



NB Housing

Homes that build community

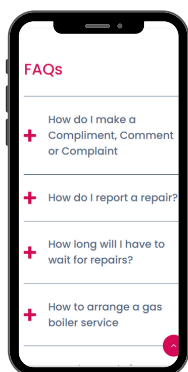
Tenants Newsletter

ISSUE 28
JUNE 2022

NB Housing launch a new website!

We are pleased to announce we have recently refreshed our website www.nb-housing.org. The website contains a wealth of information about the association, its people and its properties. You will also find many useful links that will provide information on upcoming events, available properties, newsletters, new developments and much more.

We hope you find the website easy to navigate and that it provides what you are looking for. As always, we want to hear what you think. Simply complete a comment form, or make a suggestion, online. We are always seeking new ideas and ways to improve our services for you, our tenants.



Introducing My Tenancy

My Tenancy is an online portal where you can view information related to your tenancy at NB Housing 24/7. This information will include your current rent balance, repairs on your home, important documents, contact information etc. You will also be able to pay your rent and request any repair work for your home.

The portal can be accessed through our website www.nb-housing.org. Before creating an account, you'll need to ensure that you have:

- Access to a valid email account
- Provided NB-Housing with your date of birth and your valid email address
- Your tenant reference key/account code. If you do not know your account code, just give us a call and we can let you know what this is.

Why not set up your account now and enjoy access to your account whenever you need it.

Summer Break

As you are aware our offices are currently closed to visitors to comply with government guidelines due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our staff are working from home to ensure continued service delivery to our tenants.

- July break: Tuesday 12th July and Wednesday 13th July
- August break: Monday 29th August.

In the event of an out of hours emergency repair, please call Radius Connect24 on 0800 7313081

TENANT ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Intergenerational Group

This initiative was an intergenerational walk and talk group which included NB Housing tenants over 55 years old and youths from the Ardoyne Youth Club.

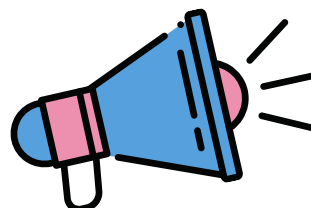
In partnership with Communities in Transition and the Ashton Centre, the aim was to promote intergenerational work. Participants shared skills and knowledge through conversation and while using their fitbits and water bottles were becoming more active too!

The group set up walking and step challenges while the youths showed our tenants how to use new technology.

Some of the young people who helped the older tenants to set up their Fit Bits and took part in the walking group.



Tenant Focus Group- New Members Welcome!



Our Tenant Focus Group meeting will soon be taking place in the Houben Centre Crumlin Road (date/time to be confirmed).

This is open to all tenants so why not join us for a chat and a cuppa. NB Housing aims to be an organisation where tenants can influence the decision making process through a range of involvement opportunities and work in partnership with the Association to deliver a housing service that not only meets their needs but exceeds their expectations. If you are interested in joining our Tenants Forum please contact Sadie on 028 90 592 110 or by email on sadie.reid@nb-housing.org for more information

Money Management



If you are struggling with rent or other bills why not get in touch and we can work with you to find possible solutions. We can also help with referrals for full benefit advice, food parcels etc. Contact Sadie for more information.

Fake Away Class

Some of our tenants took part in our Fake Away class which was a class learning to cook healthy meals using an Air Fryer. All participants were provided with an Air Fryer and ingredients to take part in this class which was very successful and resulted in some tasty, home cooked meals being prepared.



Social Supermarket: The Pantry



The Pantry is a community food store project based in The Ashton Centre. This is an initiative which is different from traditional food banks in that it doesn't just provide food, but works to provide a 'whole service' approach including budgeting. The Pantry operates on a membership basis where participants will be provided with support from trained volunteer mentors. The project is operational in North Belfast, and is open to families struggling with budgeting.

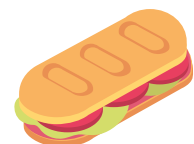
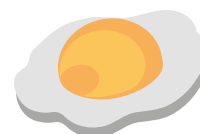
Once you join The Pantry, you pay a weekly membership fee of £5. This enables you to avail of a weekly shop of approximately £40 for a period of 12 weeks.

Both food and hygiene products are available through The Pantry. Members are permitted to purchase items based on their own preference.

Items are colour coded according to their value and you are limited to how many you can choose from each category. For example, meat will be in the more expensive category therefore will be limited.

Once members have completed an initial 12 week programme they can extend their membership to become a support volunteer. Support volunteers can still be members of The Pantry but their membership will increase to £10 a week for approximately £40 of groceries.

