



Newington Office Limestone Road

The Association is delighted to advise that our new office on the Limestone Road is almost complete. We expect to get staff back into the office in mid-December and have the office open to tenants and the public at the beginning of January. This newly constructed building is a significant improvement on our old office and will be a lot more accessible.

Newington has played a pivotal role in redeveloping and building sustainable communities throughout North Belfast. This work is still ongoing and shaped our decision to demolish and re-build on the site of our previous office. As a community-based organisation, we wanted to ensure we are conveniently situated for our tenants and other key stakeholders to access our services and to remain within the heart of the community. Once we are settled in it is our intention to offer community groups and local service providers the opportunity use our facilities, to enable them to deliver for North Belfast.

Finally, on behalf of everyone at Newington, we wish to convey our sincere appreciation to Groundwork NI, who provided us with temporary office accommodation, still in the heart of the community, whilst our new premises were under construction.



Update on extension of Welfare Advice Post & Financial Advice and Support

We are delighted to announce that our Board have recently met and agreed to extend financial support to sustain the Independent UC/Welfare Advice Officer post, employed via the North Belfast Advice Partnership.

The current postholder Niamh provides unrestricted access and support with initial Universal Credit application and assistance with all aspects of a UC claim. This includes maintaining a UC claim until the claimant receives their first payment of Universal Credit.

Niamh can also arrange a full benefit entitlement check, a better off calculation, access to support relating to a benefit appeal, the provision of digital support, housing advice, money management, appointments, etc. She also links residents with other services such as family support programmes, employability and training programmes, crisis intervention and support and independent debt advice.

The new UC/Welfare Advice Officer, Niamh between January 2020 and September 2021 has successfully assisted over 670 Newington tenants and other local clients and generated additional income of more than £1.86 million for those she worked with during this period.

The Board decision to provide further funding to sustain this role beyond its initial planned two years emphasises the impact Niamh has made not only in terms of the financial outcomes achieved for local people, but also in how she worked with many vulnerable people to achieve positive outcomes for them.

The commitment by our Board to provide additional funding emphasises Newington continued objective to supporting our tenants, other local residents and the North Belfast community in general.

With the recent removal of the £20 top up for Universal Credit claimants, rising energy prices resulting in the continued increase in utility bills, the rising cost of food and other essential household items, many within our community will face financial hardship this winter, leaving them in impossible situations like having to choose to heat their home, feed their children or pay their rent.

If anyone is struggling financially and in need of crisis intervention or further information and advice on how to acquire a referral to see Niamh, please contact your Housing Officer on 028 90 74 4055.

The National Energy Action (NEA) - a national fuel poverty charity, working to ensure that everyone in England, Wales and Northern Ireland is warm and safe at home has developed a series of information leaflets to help provide advice and guidance.

The below advice and information leaflets can be acquired by visiting: <https://www.nea.org.uk/mediafactsheets/information-leaflets/>

Dealing with damp and condensation (2021)

Using your central heating system (2021)

How to read your electricity bill (2021)

How to read your gas bill (2021)

How to read your gas and electricity meter (2021)

Your home energy checklist (2021)

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 on **028 9074 4055**. Newington staff can offer advice on how you may be affected or can assist with making the appropriate referrals to ensure the correct paperwork is forwarded to the relevant agencies such as Housing Benefit, Universal Credit. etc. This will ensure the transition process is as easy as possible for you.

Newington's Student Bursary Awards 2021



The Association is delighted to confirm that we recently distributed eight **£500** bursary awards this year totalling the sum of **£4,000**.

Five were awarded to new students, along with three renewals to existing awardees to help them financially during this current academic year.

We recognise that it takes real commitment from students and their families to continue and to remain in third level education and are mindful that for many families there have been significant challenges over the past 18 months, as the Covid-19 pandemic has undoubtedly impacted many within communities throughout North Belfast and further afield.

Third level education and the financial burden placed on family members to support young people within a learning environment has probably never been more challenging. We believe this year more than ever our awards will significantly help and assist students going into or remaining in, higher education and the financial support provided will help in some way to reduce the pressures faced by many families, as well as provide students with some welcome relief.

