



# NB Housing

Homes that build community

## Tenants Newsletter

ISSUE 30  
DEC 2022

### Annual Report

We are delighted to include your copy of NB Housing Annual Report 21/22. You will find information about how the association performed, survey results, new developments, tenant participation and financial reporting for the year.

We would like to hear what you think of the report. Do you have any suggestions or ideas for next years issue, is there anything else you would wish to see included? You can give us your feedback by calling us on 028 90 592110 or sending us an email to [info@nb-housing.org](mailto:info@nb-housing.org). The report can also be found on our website at [www.nb-housing.org](http://www.nb-housing.org).

We look forward to hearing from you.



### Merry Christmas from NB Housing!

Our offices will close at 4pm on Friday 23rd December. Our offices will be closed on 26th December, 27th December, 28th December and 2nd January 2023.

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

# Help & Advice on Money Matters

The cost of living crisis is impacting us all. As winter fast approaches, we have seen food prices on the rise and energy costs soaring as we attempt to manage budgets on fixed incomes. The struggle is real as some are choosing to “eat or heat” and finding it extremely difficult to make their income go far enough.

There are many organisations providing advice and information on how to ensure we can maximise income, manage bills and even prevent debts increasing. We have provided some suggestions and contacts below that may assist you.

As always, your Housing Officer is also available should you need any further advice and can be reached on 028 90 592 110, via email on [info@nb-housing.org](mailto:info@nb-housing.org) or via or website [www.nb-housing.org](http://www.nb-housing.org).

## Advice NI

Advice NI can provide advice on a range of benefit issues as well as information on benefits for carers, those with disabilities, being out of work, housing etc. Contact on 0800 915 4604 or email [advice@adviceni.net](mailto:advice@adviceni.net). Local Advice NI members include:

- Ardoyne Association Advice Centre:  
028 90 715 165
- Advice Space: Andersonstown Road and Shankill Road:  
03001233233
- Community Advice Lisburn:  
02892662251
- Community Advice Ards & North Down  
03001239287
- Mid and East Antrim/  
Ballymena/Carrickfergus  
02896001333



## Consumer Council

The Consumer Council offers energy advice for consumers during these difficult times and provides an independent energy price comparison tool. You can save by switching supplier, tariff, payment methods, how you receive your bills or a combination of all these.

Tel: 028 9025 1600

Website:

<http://www.consumerCouncil.org.uk/energy>,

## Cost of Living Support Payment

One-off payment to those on income related benefits, disabled claimants and pensioners. These payments are intended to provide support to you with the current rise in the cost of living.

[W:www.nidirect.gov.uk/cost-living-support](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/cost-living-support)

## Make the Call

Are you receiving all the benefits, services and support you are entitled to?

A benefit advisor can carry out a full assessment for you and advise accordingly. You may be entitled to additional income you were not aware of.

Calls are free on **0800 232 1271** or email **[makethecall@dfcni.gov.uk](mailto:makethecall@dfcni.gov.uk)**. Make the call today!

## Belfast City Council Fuel Stamp Scheme

Belfast City Council's fuel stamp scheme helps householders save for home heating oil, by spreading the cost of their fuel.

Residents can buy oil stamps from participating retailers, collect them on a savings card and use the value of the stamps to pay for all or part of an oil purchase when placing an order.

**W:** <https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/community/housing/home-heating>

## Belfast Warm and Well Scheme

Advice & practical support to vulnerable people to help stay warm and well through the provision of heating measures and financial assistance (subject to assessment)

**T:** 028 9023 9909

**Email:** [warmandwell@nea.org.uk](mailto:warmandwell@nea.org.uk)

## Winter Fuel Payment (NI Direct)

If you were born on or before 25th September 1956 you could get between £250 and £600 to help you pay your heating bills. You'll usually get this automatically if you're eligible but if not, you will need to make a claim.

**W:** [www.nidirect.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment-centre](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment-centre)

## Debt Management

If you are struggling to manage deductions from your benefit payments, you can contact the Debt Management Service.

**T:** 0800 587 1322

**W:** [www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/debt-management-northern-ireland](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/debt-management-northern-ireland)

## Discretionary Support

You can apply for help from Discretionary Support if you are in a financial crisis. Depending on your circumstances, you could be offered either an interest-free loan or a grant that you would not have to pay back.