If you are struggling and feel your family could benefit from The Pantry contact Sadie at NB Housing for referral information.



Flax Foyer launch "Foyer Connect"



Flax Foyer are delighted to launch their new project "Foyer Connect", funded by Supporting People through their Covid Recovery Fund. Foyer Connect aims to improve the mental health and well-being of young people through increased digital connectivity.

The young people shared their experiences of participating in the application and procurement process with our funders, showing interest, knowledge and understanding of the impact the funding was going to make. Supporting People representatives were very impressed and encouraged them to continue on their road to success.

“ I feel that the Foyer Connect project is a great asset for the Foyer, it helps the residents with their mental health and gives them more opportunities.

(Young Person)



supportingpeople
supporting independence



Tenant Satisfaction Survey Results

Thanks to all NB Housing tenants and residents who returned their completed Tenant Satisfaction Surveys. NB Housing values feedback from our tenants on the services we provide.

A total of 165 tenants responded to the surveys which represents a 16% return. We seek to continually engage with our tenants to ensure that they are kept informed of our services and that their views are taken into account.

Whilst the satisfaction levels are positive, your responses will also give us an opportunity to make improvements in certain areas that were not as positive. We welcome any ideas you may have to help us improve our services and encourage tenants to make suggestions by contacting us by phone, letter or by email (info@nb-housing.org).

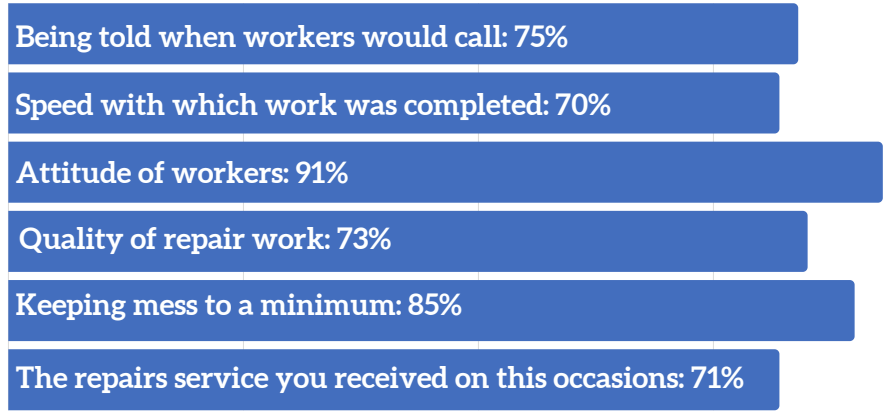
Alternatively, you can use the comments leaflet which can be downloaded from our website www.nb-housing.org.



74% of tenants surveyed were satisfied with the overall service provided by NB Housing

75% of tenants surveyed were satisfied with their accommodation

Contractor Performance



79% of tenants surveyed said when they last had contact it was easy to get hold of the right person

81% of tenants surveyed said that staff were able to deal with their query

78% of tenants surveyed were satisfied that NB Housing is keeping them informed

92% of tenants surveyed said that they found staff helpful

Our New Homes

An update from the Development Team

We would like to highlight some of the recent projects that went on site recently.

197-203 Crumlin Road

The contract for 197-203 Crumlin Road has been signed and the contractor has started works to deliver 14 new homes. This is the Association's latest new build development. Members of NB Housing Board, Senior Management and the contractors attended the contract signing in March 2022.



Works are still at the very early stages and we look forward to the finished project next year.



The contractor building the scheme is Andrew Bradley Ltd and the development is programmed to handover in Summer 2023. Construction costs for the scheme is £1,922,700.

Drummond Brae, Ballynahinch

The small new build at Drummond Brea, Ballynahinch is now in contract and we expect this to come into management during early 2023. Both properties are 4 person 3 bed houses.

Below is an image of the front elevation and site layout for these new units:



House Sales Scheme

On 28 August 2022 the statutory House Sales Scheme for NB Housing tenants will permanently and completely close. This scheme enables eligible tenants to purchase their social home supported by a discount.

From this date, no new applications can be made to the House Sales Scheme. To be clear, applications to the Sales Scheme must be made before midnight on 27 August 2022. No applications can be accepted after that time. As long as an application is made before midnight on 27 August 2022, the application may be processed and the sale may complete after that date.

The closure of the House Sales Scheme on 28 August 2022 reflects legislation passed by the NI Assembly on 30 June 2020 and given Royal Assent on 28 August 2020. Further information from the Department is available on NI Direct.

Further information may be obtained from the link below.