Commenting on the recent awards, Newington's Head of Housing & Communities, Jacqui Gilmore said:

"We are delighted to be able to continue to support this initiative in partnership with Newington Credit Union. The majority of our homes are located within areas of high deprivation and low educational attainment and we passionately believe it is important to invest in our tenants and their families. This important project has been ongoing for several years and both organisations have witnessed a number of previous awardees, with the assistance of this bursary, achieve their educational goals. I particularly want to express my gratitude to our partner organisation, Newington Credit Union for their continued support and dedication in delivering such a fantastic initiative in partnership with us."

Looking ahead, it is hoped that once the successful candidates complete their studies, they will return to North Belfast to apply the skills and knowledge they have learned, through their future professions.

On behalf of the Association, we wish to convey our congratulations to all the successful candidates and wish them every success with their studies over the coming few months.



Our Tenant Forum

Our Tenant Forum was established in April 2017 and continued to meet regularly up until March 2020. With the outbreak of Covid-19 coupled with a change for some members in their personal circumstances, resulting in them having to leave the Forum. The challenges of remote/digital working and the restrictions on face to face meetings resulted in no meetings taking place.

We recognise that tenants and stakeholders' feedback is vital in assessing our performance and identifying any necessary improvements required to how we operate. Newington staff actively develop new ways to consult and engage with our tenants. This is to acquire valuable feedback on our service delivery, performance standards, tenant satisfaction level, etc. and through our Tenant Forum and Menu of Involvement, which provides our tenants with various ways to engage and participate

in the activities of Newington, in a way and at a level which suits their own personal circumstances to become actively and meaningfully involved in shaping the services we provide.

Over recent weeks the Association has, in partnership with Supporting Communities, been providing new members of our Tenant Forum with bespoke training.

Once training is complete, the Association is aiming to re-establish a new Tenant Forum in early 2022.

Anyone wishing to join the Tenant Forum or interested in getting involved in other ways are asked to contact their Housing Officer or our Community Engagement Officer, Martin Hamilton, on 028 9074 4055.



Why should I become a member of Newington's Tenants' Forum?

As a tenant of Newington your knowledge of tenancy matters is important to shape the services we deliver.

What is the Tenant Forum?

The Tenants' Forum is a group of volunteers who give up some of their free time to improve the services and information tenants receive from Newington. Members also meet to have their say about what's happening. They discuss policy changes, home improvement specifications, events held for tenants and lots more.

What's in it for me?

A chance to have your say. To bring your expertise as a tenant.
To attend training events and develop existing and learn new skills. This group will introduce you to lots of other tenants, learn more about Newington and have your chance to respond to proposed changes.

What's in it for Newington?

Feedback from Tenants' Forum members gives us a well-rounded view of the business and ensures we're doing right by you.

How to apply

If you'd like to join the Tenants' Forum or to find out how else you can get involved at Newington, please email our Community Engagement Officer, Martin Hamilton m.hamilton@newingtonha.co.uk or alternatively contact him by phoning on **028 9074 4055**.



Newington staff attend Effective Communication and Mindskills Training



EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION TRAINING

On Friday, 22nd October, all Newington employees attended effective communication training. Due to the current hybrid working in place, this was the first opportunity for many of our staff to meet face to face since March 2020.

The training was designed to enable staff to improve their communication skills, give clear and relevant advice and receive feedback, how to respond effectively to queries and complaints and to equip staff to deal with confrontation and challenging situations.

MINDSKILLS TRAINING

Then on Thursday, 27th October, Newington staff and some of our other community partners attended Mindskills 'Mental Health & Suicide Awareness' Training.



Mental illness, also called mental health disorders, refers to a wide range of mental health conditions — disorders that affect your mood, thinking and behaviour. Examples of mental illness include depression, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, eating disorders and addictive behaviours.

Many people have mental health concerns from time to time. But a mental health concern becomes a mental illness when ongoing signs and symptoms cause frequent stress and affect your ability to function.

A mental illness can make you miserable and can cause problems in your daily life, such as at school or work or in relationships. In most cases, symptoms can be managed with a combination of medications and talk therapy.

Commenting on the training, Philip McTaggart from Mindskills Training said: 'Our aim at Mindskills Training has always been to highlight these issues by creating awareness within communities about the causes and

repercussions of suicide and mental health, promote positive mental health and to encourage people within the local community to break down the barriers which stops people seeking help.

In today's world, everything is so fast that sometimes we don't see what is right in front of our eyes. Many bereaved families regret that if they had been able to recognise a sign that something was wrong, they might have been able to save their loved one's life.

