



# NB Housing

Homes that build community

## Tenants Newsletter

ISSUE 34  
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### Annual Report

We are delighted to include your copy of NB Housing Annual Report 22/23. 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 22nd December. Our offices will be closed on 25th December, 26th December, 27th December and 1st January 2023.

In the event of an out of hours emergency repair, please call Radius Connect24 on 02890423811

# Getting to Know You...

## *Meet our Housing Apprentice*

We welcomed Brodie Reilly to the NB Housing Team in February 2022 as our Housing Apprentice and have asked him a few questions about his experience so far!

### Why did you decide on a career in housing?

When I researched into the housing sector I was very interested. It stood out to me as it was an opportunity to help and support people through difficult situations. What also enticed me was how many different career possibilities that were in housing.

### How did you apply to the Apprenticeship Programme and what does it involve?

I applied online for the housing apprenticeship through an advert I found. Once I had applied, I came for an interview and upon being successful, I was offered a placement at NB Housing. This is my first year of the programme, I work four days a week in office and one day at home for online classes, I have a face to face day in class once every six weeks.

### What is a typical week like in NB Housing for you?

A typical week in NB Housing for me would be supporting the separate teams within the organisation, housing, maintenance and development which allows me to learn and grow my knowledge in housing as a whole. I would attend house visits, organise filing and delivery of starter packs to new tenants, anything that helps my co-workers to focus on their key roles and deliver a quality service to our tenants. Currently I am working on reception for the maintenance team.

### What's your favourite thing about working in housing?

My favourite thing about working in housing would be being able to make a positive impact on people's lives. Being able to help people with queries or issues, give them advice and signpost them to support agencies for different types of problems. This is a big plus for me as being able to answer queries and solve problems as well as pointing people in the right direction for certain issues gives me great satisfaction and motivates me further to grow my knowledge in housing in order to help more people and give as best advice as possible.



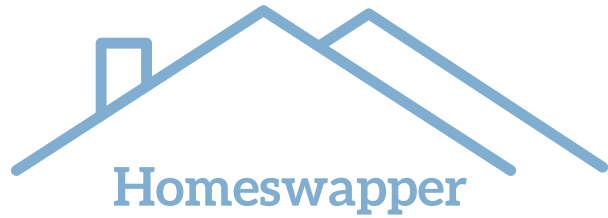
## Tenant Participation

During this quarter some tenants took part in a Halloween wreath making event. This was an enjoyable activity for the participants who were all provided with a tasty lunch beforehand. Pictured below are some residents working hard before showing off the finished product.

We have further activities planned for the new year and would love to see you come along and take part. All NB Housing tenants are very welcome to take part. If you would like to get involved please contact us on 028 90592110 to register your interest.



Tenant Participation activity is a wonderful opportunity to meet new people and we are always keen to encourage new members to come aboard. Our Tenant Forum also provides tenants with the opportunity to express their views on our service and get involved in reviewing some of our policies and processes.



Interested in a mutual exchange? Visit [www.homeswapper.co.uk](http://www.homeswapper.co.uk) and register your interest. Homeswapper allows all social housing tenants to register their details on a shared portal and if approved by their landlord, broadens their opportunity to find a match.

If you would like more information on Homeswapper please speak to your Housing Officer. Please note that where you identify a suitable match on Homeswapper, you must still contact NB Housing and apply through the usual mutual exchange procedure.

## Mandatory Migration to Universal Credit Update

From 16th October 2023, the process of mandatory migration to Universal Credit was extended to all areas of the province and includes those who receive tax credits with no other benefits (apart from Housing Benefit). If you are in this category you will receive a letter from DFC, known as a migration notice, advising that you must apply for Universal Credit. Please note that unlike Housing Benefit, Universal Credit does not pay for the rates element of your weekly charge, and you must apply for Rate Rebate separately at [www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/create-or-log-rate-rebate-account](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/create-or-log-rate-rebate-account).

Please do not hesitate to contact your Housing Officer if you need any further advice in relation to this or if you feel you would benefit from a support referral.

# Our New Homes

## An update from our Development Team

Our Development Team have been busy progressing our new build schemes and we currently have over 70 new build units on site. During the year we commenced new builds in Belfast, Cookstown, Dunmurry, Lisburn and Kilkeel. Below is a snapshot on progress to date:

### Leamington Place, Lisburn

Work commenced on Leamington Place in Lisburn and will provide 12 much needed apartments.



### Bridge Street, Kilkeel

Work ongoing at Bridge Street, Kilkeel and will provide 9 much needed apartments.



## Linen Gate, Cookstown

With the Climate Change (Northern Ireland) 2022 (Act) now in place, it sets a target of at least 100% reduction in net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 for Northern Ireland. One of the major contributions to emissions is the use of fossil fuels in heating our homes.

NB Housing is pleased to announce our first scheme that will be powered without the use of a conventional gas or oil heating system. These houses will benefit from an energy efficient heating system that will deliver environmental benefits and inform us for future schemes.