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/disposal-housing-association-property>

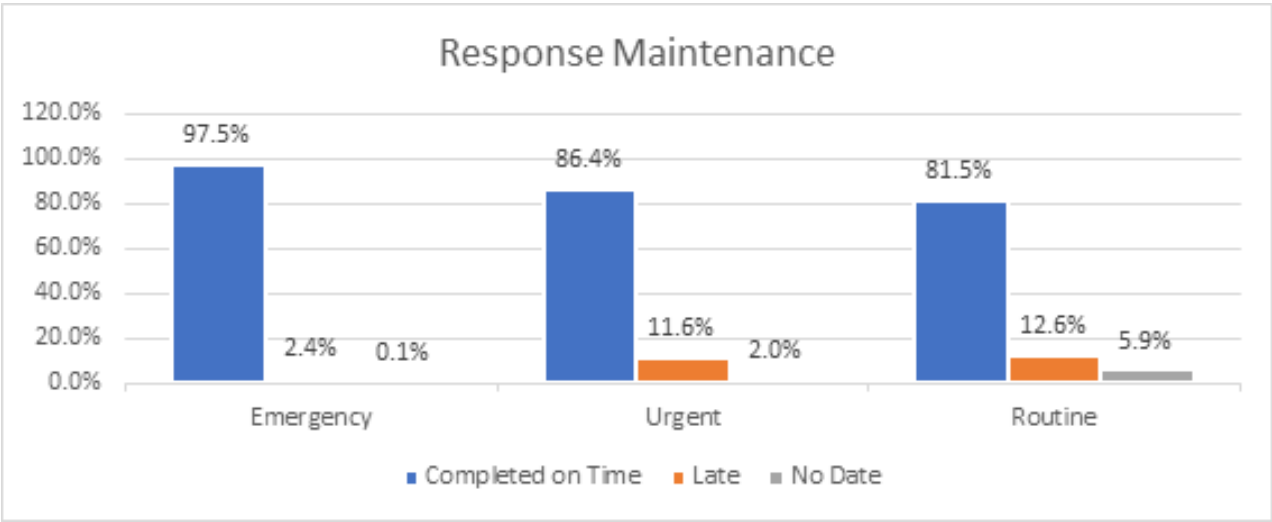


If you would like to keep up to date with our latest development sites please like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter!

