

Newington H.A continues to support the **'Best of the North'**



As a local community based housing provider, we actively seek to sponsor activities or events which positively promotes North Belfast and 'The Best of the North Awards' is a great example of this.

In only its second year, these awards have already become a phenomenal success and Newington HA is delighted to have been the Premier Sponsor for both years. The brainchild of the North Belfast News and its parent company Belfast Media Group, these awards are a celebration of all things that make a resilient, vibrant and sustainable community.

The 30 separate categories acknowledge the contribution of individuals and organisations in the public and voluntary sector, as well as recognising the achievement of local businesses and entrepreneurs, who provide services and employment to local people.

Competition was fierce and all winners were chosen by the public. An astounding 223,000 votes were cast in the four weeks leading up to the awards ceremony.

Winning organisations and businesses promote they are the "Best of the North" in their field and some have advised that business has increased as a result of their success.

Over 300 guests were in attendance at the event, which undoubtedly showcased the amount of dedication, hard work and local talent there is within our community.

Newington wishes to extend its thanks to the North Belfast News for the opportunity to be part of such a successful night and to extend our congratulations to all those that were nominated, shortlisted and successful in acquiring awards on the night.

Newington's involvement in this event reinforces our reputation as an organisation engaged with the local community at all levels. Although we are classed as a "community based Housing Association" we could also easily be referred to as a community organisation that happens to be a Housing Association.



Newington commits to 'Make a Stand'

Make a Stand was launched by the Chartered Institute of Housing to tackle domestic abuse. It centres on a pledge that CIH have developed in partnership with the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) and Women's Aid.

Millions of people experience domestic abuse every year and two women are killed by their partner or ex-partner every week in the U.K.

Housing organisations house and employ millions of people across the UK and Ireland and that means we house and employ many thousands of people who are affected by domestic abuse.

Newington has recently committed to provide support for people experiencing domestic abuse. By doing so, we have publicly committed to take proactive action to support victims of domestic abuse.

Anyone suffering from domestic abuse can also call into the Association's office or contact us directly on **028 9074 4005** for advice and support. All information you provide us will be kept in the strictest of confidence.



**DON'T TOLERATE IT,
REPORT IT.**

If you are a victim or know someone who is a victim, contact police on 999 in an emergency or 101 for non emergency or **Women's Aid** on **028 9066 6049**

What do i do... if there is a change in my circumstances?

HAVE THERE BEEN ANY RECENT CHANGES IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD CIRCUMSTANCES?

WHAT DO I DO IF I RETURN TO WORK?

If there is any change in your current circumstances or if you require any advice regarding any recent or upcoming changes within your household, please contact the Association immediately.

Staff can offer advice on how you may be affected and will assist you to ensure all relevant paperwork is forwarded to the relevant agencies such as Housing Benefit. This will ensure the transition process is as easy as possible for you.

Home Adaptations

Do you have a current impairment which restricts you from easily accessing your property or which prevents you from managing sufficiently within your home?

Association staff are available to carryout a quick assessment with you to identify if minor adaptations can be incorporated into your property, to make life easier for you.

We can also assist in referring you for an Occupational Therapist assessment, if major works to your home are required.

For further advice and information, please contact a member of staff on **02890 744055**.

Why not join Newington's Match Savings Scheme



Newington Housing has been working in partnership with Newington Credit Union over the past few years to deliver a Match Savings Scheme to our tenants. When joining the scheme you must initially save a minimum of £10 per month on a regular basis for the first 6 months. At the end of the 6 months, we will check with Newington Credit Union to ensure you have adhered to the terms of the Scheme.

If you have met the terms of the Scheme, the Association will deposit the amount of £60.00 (i.e. match the minimum savings amount you will have saved over the first 6 months into your account as a reward).

You can qualify for Newington's Match Savings Scheme if you do not currently have a credit union account or if your credit union account been inactive for more than 2 years.

If any tenant is interested in joining the Match Savings Scheme, please call us on 028 9074 4005 and we will be happy to assist you through the application process.



YOUR CREDIT UNION

Planning for tomorrow



Community Investments & Tenant Engagement

For several years, we have been involved in several major regeneration projects within the local area (i.e. regeneration of the Limestone Road, Dunmore, Girdwood, New Lodge, etc.) and as a community focused organisation we recognise that as well as developing homes and services for our tenants, we also need to ensure that we invest in and develop initiatives which benefit the whole community:

Over the past 12 months we have supported and participated in local projects which are aimed at strengthening communities and improves local residents' health and well-being.