**T:** 0800 587 2750

**Text Call:** 0800 587 2751

**W:** [www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/claim-discretionary-support](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/claim-discretionary-support)

## Universal Credit

You can apply for Universal Credit if you are unemployed or if you are in work and on a low-income. You can claim Universal Credit online but please note, there is a five week wait. You may be able to claim a contingency fund grant for short term living expenses to bridge the gap.

**T:** 0800 587 2750

**Text Call:** 0800 587 2751

**W:** [www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/how-you-make-claim-universal-credit](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/how-you-make-claim-universal-credit)

## Managed Migration to Universal Credit

The Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) has been piloting the managed migration to Universal Credit in some areas of Great Britain for some months now. It is however its intention to begin to roll this out to the remaining areas of the UK in April 2023, with a view to completing the process within 18-24 months. If you are in receipt of benefits, the DWP will write to you to tell you when you will be moved over to Universal Credit. We would advise you to seek benefit advice as soon as possible in preparation for this move. Please contact your local advice centre or if you are unsure who to speak to, contact your Housing Officer who will be able to signpost you to the relevant agency.

Please be aware that when you receive Universal Credit your rates will not be paid automatically. You must make a separate application for Rate Rebate at [www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/create-or-log-rate-rebate-account](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/create-or-log-rate-rebate-account)



Help make Northern Ireland a safer place for you and your family.

Tell us what you know about crime in your area.

crimestoppers-uk.org

CrimeStoppers Trust is a registered charity. UK Registration No. 1106875/SC037902

Northern Ireland  
**CrimeStoppers.**  
**0800 555 111**  
100% anonymous. Always.

## 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.

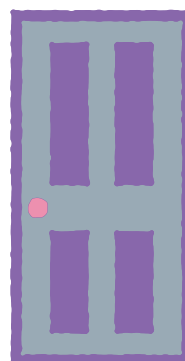
The portal can be accessed through our website [www.nb-housing.org](http://www.nb-housing.org). Before creating an account, you'll need to ensure that you have:

- 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.

## Bogus Caller Alert

Please be vigilant when allowing people you do not know into your home. All staff from a reputable company should be carrying ID. Do not be afraid to ask to see this before allowing a stranger to enter your home. If you have any concerns, contact the company that the person says they are from to confirm their identity. Any suspicious activity in your area should be reported to the PSNI on 101.







# Condensation in your Home

## What is condensation?

Condensation occurs when moist air comes into contact with a cold surface, such as when windows steam up. This is a very common issue as we all generate moisture as we breathe and carry out normal daily tasks such as cooking and washing. In some severe cases condensation can lead to mould on walls and ceilings and can also lead to damp patches.

As your landlord we are committed to working with our tenants to address any cases of condensation. We are particularly mindful that the high cost of heating your home may add to the issue as temperature reduce allowing more cold spots to develop. We ask any tenant who is experiencing condensation to please contact our Maintenance Team and an inspection will be carried out.

## Some useful tips to reduce moisture from your home

These simple steps will help you produce less moisture in your home:

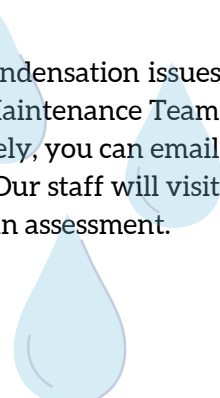
- If you can dry washing outdoors.
- If drying wet washing indoors, put it in the bathroom with the door closed and windows left open.
- If you can, try to keep your house warm for as long as possible. It is advised that a reduced thermostat setting at your boiler or radiators and run for longer is best rather than high heat for a short period.
- If you can, please do not dry wet clothes on radiators.
- Vent tumble driers outside.
- Keep trickle ventilators open when someone is in the room. Good ventilation helps protect your health and home from damage by working to eliminate excess moisture from the air. It is recommended to open windows and air your home for at least 20 minutes daily.

- Ventilate your kitchen and bathroom when in use by opening the windows and using extractor fans. When cooking place lids on pans as this will reduce the amount of moisture escaping into the room.
- Close kitchen and bathroom doors when in use. This will help prevent moisture reaching other rooms, especially bedrooms which are often colder and more likely to get condensation.
- We recommend extractors are used to remove moisture to outside the property. If you feel your extractor is not effective then please report this to our maintenance team.
- The bathroom is one of the rooms in your home that condensation will occur. Bathing creates a lot of moisture and steam and if it does not go outside then it will form water droplets on cold surfaces such as windows and walls. We recommend the extractor fan is on and left on until moisture is removed, open windows and air the bathroom after use.
- Where excess condensation is on windows and surfaces we recommend that this is wiped with a towel.