Many people who are feeling suicidal have signalled their intent in the year before they died, whether it is verbally or through behavioural changes. Therefore, the more people who feel confident and willing to explore possible signs of suicide risk and provide support and help, the more lives could be saved.

Often people do not want to intervene for fear of making someone's situation worse. They are afraid to say the wrong thing, or the stigma attached to suicide means they avoid, ignore or do not recognise the signs of suicidal thoughts.

We need to lift the taboo and talk about suicide as a serious community issue, then reach out as widely as possible to get family, friends, relatives and work colleagues involved in suicide prevention. This is where training forms a vital role.

Awareness needs to be raised within all sections of the community and as broad a range of people possible given the necessary skills and confidence to reach out to someone who needs help. Suicide can affect any one of us at any time, therefore it is our responsibility to find ways to create suicide-safer communities'.

Below is some of the testimonies from Newington staff who attended the training.

'I went to the Mindskills training on the 27th of October and have to say I got a lot out of it. It makes you aware of your own mental health and how to identify the signs to help others. Never be afraid to ask for help, it's not a sign of weakness - it's a sign of strength. Phillip is such a down to earth guy that knows what he's talking about.'

'I really enjoyed the Mindskills Training session that I recently attended, which was delivered by Philip. It was enjoyable, educational, very thought provoking and highlighted to me just how important it is to look after my own mental health and well-being. It also helped me how to identify the signs to assist other. There should be no stigma attached to speaking openly about your



own personal mental health and I would recommend the training to everyone.'

'My recent training session with MindSkills was a training session I won't forget. The session made me look and reflect on myself and gave me a deeper awareness of issues that are so prevalent in our day to day living. Philip is great at what he does and his passion is contagious. My biggest take away was how important it is to look after ourselves, our own mental health and that a smile can change someone's day. Thanks Philip.'

'Really beneficial and worthwhile training. I learnt so much and I would highly recommend to anyone, as we all have a role to play in suicide prevention. Philip was fantastic at delivering it and is so passionate about the cause, which just shone through'

For further information about MindSkills Training, please visit: <https://www.mindskills.training/contact>

SYMPTOMS

Signs and symptoms of mental illness can vary, depending on the disorder, circumstances and other factors. Mental illness symptoms can affect emotions, thoughts and behaviors.

- Examples of signs and symptoms include:
- Feeling sad or down
- Confused thinking or reduced ability to concentrate
- Excessive fears or worries, or extreme feelings of guilt
- Extreme mood changes of highs and lows
- Withdrawal from friends and activities
- Significant tiredness, low energy or problems sleeping
- Detachment from reality (delusions), paranoia or hallucinations
- Inability to cope with daily problems or stress
- Trouble understanding and relating to situations and to people
- Problems with alcohol or drug use
- Major changes in eating habits
- Sex drive changes
- Excessive anger, hostility or violence
- Suicidal thinking

Sometimes symptoms of a mental health disorder appear as physical problems, such as stomach pain, back pain, headaches, or other unexplained aches and pains.

WHEN TO SEE A DOCTOR

If you have any signs or symptoms of a mental illness, see your primary care provider (GP) or a mental health professional. Most mental illnesses don't improve on their own, and if untreated, a mental illness may get worse over time and cause serious problems.

IF YOU HAVE SUICIDAL THOUGHTS

Suicidal thoughts and behavior are common with some mental illnesses. If you think you may hurt yourself or attempt suicide, get help right away:

Call 999

Call your mental health specialist.

Call a suicide hotline number.

Seek help from your GP.

Reach out to a close friend or loved one.

Contact a minister, spiritual leader or someone else in your faith community.

Suicidal thinking doesn't get better on its own — so get help.

HELPING A LOVED ONE

If your loved one shows signs of mental illness, have an open and honest discussion with him or her about your concerns. You may not be able to force someone to get professional care, but you can offer encouragement and support. You can also help your loved one find a qualified mental health professional and make an appointment. You may even be able to go along to the appointment.

If your loved one has done self-harm or is considering doing so, take the person to their GP, hospital or call 999 for emergency assistance.

MHM | MENTAL HEALTH MOVEMENT
"Let's take care of each other. Mental Health Matters!"