For example:

- » **Distributed over £15,000 to local projects who deliver activities to all.**
- » **Awarded student bursaries to 3 tenants/ households members to support further education and learning.**
- » **Facilitated and participated in local community clean ups and fun-days.**
- » **Assisted tenants to join our Match Savings Scheme in partnership with Newington Credit Union.**
- » **Supported other local initiative such as the 'Best of the North Awards'**

Moving forward, we recognise that the Association must play a key role in ensuring that when we build homes, we also invest in local amenities and service, which will then support new tenants and others residing within the local community. In view of this, we are committed to further significant investments over the coming months and years ahead.

Finally, the Association would welcome idea from tenants on ways to improve their local area. Please contact us on **028 9074 4055** if you would like to discuss them with a member of our team.



Grow Project at Camberwell Court

Camberwell Court is a sheltered housing complex on the Limestone Road; when driving past you might have noticed our poly-tunnel tucked away at the back of the garden. Each Wednesday in the growing season, a group of residents and volunteers meet with a community gardener to participate in gardening activities.

These sessions are run by Grow, a North Belfast charity that is all about people, community, health, wellbeing, promoting diversity and social justice. Grow has a unique way of doing this - growing food, flowers, cooking, lots of tea and creating beautiful shared spaces where people can be themselves and share their stories.

The Camberwell Court garden has an exceptional group of six volunteers and a trained community gardener who supports the sessions. The sessions are designed to be completely inclusive for all abilities; whether it be in the poly-tunnel, the garden or seated at the table, everyone can contribute to the garden and feel welcome.

At Camberwell we grow fruit, vegetables and flowers and share the seasonal harvest once a week; but most importantly we always have time for tea and a good chat.

We plan for the residents of Camberwell to visit our Waterworks Community Garden to make pizza and to visit Antrim Castle Gardens in September 2018. We also hope to organise an evening cooking session, jointly with another local community group, later in the year.

Grow also runs the community garden in the waterworks park and has organised events such as the Big Lunch and clay oven pizza evenings for local community groups. However this is just the tip of the iceberg for Grow's outreach in North Belfast.

If you are interested in volunteering with Grow, please get in touch with **Pauline O'Flynn**, our **Outreach and Development Officer** on: **07749077322** or by email: **pauline.oflynn@grow-ni.org**



Development News

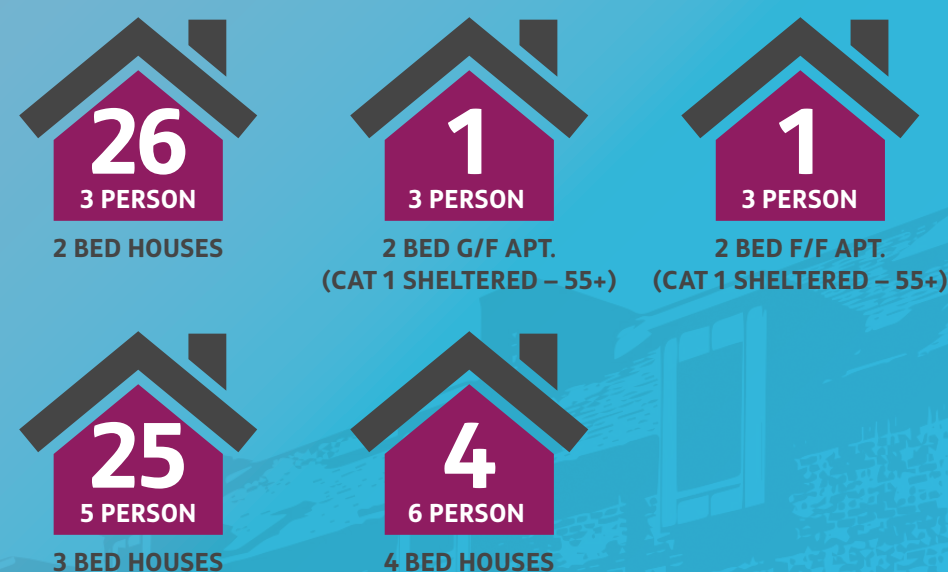
In 2017/18, we worked in partnership with Apex Housing and Choice Housing to deliver an additional 56 new homes within North Belfast.

At our Dunmore/Alexandra Park Avenue development we took possession of 38 new homes and at our Parkside Gardens/Newington Street developments we also acquired 18 new homes.