## How to remove mould

- Wipe mould off immediately with water using a sponge or cloth.
- We recommend you do not use washing up liquid or bleach!
- Apply anti mould removal liquid to remove mould; available from most high street stores (Read all instructions carefully before use).
- Dry clean clothes and shampoo carpets affected by mould.

If you have any damp or condensation issues please report these to our Maintenance Team on 02890351131. Alternatively, you can email us at [info@nb-housing.org](mailto:info@nb-housing.org). Our staff will visit the property and complete an assessment.



# Flax Foyer Homeless Awareness Week

## 5th-11th December 2022

During Homeless Awareness week we would like to raise awareness of the work we do in supporting young people experiencing homelessness.

Flax Foyer has 37 self-contained flats and provides 24/7 support to young people on a range of issues, including: housing, training, education and employment, independent living skills and help to access benefits and health care. We also provide support by spending time and talking to the young people when they need it. Sometimes it's the little things that mean the most.

We have great organisations/projects that support us including: Start360, NIYF, Bytes, Extern, Ashton Centre, Ardoyne Association, AYE, The Hype Team, YEHA, Lighthouse and The People's Kitchen. These organisations/projects help us provide a holistic service to our young people, ultimately helping to improve their circumstances and life experiences.



bytes



extern  
CHANGING LIVES EVERY DAY



At Christmas time we are reaching out for support to the local community, schools and charities to make sure our young people have enough basic essentials and hopefully a few treats too, it is Christmas after all. We know that times are hard for everyone, so we are very grateful for all those that have already committed their generosity and support.

We are also very pleased that we have passed our recent inspection from Supporting People, evidencing our dedication in improving standards for all the young people in need of our services.

If you know of a young person (18-25) in need of our service, please get in touch at [info@flaxfoyer.com](mailto:info@flaxfoyer.com)

# NB Housing Accredited

## We Invest in People Gold Award!



"Investors in People is delighted to award a local housing association in North Belfast, NB Housing, the We invest in people, GOLD accreditation.

Gold accreditation means that you've got the policies in place but more than that, it means everyone, from Board, CEO to apprentice takes ownership for making them come to life. NB Housing is an association that believes housing should be better. Homes that are affordable, secure and promote opportunity, to ensure everyone has an affordable, sustainable home in a supportive community that enables tenants to lead their best lives. NB Housing provides accommodation and support to families, homeless young people and older residents across Northern Ireland."

Paul Devoy, CEO of Investors in People, said: "We'd like to congratulate NB Housing. Gold accreditation on We invest in people is a fantastic effort for any organisation, and places NB Housing in fine company with a host of organisations that understand the value of people.

We believe that the success of your organisation begins and ends with people. If we make work better for everyone, we make work better for every organisation. And if we do that... we make society stronger, healthier and happier."

Commenting on the award, Caroline Keenan-Jackson, Director of Housing & Corporate Services, said: "We are delighted to have been accredited We invest in People Gold award for a second time. It is encouraging to receive recognition after what have been challenging times during a global pandemic. Our staff team are proud of the achievement and recognise that the ethos of continuous improvement is what makes us successful. We look forward to further engagement with the Investors in People family on our journey to make work better for both our staff team and ultimately the tenants for whom we provide services"

**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™**  
We invest in people Gold



# Our New Homes

An update from the Development Team

## Langley Street, Belfast

Works commenced on this new build development at the end of September 2022. The scheme is a first for the Association in that it has been brought forward using the Competitive Land, Design and Build procurement methodology. The site was formerly vacant land which had been unoccupied for a number of years. It is expected the completed properties will complement our existing developments in the area. Once complete the scheme will provide 3 x 2 bed houses, 2 x 2 bed apartments and 1 x 1 bed apartment. The properties are programmed to complete in the Autumn of 2023.

### Progress Pictures



### Proposed Completed Scheme



## Rehab Units

NB Housing have in recent years undertaken refurbishment of houses bought from the private housing market. Here are a few a few photos of one of the recent completed properties in Newtownards. Further units are going out to tender and are programmed to go onsite during early 2023. These will be the final rehab properties developed by NB Housing as we shift our focus to delivering new build properties.