## What's in Store for 2024?

2024 promises to be a busy year for handovers for the Association. Below is a table showing the anticipated completion dates for a number of schemes expected to complete next year:

Scheme Address	Mix	Appropriate Handover
197-203 Crumlin Rd	9 x 3 person 2 bed houses 3 x 5 person 3 bed houses 2 x 2 person 1 bed apartments	February 2024
Linen Gate, Moneymore Rd, Cookstown	5 x 4 person 2 bed bungalows	Winter 2024
Gobrana Road, Glenavy	11 x 5 person 3 bed houses	Winter 2024
Bridge Street, Kilkeel	7 x 3 person 2 bed apartments 2 x 4 person 2 bed apartments	Spring 2024
Leamington Place, Lisburn	10 x 3 person 2 bed apartments (CAT1) 2 x 2 person 1 bed wheelchair apartments	Autumn 2024
Bridge Street, Lisburn	9 x 2 person 1 bed apartments	Autumn 2024

# An Update from the Maintenance Team

## Important information for tenants with natural gas heating systems.

If your gas heating stops working please follow the points below before requesting a repair:

Ensure your gas supply is on:

- If your meter is displaying between 30 - 15 units, you can avoid your gas supply switching off by releasing your 'credit reserve facility'. To do this insert card, press and hold red button 'A' for 5 seconds until you hear a beep. Release button and remove card.
- If your meter reaches 15 units it will automatically switch the supply off, unless it is put into reserve. Once this happens a 'C' will appear beside your unit count, in order to open the reserve again, top up your pay-and-go card and insert it into the meter, when doing this please ensure that the boiler is off otherwise your payment will be received but the gas supply will remain closed.
- If your top up is successful the 'C' beside the unit count will change to an 'O' this will take approx. 10-15 seconds following topping up. This now means that your gas supply is open and your boiler should start firing up again. If your boiler still doesn't fire up hit the reset button and check that your room thermostat hasn't been turned down.
- If you report this as a repair and the contractor finds the thermostat turned down to the off position we reserve the right to recharge you the cost of the call out.
- This also applies to tenants in new build houses still under defects you must check the thermostat before reporting a fault.

## Book your annual boiler service

It is a legal requirement that we carry out an annual gas safety inspection in your home. Without it, your appliances could become unsafe, putting you and your family's lives at risk.

It is part of your tenancy agreement to have these necessary checks carried out. If you refuse to let the gas engineer in, we will have no choice but to apply for a court order to gain access to your property. It is vitally important that you let our gas contractors into your home to carry out the annual safety check. We will write to you with an appointment date. It will only take around an hour for them to service your gas boiler. If the time we give you is not convenient, just phone us to re-arrange it. It costs you nothing and it could save your life. Whatever you do, don't ignore it. Your family's lives could depend on it

All our contractors are registered with Gas Safe. When they visit your home, they will show you their photographic ID cards, if you have any concerns you should contact the maintenance team on 02890 351131.



### CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) POISONING



Gas Safety



# Our Investment Programme

## Kitchen & Bathroom Update

We have been working hard to progress our kitchen and bathroom replacements throughout North Belfast. Thank you to all our tenants who have given access to their homes to have their kitchen and bathroom upgraded. If your kitchen and/or bathroom have been surveyed, you should receive a letter from NB Housing within the next few months to advise when your works will start.

Kitchen and bathroom surveys are continuing so please ensure that when our Consultants Questcon contact you with regards to your survey that you contact them to arrange access, as failure to give access will cause a delay in your kitchen and bathroom being upgraded.

## Window & Door Replacements

The replacement of common windows at Holyrood House will commence in the coming months. We will contact all residents advising of when works will commence. There will be a level of disruption within the scheme while these works are on-going and we thank you in advance for your patience and cooperation.

We have identified a further 55 properties within North Belfast that will receive new doors in early 2024. We will contact all residents advising of when works will commence in their home.

We expect upon completion of these schemes that we will be investing around £900,000.

## Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR)

You may have been contacted recently by one of our electrical contractors with regards to Electrical Installation Condition Report (or EICR) in your home. An EICR is an inspection and testing of electrical installations within your home to ensure they are in a satisfactory condition and safe for continued use. We are required to carry this out every 5 years. This test forms part of our regulatory requirements, so it's really important that we get access to your home to carry this out. Failure to grant access is a breach of your tenancy agreement and we can exercise the right to apply to court for access and you will be liable for all costs associated.

If your appointment is not suitable, please contact the number on the letter to make alternative arrangements. During the EICR we require clear access to your electrical cupboard and all of the electrical sockets. The EICR should take approximately 2 hours to complete. If we find any minor faults, our electricians will repair these at the time of the EICR. If we need to fix other issues, such as replacing your consumer unit, we will arrange this as follow-on work at a date and time to suit you.

We appreciate your cooperation in allowing us to carry out this safety check and if you have any queries or concerns, regarding any maintenance work please do not hesitate to get in touch with our Maintenance Team on 028 90351131.



### 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

**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

**INSEC Security:** 028 9020 0080

### 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