In addition to the above, in June 2018, we took possession of 31 new homes, which were acquired through Phase 1 of the New Lodge Redevelopment Scheme.

New Lodge Phases 2 - 5 will see us acquire a further 57 new homes by the end of 2018 and these homes will be allocated to those in high priority need and in housing stress.

BREAKDOWN OF THE TYPE OF HOMES CURRENTLY BEING CONSTRUCTED UNDER PHASE 2 – 5:



ANTICIPATED TIMEFRAMES FOR HANDOVER OF THE REMAINING 57 PROPERTIES IN PHASE 2 – 5:



Planned & Cyclical Maintenance 2018/2019

The Association has recently completed its Planned and Cyclical Maintenance Programme of Works for 2017/18 and spent approximately **£254,000**. Looking ahead, we plan to invest a further **£518,000** in our stock during 2018/19 on the following projects:

PLANNED MAINTENANCE SCHEMES IN 2018/19

NATURE OF WORKS	LOCATION	ANTICIPATED COST
Kitchen Replacement Scheme	Deerpark Mews (9 properties) Meadow Place (9 properties) North Queen Street (10 properties) Spamount Street (9 properties) Victoria Parade (11 properties)	£132,000
Gas Boiler Replacement Scheme	Deerpark Mews (9 properties) Kansas Avenue (3 properties) Lisieux House Sheltered Scheme	£40,000
Secondary Glazing Scheme	Lisieux House Sheltered Scheme	£50,000
Major Improvement and Thermal Insulation works	8 NHA properties	£200,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		£422,000

CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE SCHEMES IN 2018/19

NATURE OF WORKS	LOCATION	ANTICIPATED COST
NICEIC Electrical Tests	100 general needs and sheltered units	£10,000
External Cyclical Painting	Approx. 50 no. properties throughout North Belfast	£46,000
Annual Gas Servicing	627 properties owned by NHA	£40,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		£96,000

Contents Insurance Are YOU Covered?

The Association would advise all tenants that it is their responsibility to take out Contents Insurance.

The Association is not liable for any loss or damage caused to Tenant's belongings Contents Insurance can be obtained from most Insurance Brokers.



Useful Numbers

NIHE: 03448 920 900

Phoenix Gas: 08454 55 55 55

POWER NI: 03457 643 643

BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Pest Control: 02890 270431

B.C.C Noise Control: 02890 373 006

B.C.C Waste Management: 02890 270 657

Newington
Housing Association



02890 744055

Tenant Debt Advice Service & Support via Housing Rights Service

The Association operates a referral service for tenant's currently experiencing financial difficulties. The Tenant Debt Advice Services is delivered by Housing Rights Service and is completely confidential.

Any tenant seeking to avail of financial advice and support is urged to contact us for further information.



Belfast Family Support Hub brings together organisations that deliver services to children/young people (0-18yrs) and their parents/carers. This includes community, statutory and family support service.

For further information, please contact **Edith McManus**, Co-Ordinator of the Lower North Belfast Family Support Hub by phone on **02890 749986** or email her at : edith.mcmanus@ashtoncentre.com

OR

Karen McClean, Co-Ordinator of the Upper North Belfast Family Support Hub by phone on **02890 351020** or email her at : uppernorthfamilysup-port@vinecentre.org or alternatively contact the Association on **02890 744055** for advice, assistance and guidance.



Gas safety in your home

Gas safety inspections

As your landlord, we are legally required to carry out a gas safety inspection each year. The inspection is to check your gas appliances are safe.

>> Our Gas Safe contractors will carry out the inspections and you do not have to pay anything for the service.

The Association or our contractor will contact you to arrange access to your home. If your circumstances make it difficult for you to have a gas inspection, please contact us. We will work with you to ensure your service is completed.

As this is a legal requirement, if you do not provide us with access to your home, we will take legal steps to gain entry or take steps to ensure the gas supply to your property is disconnected until your boiler service is completed.

Gas leaks

If you smell gas or think there's a leak phone **0800 002 001**. Also, make sure you:

- >> Turn off your gas supply immediately
- >> Open windows and doors to let in fresh air
- >> Don't turn electric switches on or off
- >> Don't smoke
- >> Don't use naked flames.

Carbon monoxide poisoning

Unsafe gas appliances may produce a poisonous gas called carbon monoxide (CO). This gas is odourless and invisible. When breathed in it can cause serious health problems or death.

