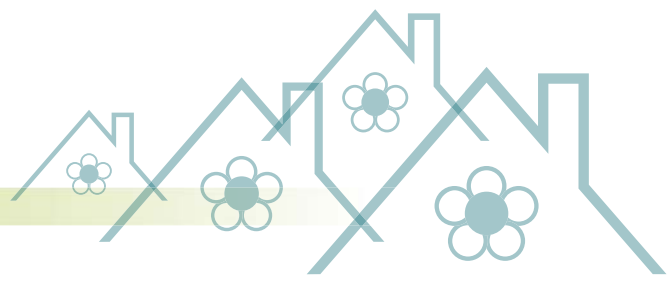
## Housing Allocations

Category	Cases	Resolved by Housing Management	On-going at 31st March 2010	Referred to Mediation	Referred to Committee
ASB	52	51	1	0	0
Total	52	51	1	0	0

The Association continues to be a key participant in the local community Housing Liaison Committee. The Committee is made up of the local and Statutory organisations all of who are committed to improving the areas by providing a multi-agency approach.







# Maintenance Report

The Association continues to provide a high quality day to day response maintenance service through its Measured Term Contract with our contractor Maurice Flynn and Sons. The measured term contract ensures our tenants are provided a complete service and that the Association is meeting its obligation under the conditions of tenancy.

The table below details all works received and completion times and performance.

## Response Maintenance

Category	Time Period	Repairs	On Time	Percentage
Emergency	24 Hours	424	419	98.82%
Urgent	4 Working Days	470	467	99.36%
Routine	28 Days	495	494	99.80%
Total	—	1389	1380	99.33%

## The annual cost for Y/E 2010

Administration	£27,953
Response Repairs	£140,919
Cyclical Repairs	£45,436
Major Repairs	£52,103
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£238,458</b>



## Planned Works

In 2010 the Association took part in Cosy Homes Scheme for Housing Associations part funded by the Northern Ireland Sustainable Energy Programme managed by Bryson Energy.

This involved the replacement of Economy 7 / Old Oil heating system and upgrading the properties to more efficient Gas heating systems.

The schemes involved in these works were Thorndale Family Centre, Antrim Road (Economy 7) – Holyrood House, Flax Street (Economy 7) and 5 general needs properties (Old Oil Fired Central Heating Systems). Another feature of the scheme was loft insulation. All lofts were upgrade to 300mm. The works to replace and upgrade commenced November 2010 and were successfully completed March 2011.

A satisfaction survey was issued to those tenants and the results of the respondents were as follows:

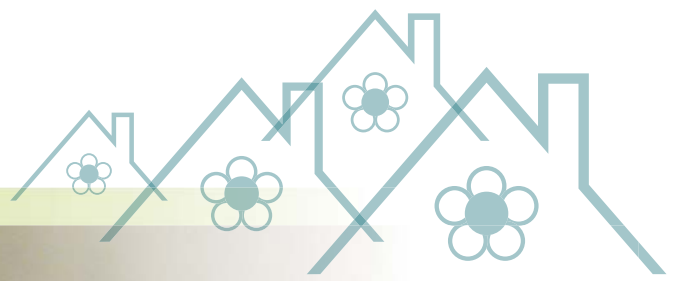
- 100% were satisfied with the outcome of the gas heating upgrade and/or loft insulation upgrade.
- 100% were satisfied with overall quality of the work.
- 100% believed the contractors had a good attitude and kept dirt and mess to a minimum.
- 100% believe their new gas system is good at heating their home and economical.
- 100% believe this new heating system has improved their home.

This scheme has proved to be worthwhile and successful for both tenants and the Association.

Therefore the Committee has approved the Association to continue with cosy homes for 2011-12 and we have identified a further 78 properties. We are due to start works on these properties in September 2011.

### **Stock Investment**

In addition to the heating upgrades, the Association plans to commence improvement works to the housing stock in 2012. The works are proposed after the Association undertook a stock condition survey. The programme of works will be presented to the Tenants Forum as soon as possible for review and comments.



### Disabled Adaptations

Adaptation	Number Completed
Shower	4
Grab Rails	2
Stair Rails	2
Stair Gates	1
Total	9

Any tenant or member of their household who has a disability can apply for an adaptation. For further information and advice you can contact the Association, your local community occupational therapy service directly or speak to your GP.

Here is an example of one of the Associations more recent disabled adaptations. Patricia McCann of Herbert Street had the through the ceiling lift fitted in her home. This lift will greatly increase the quality of Patricia's home life, making everyday tasks less of a struggle.





# Development Report

The Association this year continues to grow and extend our property portfolio in Ardoyne

We have commenced on site with three schemes this year.

## 1. Brookfield Mill

This is a brownfield site located just off the Crumlin Road. The land was previously occupied by Pittsburgh Bar and Golden thread theatre. The site was bought by a private company and demolished. The Association purchased land in April 2010 with full planning permission for 40 apartments.