<p>Lifeline 0808 808 8000 24/7 phone support for those in crisis</p>	<p>SAMARITANS BELFAST Freephone 116 123 24/7 listening ear to those in distress</p>
<p>HSC Health and Social Care 028 9074 4447 (in North and West Belfast) 028 9079 6220 (in South and East Belfast) The GP Out of Hours service provides care for urgent problems when your own GP is closed.</p>	<p>028 9080 0000 Freephone 0800 000 0004 Offers a 'no appointment' service for anyone in crisis</p>
<p>LIGHTHOUSE 028 9079 8070 Provides accessible support services to people who are directly affected by suicide and self-harm</p>	<p>Bridge of HOPE Offers a range of services to support people experiencing stress, trauma or anxiety</p>
<p>extern 0848 2880120 Extern Crisis Response Team Offering One Support</p>	<p>028 9028 1630 Offers a counselling service</p>

Supported by

Our Community Investment during 2021/22

Newington's BOM is committed to investing in our tenants and residents within the wider community and has a range of community investment programmes. For several years, NHA's Board of Management has annually committed 2% of our rent receivable (**approx. £73k set aside in 2021/22**) to deliver targeted strategic investment initiatives.

The Association is committed to working in partnership with our key stakeholders and partners to enhance the lives of those currently residing within existing well-established communities and to strengthen and support any future new build developments we deliver.

Since April this year, the Association has financially supported the following:



QUARTER 1
April – June 2021
Total Spent = £15,420

- » Retention of the UC Advice Post until Dec. 2021
- » Assistance with the running costs at a local advice office
- » Help to support a community clean up event held by Newington Residents Group
- » Help to support the delivery of summer activities at Camberwell Court
- » Assist with the delivery of TDK 'Colour the Area' summer event



QUARTER 2
July – Sept. 2021
Total Spent = £9,800

- » Support with the publication of a summer edition of a local community magazine
- » Awarded funding to support the delivery of a local community festival
- » Awarded funding to assist Northside Family Support with the delivery of local summer street parties
- » Provided financial support to 3 of the 4 local SVP conferences
- » Awarded financial support via 8 no. Student Bursaries
- » Acquired Welcome Home Packs for distribution to new tenants
- » Awarded funding via sponsorship of a TAMHI fundraising event
- » Awarded financial support to Limestone Utd to acquire sports gift packs for a recruitment event during Good Relations Week



QUARTER 3
Oct. – Dec. 2021
Total Spent = £20,182

- » Awarded grants to 17 no. local groups/organisations via our Brian Mullan Community Fund
- » Support with the publication of a winter edition of a local community magazine
- » Provided financial support to Duncairn Community Partnership to assist with the delivery of their annual Christmas event
- » Provided further financial support to 4 local SVP conferences

Our Brian Mullan Community Fund

In October 2021, the Association was delighted to again welcome applications from community or voluntary sector organisations seeking to avail of essential funding to deliver projects and services within North Belfast.

Over the past few years, via this Fund, the Association has distributed in excess of **£30,000** to **37** local organisations throughout North Belfast.

Our Brian Mullan Community Fund initiative has been designed to support organisations and projects that promote inclusion, strengthen communities and improve individual's lives.

A funding pot of **£10,000** was again set aside this year by the Association's Board of Management to ensure the successful delivery of the scheme.

The scheme closed on Friday, 5th November 2021 and a total of **17 applications totalling £15,282** were received from various organisations throughout North Belfast.

All qualifying applications were recently assessed and scored by our 'Assessment Panel', made up of Newington tenants, employees and Board members, who distributed funding of up to **£1,000** per project, to the successful applicants.

Due to the volume and standard of applications received, the Association's Board met recently and agreed to increase the funding pot from **£10k** to **£15k** (for this year only) and award funding to all the 17 groups/ organisations who applied.

The Association wishes to express our appreciation to all the organisations who took the time to apply for an award and we wish them every success in the delivery of their projects. We also wish to extend our gratitude to our tenants, staff and Board members on the 'Assessment Panel', who gave up their time, on a voluntary basis, to help deliver such a successful initiative.



"Brian was a man of great enthusiasm and dedication."

These awards are dedicated in memory of Brian Mullan, who sadly in July 2016 passed away after a short illness. Brian was an exceptionally dedicated and inspirational friend and colleague.

A native of North Belfast, Brian was a highly motivated man who fought tirelessly for the provision of essential community services for all. He did so with strong leadership and integrity and inspired others to take an interest in their communities, improved the quality of life for all residents and continually challenged the status quo.