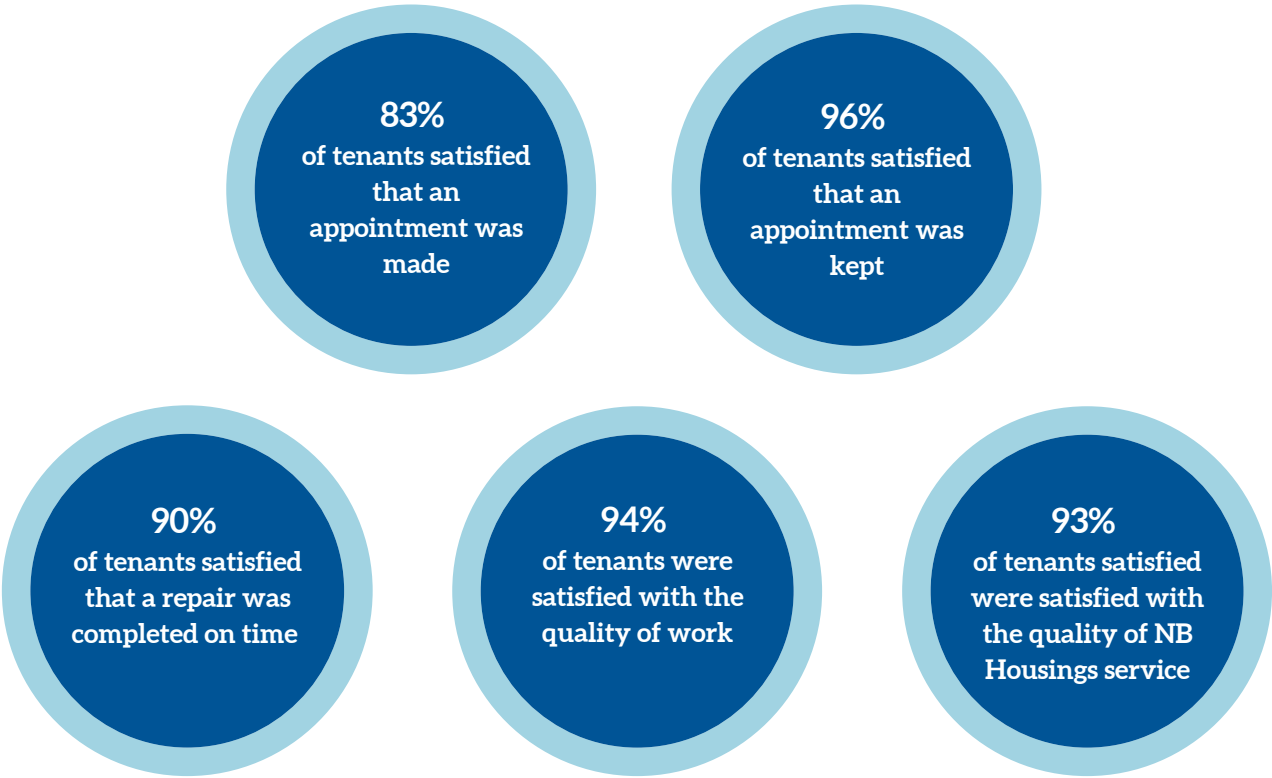
An Update From Our Maintenance Team

Key Performance 2021/22

NB Housing is pleased to have met the Department for Communities target for maintenance response times.

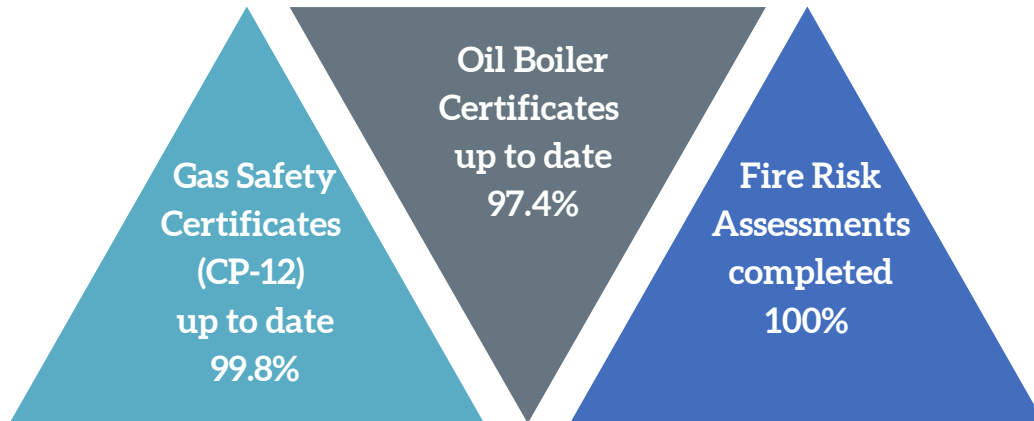


We are pleased to record an average of 91.2% satisfaction with our repair’s services based on responses to our text service:



Statutory Compliance

At the 31st March our compliance figures were:



It is vitally important that all tenants provide access for their annual boiler service and check. Failure to do so will result in the capping of gas supply and legal action to obtain access. All associated costs would be deemed recoverable from the tenant, so please provide access to prevent delays and unnecessary costs.

Aids & Adaptations

The Association completed over 30 adaptations in our properties at a cost in excess of £50,000. If you require an adaptation in your home, please contact our maintenance team on 028 90351131 or repairs@nb-housing.org



Planned Maintenance

We have recently completed our door replacement scheme to 96 properties in February, this represents an investment of £215,364 in these properties.



Cyclical Maintenance

In March we commenced internal and external redecorations at a number of our apartment schemes. These works are expected to complete over the summer. These works represent an investment of £78,000 in our schemes.



NB Housing & CTS Projects Ltd

We are delighted to have entered into contract with CTS Projects Ltd to provide Maintenance Services



Pictured is John Brooks (Director of Development and Property Management), Philip Canter (Maintenance Manager) & Serena Hylands (Director CTS).

Meet the Team!



Kyle

In this new quarterly feature, we hope to introduce you to the team at NB Housing to enable you to put a 'face to the name' and know the staff that are here to help you. Kyle joined NB Housing in May 2022 as a Maintenance Officer.

Kyle will assist tenants with all aspects of repairs, grounds maintenance, cleaning/estate services and disabled adaptation requests. Kyle brings with him a breadth of experience in surveying and estates from his time working in local government.

In his spare time Kyle is kept busy as a father to 2 young children, is an owner of a crazy cocker spaniel who has to get out for big walks every day and he assists on a local farm milking 400 cows a few times a week. To relax he and his family take their touring caravan around Northern Ireland at the weekends.