The Association along with our Design Team, set about implementing a scheme which would not only look aesthetically pleasing to the area but provide much needed affordable, quality and accessible accommodation for those in need.

The scheme is due to be completed by November 2012. Upon completion the scheme will provide 40 number 3 person 2 bed apartments over 5 floors.

The scheme will incorporate a communal first floor garden terrace and secure car parking for residents on the ground floor.

Other features of the completed development will be:

- Built to Lifetime Homes Standard and Secure by Design Standards
- Secure Onsite parking.
- High specification electrical finish to all homes.
- Photovoltaic panels.
- Code for Sustainable Homes level 3 rating.





## 2. Prospect Park

The Association has commenced on site with providing further accommodation in an existing development Prospect Park, Flax Street.

We identified the open space area within this existing development was creating some anti-social behaviour problems. We held a series of tenant consultation events to discuss possible ways forward to tackle these issues.

The outcome of these meetings and letters received by the Association from various residents was to investigate the possibility of planning permission being granted to build 2 additional units in the existing scheme. This solution would remove the open space and provide much needed accommodation.

Planning permission was granted for 2 new build houses in December 2010.

We commenced with construction of the 2 units March 2011 and these properties are due to be completed November 2011.

The scheme when completed will provide 2, 5 persons, 3 bed houses.

## 3. Ladbrook Drive

Work commenced on the construction of a 3 person, 2 bed property in March 2011.

Features of the property include:

- Built to Lifetime Homes Standard and Secure by Design Standards
- Solar panels.
- Code for Sustainable homes level 3 rating.

This property will be completed November 2011



A photograph of two men shaking hands. The man on the left is wearing a blue and white plaid shirt, and the man on the right is wearing a dark suit jacket over a white shirt and a red tie. They are both smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

# Corporate Services

## **Learning and Development**

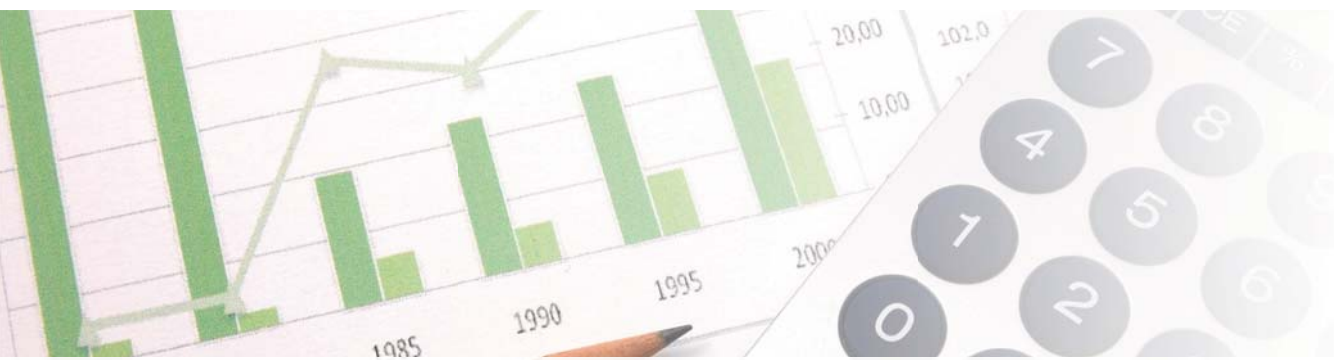
Flax is committed to the development of its staff and to ensure all employees have the necessary skills to achieve our objectives. During the year the Association invested £3,300 on staff training and £5,089 on Committee training and conference attendances.

Martin Hamilton, Housing Officer successfully completed a Post Graduate Diploma in Housing Studies.

Pictured here being congratulated by the Manager Donal Conway, Martin said that he is very happy to have a recognised qualification in a job that he has carried out for a number of years and that he thoroughly enjoys.

The Committee claimed £497 expenses during the year.

D. Conway, General Manager and Mary Fusco, Foyer Manager, participated in a Management and Leadership Development Programme. This training was fully funded by the Department for Learning and Development.



# Finance Report

<b>Income &amp; Expenditure Account: For Year Ended 31 December 2010</b>	<b>2010 £</b>	<b>2009 £</b>
Turnover	1,997,792	1,745,168
Operating Costs	(982,576)	(766,643)
Operating Surplus	1,015,216	978,525
Interest receivable	26,661	—
Interest payable	(378,691)	(322,342)
Other Income	—	—
Other Finance (costs)/income	(1,853)	4,897
Surplus on ordinary activities before taxation	661,333	661,080
Tax on surplus on ordinary activities	—	—
Surplus on ordinary activities after taxation	661,333	661,080
Transfer (to)/from tenant's services fund	20,533	(9,834)
Transfer (to)/from support reserve	(230)	(239)
Surplus for the year	681,656	518,054
Transfer to Designated Reserves	(265,425)	(305,000)
	416,231	346,007

The Association has no recognised gains and losses other than above.  
All the Association's activities are classified as continued