We have installed CO detectors in all our homes to protect you and your family. If your CO detector is triggered turn off your gas appliances, open windows and contact the Association immediately on **02890 744055** during office hours or our out of hours telecare service on **0800 731 3081**.



Fire safety advice

Following the Grenfell Tower fire, it is important that we all take steps to ensure all residents have the information they need to raise any fire safety concerns and are well informed about what to do if an incident should occur in their building. High-rise buildings are designed to resist fire and stop the spread of smoke. Most fires are contained and do not spread beyond the flat they originated in.

Safety advice for residents

- >> Newington has installed smoke alarms in all our accommodation and it is important that they are tested at least once a week.
- >> As a tenant, formulate an escape plan in case you ever need to evacuate the building.
- >> Communicate the escape plan to other occupants in your household and with neighbouring tenants.
- >> If you are high up, do not use the lift. If you can, go down the stairs.

- >> In the event of a fire, there will be a designated assembly point located outside your building. If you are unsure where this assembly point is, please contact the Association for clarity.
- >> If you cannot get out of your home, go into one room, then phone 999 and say which room you are in. The fire and rescue service will tell you what to do and they will get there as fast as they can.
- >> Keep exits clear both in your home and in communal areas
- >> Never leave flammable materials/unwanted household furniture in the communal areas or bins stores.
- >> All front doors to flats and doors on corridors and staircases are 'self-closing' fire doors, never wedge them open

Finally, if you spot anything that concerns you, please contact the Association on 028 9074 4055 further additional advice and assistance.

Home Safety/Protecting **your** Home

Homes with no security measures in place are **five times** more likely to be burgled than those with simple security measures. Good window locks and strong deadlocks can make a big difference.

By taking just a few steps can make a big difference in keeping your home safe from burglary. Here are a few tips:

Helpful Tips

- >> Lock your doors and windows every time you leave the house, even when you're just out in the garden.
- >> Remembering to double-lock UPVC doors (lift handle and turn key).
- >> Hide all keys, including car keys, out of sight and away from the letterbox (remember a device could be used to hook keys through the letterbox).
- >> Install a visual burglar alarm and ensure your outside lighting is in working order.
- >> Get a trusted neighbour to keep an eye on your property.
- >> Leave radios or lights in your house on a timer to make the property appear occupied.
- >> Make sure the fences around your garden are in good condition.
- >> Secure bikes at home by locking them to an immovable object inside a locked shed or garage.
- >> Keep ladders and tools stored away; don't leave them outside where they could be used to break into your home.
- >> Ensure side gates are locked to prevent access to the rear of the property.
- >> Ensure rear fencing is in good repair.
- >> Improve natural surveillance at the front of your property i.e. trim high hedges.
- >> Remove valuables from view of ground floor windows.
- >> Store any high value items (i.e. jewellery, passports) in a properly secured safe.

Beware of Bogus Callers

Reports of bogus callers tricking their way into people's homes are a regular occurrence. Often the problem arises because people are very trusting and are willing to accept strangers into their homes.

It is very important to be wary. Always ask for identification. If you are unsure, don't let them in.

Our Contact Details/ Reporting Repairs

Contact us directly on: **02890 744055**
Visit our website: www.newingtonha.co.uk
& (click on report a repair icon on the main screen)
or email us directly: admin@newingtonha.co.uk

When our offices are closed, Emergency Repairs can be reported through our Out of Hours service via Fold Tele-care on **0800 7313081**

Meter Box Damages and Rechargeable Repair

The Association is receiving requests from tenants to repair/replace their gas meter boxes, due to malicious damage.

The Association wishes to advise all tenants that the repair/replacement of meter boxes are not the responsibility of the Association and if any tenants request these works, they may be held liable for the associated costs.

What do I do about mould?

The environment in the home can become damp. Too much moisture in your home can lead to damp and mould conditions and is often due to condensation.

Condensation

Are your wall surfaces, windows, furniture or clothing damp? Can you see black mould growing on them?

If so, it is likely that you have a condensation problem.

Condensation occurs mainly during cold weather, whether it is raining or dry. It appears on cold surfaces and in places where there is little movement of air. It forms when warm moist air and steam are produced and the warm air comes into contact with, and condenses on, a cold surface before it can leave the building. Look for it in corners, on or near windows, in or behind wardrobes and cupboards. It often forms on north-facing walls.