## New Schemes in Planning: 22-30 Hopefield Avenue, Belfast

We have applied for planning permission to provide:

- 15 x 2 bed apartments for active elderly
- 3 x 2 bed wheelchair apartments

If planning is granted we estimate construction will commence in the Spring of 2023. Below is a computer generated image of the scheme



If you would like to keep up to date with our latest development sites please like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and take a look at our website!





# An Update from our Maintenance Team

## Meet the Team!



Dean joined NB Housing in September 2022 as a Maintenance Officer. Dean will assist tenants with all aspects of response maintenance, grounds maintenance, cleaning and estate services.

Dean's background in surveying will provide a great basis for the work he will undertake with NB Housing and is looking forward to getting to know our tenants.

As a father of two daughters, life is very busy for Dean but when he does get spare time he is a keen sports enthusiast.

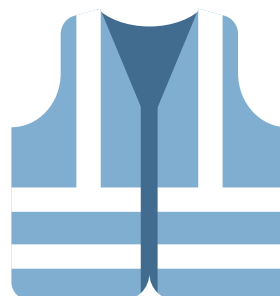
## Boiler Services and Access for Contractors

It is vital that all tenants provide access to NB Housing contractors to enable works to be completed. It is particularly important that you grant access for your annual Gas Boiler Service. This is a health and safety requirement and is essential to ensure the safe operation of your boiler. It also ensures that your boiler is working efficiently and given the high cost of fuel, it is in your interest to have this completed on time.

Failure to provide access will result in abortive call outs. If access continues to be an issue, the Association may instruct the capping of the gas supply at your home until the boiler service is complete.

Please note all additional costs associated with these actions will be deemed recoverable from tenants.

If you are unable to facilitate a contractor attending, please contact NB Housing on 02890351131, so alternative arrangements can be made.



## End of Tenancy Repairs

When terminating your tenancy, NB Housing expects properties to be left in a good standard. This includes the property being cleared from belongings and any gas/electric top up cards provided for the next tenant.

A member of our Maintenance Team will carry out an inspection and if any defects or non-standard items remain in the property which are tenant responsibility, we will ask these to be made good or else they will be recharged to the outgoing tenant.

## Home Insurance

The Association insures the building you live in against damage, however we do not cover tenant belongings. We encourage all tenants to take out home insurance so that your own belongings and furniture is adequately covered.

Home contents insurance can be purchased for as little as £63 per year and we encourage you to shop around for the best deal.

## Removal of Large Items

Any furniture that requires disposal should be arranged with your local council who will provide a bulky waste collection. Any item for disposal should be kept in your home until the day of collection as agreed with the council.

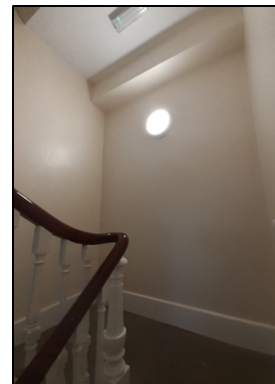
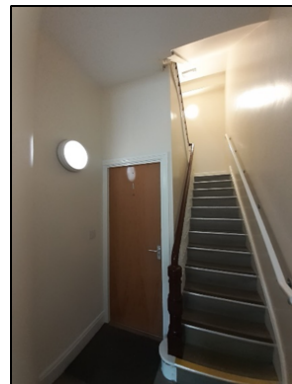
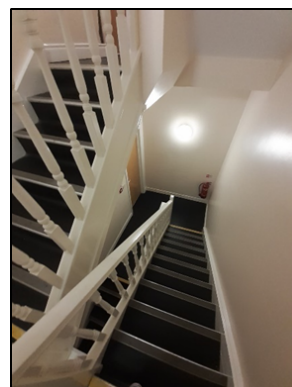
## Contact Details

Are your contact details up to date? Please ensure that we hold your current telephone number and email.



## Common Areas

NB Housing are pleased to have completed communal redecoration to a number of our apartment buildings



### 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](http://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

**Phoenix Gas:** 0345 455 5555

**Power NI:** 0345 745 5455

**INSEC Security:** 028 9020 0080

**Belfast City Council Pest Control:** 028 9027 0431

**Noise Control:** 028 9037 3006

**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](http://www.nb-housing.org)), can contact us via email: [info@nb-housing.org](mailto:info@nb-housing.org) or can text us on 074 9820 2221