<b>Balance Sheet:</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>For Year Ended 31 December 2010</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>

**Fixed Assets:**

Housing land and buildings Cost	40,439,629	37,346,052
Less Housing Association Grant	(31,766,265)	(29,015,120)
	<u>8,603,996</u>	<u>8,330,932</u>
Other Fixed Assets	694,982	617,242
	<u>9,298,978</u>	<u>8,948,174</u>

**Current Assets:**

Debtors	197,533	117,614
Cash at bank & in hand	134,888	468,323
Investments	1,913,58	960,002
	<u>2,246,010</u>	<u>1,545,939</u>

**Current Liabilities:**

Amounts falling due within one year	(3,525,593)	(1,105,243)
<u>Net Current Assets</u>	<u>(1,279,583)</u>	<u>440,696</u>
Total assets less current liabilities	<u>8,019,395</u>	<u>9,388,870</u>

**Creditors:**

Amounts falling due after more than one year	3,172,889	5,226,1048
Pension Liability	106,727	155,719

**Financed By:**

Share capital	18	17
Revenue reserves	2,240,058	1,772,982
Designated reserves	2,499,703	2,234,048
	<u>8,019,395</u>	<u>9,388,870</u>





# Board of Management

During the year the Board completed a skills review on its current membership.

The review highlighted that there is a need for new members who are skilled in the following areas:

- Human Resources, Staff Management and Equality
- Property Maintenance and Development
- Legal

Applications from those skilled in these areas are very welcome. Application forms can be obtained by writing to Donal Conway ([donal.conway@flaxhousing.com](mailto:donal.conway@flaxhousing.com)).

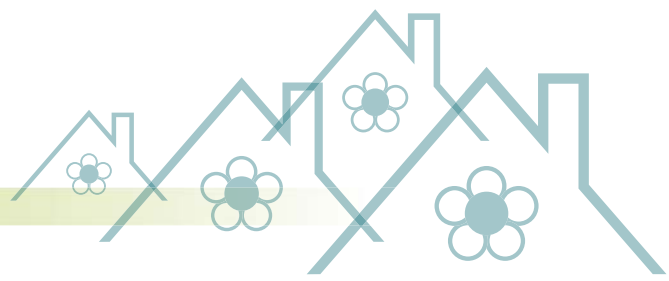
## Housing Allocations

Board Member	Role	Length of Service	Attendance at Board Meetings	Management Sub-Committee	Finance Sub-Committee	Development & Maintenance Sub-Committee
John Patterson	Chairman	9 Years	5/5		5/5	4/4
Colin Wisdom	Treasurer	9 Years	5/5		5/5	
Catherine McLaughlin	Secretary	13 Years	5/5	4/4		
Michael Stevenson	Member	15 Years	5/5	3/4		
Marion Kane	Member	23 Years	1/5			
Eileen Captain	Member	11 Years	3/5	2/4		
Elaine Burns	Member	2 Years	4/5			2/4
Elizabeth Connolly	Member	1 Year	4/4			



# Staffing Structure

Staff Member	Position
Donal Conway	General Manager
Martin Hamilton	Housing Officer
Leanne Kelly	Development Officer
Maura Butler	Maintenance Officer
Brendan O'Hara	Finance Officer
Matthew Doyle	Administrative Assistant
Aisling Brown	Receptionist
Marie Fusco	Foyer Scheme Manager
Madeline Dillon	Part Time Support Worker
Collette Dunn	Foyer Support Worker
Marie Campbell	Foyer Support Worker
Aoife Neylon	Foyer Support Worker
Sean Osborne	Foyer Night Support Worker
Michael Gorman	Foyer Night Support Worker
Peter Corbett	Foyer Night Support Worker
Charles Hemsworth	Foyer Night Support Worker
Bernadette O'Kane	Warden: Holyrood House
James Saunders	Caretaker
Paul Frame	Caretaker
Terence Frame	Part Time Caretaker



## Memberships

- A member of the Council for the Homeless
- A member of the EROSH NI Branch
- A member of the Foyer Federation
- A member of the Housing Rights Service
- A member of the NI Federation of Housing Associations

## Registrations

- Registered with Department for Social Development No.R49
- Registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act No. 305
- Registered with Inland Revenue for Charitable Status No. XO 1193

### Office Address

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Fax: 028 90594440  
Email: [admin@flaxhousing.com](mailto:admin@flaxhousing.com)  
Web: [www.flaxhousing.com](http://www.flaxhousing.com)

### Internal Auditors

FGS McClure Watters  
1 Lanyon Quay  
Belfast BT1 3LG

### External Auditors

Toner McDowell  
2 Woodstock Link  
Belfast BT6 8DD

### Bankers

First Trust Bank  
First Trust Centre  
92 Ann Street  
Belfast BT1 3AY

### Solicitors

James T Johnston & Co  
Donegall Chambers  
138 Donegall Street  
Belfast BT1 2HX



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