Brian was a man of great enthusiasm and dedication and his involvement in various groups, delivered results. When meeting Brian, he was always respectful, courteous, selfless and sincere. His actions were always meaningful and with purpose. He led from the front on local issues and was a great servant to the local community. He was a man of strong character and was extremely well thought of by his peers.

He was also a humble, truly inspiring and an invaluable member of our team and is still sadly missed by everyone associated with Newington.

Brian Mullan Community Fund Awards 2021



Group/Organisation	Project	Amount Awarded
Community Foodbank	North Belfast Christmas Family Support Hampers	£1,000.00
Building Bridges Boxing Club	Making A Difference	£795.00
174 Trust	18 - 25Yr. Old Disability Programme	£1,000.00
Ardoyne Youth Club	The Innov8 Project	£1,000.00
Carrickhill Residents Association	Carrickhil Re-Imaging Project	£1,000.00
Jigsaw Community Centre	Counselling Sessions for Adults & Children	£1,000.00
Camberwell Golden Club	Camberwell, Lisieux & Richmond Lodge Christmas Lunch	£1,000.00
The People's Kitchen	Hygiene and Homeless Packs	£540.00
Holy Family YC	Festive Neighbourhood -Lark in The Dark 21	£939.65
North Belfast Interface Network	Cross Community Christmas Event	£1,000.00
Ligoniel Improvement Association	Ligoniel Christmas Pensioners Luncheon	£994.00
New Lodge YC	NLYC Winter Wonderland	£1,000.00
Benvue Community Centre	Mental Wellbeing through Art @ Benvue	£1,000.00
Streetbeat Youth Project	Peer Mentoring Residential	£1,000.00
Sailortown Regeneration	Sailortown Community Hub	£1,000.00
North Belfast Mens Shed	Cook It Program - Cooking for 1 @ Home	£313.99
Midland ABC	Reaching Out	£700.00



grant awards
made totalling
£15,282.64

Ending of House Sales Scheme for Tenants of Registered Housing Associations

- The House Sales Scheme for Tenants of Registered Housing Associations is due to end from midnight on 27 August 2022
- From 28 August 2022, the scheme will be closed to applications and Housing Association tenants will no longer be able to buy their home
- Any eligible Registered Housing Association tenant who wishes to buy their home must make an application

through the existing House Sales Scheme before the deadline of midnight of the 27 August 2022

- Applications should be made by contacting the relevant Housing Association <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/housing-associations>

NOTE: This does not apply to Northern Ireland Housing Executive tenants. The 'Right to Buy' scheme will continue at this time.

Frequently asked Questions

Why is the scheme ending?

The reasons for this change are complex.

The way Housing Associations are classified for public accounting purposes changed. This change would potentially result in significant detrimental impacts for the building of social homes here.

Social homes are hugely important in our society and the Executive decided that this classification issue needed to be addressed so that we could continue to deliver as much social housing as possible.

To secure the future of social housing, the legislation that had to be introduced meant the House Sales Scheme for Housing Association tenants must end.

Is the House Sales Scheme being ended for all social housing tenants?

No. The changes in legislation introduced last year will end the scheme for Housing Association tenants only.

Why are NI Housing Executive tenants not affected?

Although the two House Sales Schemes operate on similar criteria, they are separate. The Housing Executive scheme was not affected by the change in accounting rules and the legislation passed in August 2020 did not include the Housing Executive scheme. The Minister has outlined that she does intend to look at the future of the Housing Executive House Sales Scheme.

When does the Statutory House Sales Scheme end?

While ending the Housing Association House Sales Scheme the legislation allowed for a transitional period of 2 years from 28 August 2020. This gives time for eligible tenants to be aware of the closure and exercise their right within that timeframe. This means that the scheme will end at midnight on 27 August 2022.

Can I still apply to buy my house until that date?

Yes. Housing Associations will accept applications from tenants to buy their homes under the Statutory House Sales Scheme up until midnight on 27 August 2022. The rules of the scheme will continue to apply up until that date and the rules can either be obtained from your Housing Association or can be accessed on the Department's website at: <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/disposal-housing-association-property>

What will happen after the closing date?

If an application to purchase a house has been received by the relevant Housing Association before midnight on 27 August 2022 it will be dealt with in the usual manner. If the Housing Association requires further information from the proposed purchaser the application to purchase will remain valid.

Equity Scheme

What if I have bought equity in a Housing Association property and wish to buy more equity after 27 August 2022?