How to avoid condensation

There is no immediate or easy solution but as the occupier you are responsible for balancing the three main factors, which are Heating, Ventilation and Moisture.

Some ordinary daily activities produce a lot of moisture quickly:-

Moisture

There are steps which will help you reduce the condensation in your home by producing less moisture:

- Cover pans and do not leave kettles boiling.
- Do not dry washing on radiators
- Dry washing outdoors on a line, or put in the bathroom with the door closed and the window open or fan on.
- Tumble dryers must be vented to the outside.

Ventilation

You can ventilate your home without making draughts to reduce moisture:

- Keep a small window ajar when someone is in the room.
- If your windows have trickle ventilators use them.
- Ventilate kitchens and bathrooms when in use by opening the windows wider, or better still, use a humidity-controlled electric fan if one is fitted.
- Do not block air-brick vents.
- Ventilate cupboards and wardrobes.
- Avoid putting too many things in cupboards and wardrobes as this stops the air circulating.
- Where possible, position wardrobes and furniture against internal walls.
- Do not block permanent ventilators.
- Do not draught-proof rooms where there is condensation or mould.

- Do not draught-proof windows in the bathroom and kitchen.
- Do not tamper with any ventilation or extract unit installed within your property.

Heating and insulation

You can make sure that you have adequate heating and insulation in your home to reduce moisture:

- When at home, the ideal temperature usually ranges between 19-22 degrees Celsius in the living rooms, including the kitchen and bathroom, and 16-20 degrees Celsius in the bedrooms.
- When away from home, the temperature in the rooms should not drop under 15 degrees Celsius to avoid condensation and increased humidity levels.
- Do not heat up cold bedrooms in the evening by opening the door to heated rooms. The warm and humid air will condensate on the cold walls of the bedroom.
- Good insulation of the building creates warmer walls and ceilings, and therefore inhibits mould growth by preventing condensation from forming on them. Note: tight windows and buildings require more active ventilation.
- Close the kitchen and bathroom doors when these rooms are in use, even if your kitchen and bathroom has an extractor fan. This will help prevent moisture reaching other rooms, especially bedrooms, which are often colder and more likely to get condensation.

First steps against mould:

First treat any mould you may already have in your home. If you then deal with the basic problem of condensation, mould should not reappear. The long-term solution to avoiding severe mould is to eliminate dampness. If the above points are followed, condensation should not be a persistent problem in your home.

However, you must remember that a balance is needed between these factors and you may need to experiment and persevere until the problem is resolved.

To kill and remove mould

- Wipe down walls and window frames with a fungicidal wash
- Dry-clean mildewed clothes and shampoo carpets
- After treatment, redecorate using a good quality fungicidal paint to prevent mould recurring

Note: this paint is not effective if overlaid with ordinary paints or wallpaper.



Need a Repair?

Contact details

If you require a repair, when contacting the Association, please provide us with your correct contact details. Also when our contractors are due to call with you, please ensure you have made adequate arrangement for them to gain access. If you request a repair and you then fail to provide access, you will be requested to repay the Association the associated callout charge.

Boiler Service

The Association is still conducting our annual programme of cyclical gas servicing to all our properties. We appreciate all your assistance in facilitating access to our contractors. If anyone has not yet had their gas boiler serviced and is aware that an engineer has already called with them, can they please contact the Association immediately?



How to make a Complaint?

Are you dissatisfied with the service we provide?

If so, please contact us immediately. Information on how to make a complaint is provided within your Tenants Handbook. Complaint Forms can be provided to you, by contacting or calling into our office.

We welcome your feedback and views, and strive to put things right when they go wrong. Staff are available to assist you with this simple process and to ensure a satisfactory resolution is found. **Just call us on 028 90 744055.**

If we cannot resolve your complaint immediately, we will forward you a complaints form or take your complaint over the phone.

Your complaint will be acknowledged and investigated. Our team aim is to treat all complaints as opportunities to improve our services to tenants, so please contact us when you need to.



Tenancy Fraud and Subletting of NHA properties

Newington H.A. is committed to tackling tenancy fraud to ensure our properties are used to their full potential by those designated to reside within them.

Addressing tenancy fraud can only be achieved with the support of our tenants and the information we receive. If you suspect that someone is committing tenancy fraud or subletting their home to someone else, please contact us immediately.

Tenancy Fraud has a major impact on all those currently awaiting a new home. **To report any suspected Tenancy Fraud, please contact our Housing Team on 028 90 744055.**