Energy Saving

With the significant increase in energy costs, it is vital to ensure we use energy efficiently. Here are some tips below to assist:

Use Low Energy Lighting

There are two main types of energy efficient light bulbs available in the UK. Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs) and Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs). Both are cost-effective options for most general lighting requirements.

Replacing a traditional incandescent bulb with an LED or a CFL will save you a few pounds every year for each bulb you change. Replacing all of the bulbs in your house can provide you with some substantial savings on your electricity. LEDs are more efficient than CFLs and will save you more money in the long term. They are often used to replace halogen down lighters and other spotlights, but they are now also available as a replacement for most other bulbs as well.

Energy efficient bulbs are available in a wide range of fittings and outputs. Most households can fit energy efficient lights throughout the whole house. Modern energy efficient bulbs can look and feel exactly like old fashioned bulbs, so there is no reason not to fit them.

Reduce tumble dryer use

Tumble dryers use a fair amount of electricity to heat the air they use, as well as to run the fan and motor. If you can dry clothes outside when the weather is dry, you can use the dryer less often and cut your electricity use over the year. If your washing machine has a fast spin setting, then you can use this to get as much water out of the clothes as possible before you dry them. If you then need to use the dryer, you can run it for a shorter time and still save a bit of energy.

Other things you might want to try...

When the time comes to buy a new dryer, look at the energy label. The higher the rating, the less energy it will use to dry the same load of washing. The best rating you can now get is A+++. You can also save energy when you wash your clothes by waiting until the machine is full before running it and by washing at a lower temperature when possible. Washing at 30°C is often enough to get things clean.

Turn down the thermostat

If you turn down your main thermostat just one degree it will cut your heating bills straight away, and you may not feel any difference. If your heating system has a main heating thermostat, or a programmer where you can set the temperature, then this is the most important part of your heating system to get to grips with. Try turning the temperature down by one degree. Wait for a day and see how it feels. If you're still feeling OK, turn it down another degree, and wait and see. And so on. As soon as you start to feel a bit too cold, turn it back up by one degree. Make a note of the setting – this is the temperature setting for you and your household.

Most families are happy with a setting somewhere between 18°C and 21°C but you may need it warmer if there are any elderly or infirm people living in the property. The temperature will also depend on the nature and layout of your house and heating system, and on where the thermostat is, as well as on personal preference. So, don't get worried if the setting you choose sounds a bit too high or low. Just find the lowest temperature that you're comfortable with. Then you can be sure you're paying no more than you need to for a comfortable home.

Contents Insurance

NB Housing would advise all tenants that it is their responsibility to take out contents insurance. NB Housing is not liable for any loss or damage caused to tenants belongings. Contents insurance can be obtained from most Insurance Brokers .

Out of Hours Visit Service

Temporarily suspended while lockdown restrictions are in place. We will keep you informed as and when restrictions are eased. However please do not hesitate to contact us on 02890592110 should you require any assistance..

Debt Advice

NB Housing wishes to highlight the availability of an independent debt advice charity that offers guidance for people in debt. The charity Debt Support Trust is open from 8.00am-7.00pm Monday to Friday and can be contacted on 0800 085 0226 or online at www.debtsupporttrust.org.uk. You will not be charged for their advice and any information that you give or receive is treated in the strictest confidence.

Recycling Centres

- **Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council:**
<https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/recyclingcentres/>
T: 028 9446 3113 & T: 028 9034 0000
- **Ards and North Down Borough Council:**
<https://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/resident/bins-and-recycling/recycling-centres>
0300 013 3333
- **Belfast City Council**
<https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/recycling/centres>
0800 032 8100
- **Mid and East Antrim Council**
<https://www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/resident/waste-recycling>
0300 124 5000
- **Mid Ulster Council**
<https://www.midulstercouncil.org/resident/bins-recycling/recycling-centres>
03000 132 132

Useful Numbers

Radius CONNECT24 (for out of hours emergency repairs) 0800 731 3081

NIHE: 03448 920 900

Belfast City Council Pest Control: 028 9027 0431

Phoenix Gas: 0345 455 5555

Noise Control: 028 9037 3006

Power NI: 0345 745 5455

Waste Management: 028 9027 0657

NB Housing Contact Details

Gatelodge Office

8 Flax Street, Belfast, BT14 7EQ

Tel: 028 9059 2110

Crumlin Road Office

282-290 Crumlin Road, Belfast, BT14 7ED

Tel: 028 9035 1131

Did you know you can contact us through the 'Getting in Touch' tab on our website (www.nb-housing.org), can contact us via email: info@nb-housing.org or can text us on 074 9820 2221