If you have previously entered into an agreement with your Housing Association under their equity sharing scheme you will still be able to purchase more equity after 27 August 2022 and avail of any remaining discount you are entitled to.

NOTE: The co-ownership scheme will continue to operate as normal. The co-ownership scheme is not covered by the statutory house sales scheme. It is operated by the Northern Ireland Co-Ownership Housing Association.

Further information about the House Sales scheme can be accessed at: <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/disposal-housing-association-property>



Department for
Communities
www.communities-ni.gov.uk

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Upgrading of Camberwell Court Communal Facilities

Over the past 18 months, the Association has been engaging with our residents within Camberwell Court regarding improvements works and new facilities within all communal spaces within the Scheme.

Over the next few weeks, the Association will be commencing works to upgrade many of the currently underutilised chatrooms and other communal spaces.

The funding to undertake these works was acquired via various channels. Initially, Camberwell Golden Club were successful in acquiring funding from Volunteer Now and Belfast City Council to purchase some new equipment for these areas, the Association then sourced additional funding via Supporting People - Provider Investment Fund and the remaining investment required to complete all the improvement works and upgrade of new facilities will be provided directly by the Association.

The upgrade and refurbishment of the hobbies room, all five chat rooms and other communal facilities (i.e., hairdressers and guestroom) will provide residents residing within the Scheme with modern facilities and enhance

the Scheme visual, thus making it more welcoming and attractive to new residents.

The current Hobbies room will be transformed into a new social space with a new pool table, dart board, TV and other recreational equipment.

The five Chatrooms will be purposely improved to facilitate the following:

- » An IT-Suite,
- » Cinema Room,
- » Complementary Therapy Room,
- » Arts & Crafts Room and,
- » A Central Library.

The provision of these new facilities will hopefully encourage more residents to become more actively engaged in different types of project and activities that will be held, once the upgrading works are complete.



Lord Mayors visit to Camberwell Court

We were delighted to receive a visit by the Lord Mayor of Belfast, Cllr Kate Nicholl to our Camberwell Court Sheltered Scheme on the 9th November 2021 to meet and engage with some of our residents and to witness first-hand the onsite Grow garden facilities, which is maintained by residents and volunteers and delivered in partnership with Grow NI.

Newington continues to fund our partner Grow NI to ensure successful delivery of our community gardening project at Camberwell as this project encourages social

interaction, improves resident's mental health and well-being and helps them to develop new skills, through involvement in gardening, cooking, etc.

On behalf of everyone at Newington, wish to express our sincere gratitude to our partner Grow NI team and their volunteers, for their continued support and the enjoyment they bring to the lives of so many of our residents within Camberwell Court.



ashton
Supporting
North Belfast

www.ashtoncentre.com

Christmas Community Collection

Ashton are collecting the following items for distribution in the local community before the festive season.

The list is only a suggestion of items that people may wish to donate:

- Children's PJ's, (all sizes from birth to 18)
- New Toys
- Gifts for teenagers
- Pre loved toys that are still in excellent condition
- Non-perishable food items
- Christmas food items (with a long date)
- Thermal socks, gloves, scarfs (adults and children)
- Unwanted gift packs e.g. candles, soaps etc.

Collection boxes will be left in the reception areas in the following centre's from Thursday 25th November

Ashton Centre Churchill Street 9am - 4.30pm	New Lodge Youth Centre Upper Meadow Street 9am - 2.30pm & 6.30 - 8.30	McSweeney's Centre Henry Place 9am - 4.30pm	CORE Project 529 Antrim Road 9am - 4.30pm
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****Many thanks in advance for your generosity****

Update on the roll out of our Planned & Cyclical Maintenance Programme of Works for 2021 – 2022



The Association is continuing to roll out our Planned & Cyclical Maintenance programmes for 2021/22. Since April this year, we have completed or are in the process of carrying out the following:

- **Upgrade our existing CCTV systems** at Camberwell Court, Lisieux House, Richmond Lodge and our Delaware Building - **completed**
- **Install new CCTV systems** at 232 Limestone Road, 124 and 126 Antrim Road - **completed**
- **Install a new door entry system** at Lisieux House - **completed**
- **Replace 5 no. existing gas boilers** that are due for renewal - **completed**
- **External works to two properties** at Meadow Place & Fortfield Place to compliment the recent interface re-imaging work carried out by the Department of Justice – **completed**
- **Upgrade existing CCTV systems** at Mater Dei Hostel - **completed**
- **Replace existing windows and rear doors** at 6 of our general needs properties – **works ongoing**
- **Upgrade of Lisieux House's flat roofs and eaves** – **works ongoing**
- **Planned maintenance works at Mater Dei Hostel** – **works ongoing**
- Carryout the **replacement of 52 kitchens** – **works ongoing**
- **Servicing of our Mechanical Ventilation Heating Recover systems** fitted within some of our homes – **works ongoing**
- **Internal redecoration and replacement of flooring** within Lisieux House and 232 Limestone Road – **works ongoing**
- **Carry out further planned NICEIC's Electric Inspections** – **works ongoing**



Are YOU plumbing prepared?



Regularly check your kitchen pipes and appliances hoses for slow leaks.

Also, ensure you know where your household stop value is and make sure that you can turn it on and off. If you ever have a burst pipe, you'll be able to cut off the water flow before it floods the house.

Always keep a contact number for your water supplier handy so that if you find a leak you can let them know and stop water being wasted.

How do I report a leak or burst pipe to NI Water?

You can contact NI Water in several different ways:

By Phone: Call NI Waterline (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) on 0345 744 0088. Customers with hearing difficulties can use 'Text Relay' through NI Waterline on 0345 744 0088.

By Email: waterline@niwater.com

Via Webchat, Facebook, Twitter or Self-Service Portal: <https://www.niwater.com/contact-us/>

Are YOU winter ready?

NEA are concerned that the 'perfect storm' of higher energy prices, reduced incomes, and leaky, inefficient housing could put many households in Northern Ireland at increased risk of fuel poverty this coming winter. These increases come at a time when many household budgets are already stretched thin.

However, simple changes to day-to-day activities could make big differences to household bills.

Here are 10 energy savings tips that everybody can implement.



You can save around **£30** a year just by remembering to turn your appliances off standby mode.



Save an average of **£35** on electricity a year by drying clothes on a clothes line, instead of using a dryer.



Room thermostats allow you to set the temperature your home heats up to and maintains. Turning it down by only 1 degree could save you **£70**



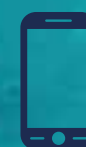
Spending one minute less in the shower every day as part of your grooming routine will save up to **£7** per person off your household energy bill each year.



Only boil the water you need in your kettle. This can save you **£6** per year.



Washing clothes at 30 C instead of 40C can save you around **£9** a year and 1 less cycle per week can save around **£5** a year on energy.



Don't leave your mobile phone on charge all night – most only need a couple of hours.



Switch off lights when not in use. This could save your household **£14** a year.



Using a bowl to wash up rather than running the tap could save you up to **£25** a year.



Draughtproofing windows/doors can save **£30**. Chimney draught excluder can save an additional **£20**

How can I cut down on my energy bills?

There is a tough winter ahead for many households due to rising energy bills, according to the Northern Ireland Consumer Council.

Wholesale energy prices are at an all-time high, leading to more expensive electricity and heating bills.

What steps can we take to save energy and save money on household bills?



Turn down your thermostat

No-one wants to be cold in their own home, but could you be using more energy than you need to stay comfortable?

Turning your central heating down by one degree could cut your heating bills and save by up to **10%**. That's an average saving of approximately **£90** per year. You can also try closing curtains at night to keep the heat in and try not to block radiators by placing furniture up against them.

Cut down on waste

Using heating systems and household appliances more efficiently or only when we need them is better for the planet as well as our pockets.

The NI Direct website and the Consumer Council have lots of tips on how to save money on day-to-day household tasks.



Laundry

- » Wait until you have a full load to run your washing machine
- » Dry clothes outdoors when possible



Cooking

- » Cover pots and pans with lids when using the hob
- » Only boil the amount of water you need when using a kettle
- » Up to **20%** of heat is lost when you open an oven door so keep it closed when possible
- » Defrost fridges and freezers regularly and never leave the fridge door open



Lighting

- » Switch the lights off every time you leave a room
- » Use energy efficient light bulbs - the NI Direct website claims if every UK home installed three "it would save enough energy to power all the UK's street lights"

For more household tips, you can contact the Northern Ireland Energy Advice Line on 0800 111 4455.

The not-for-profit charitable organisation **Bryson Energy** also arranges energy advice home visits for people facing fuel poverty which can help them to reduce their bills.

Switch your energy supplier

Changing utility companies when a better deal is on offer is a good way to save money and promote competition in the market.

However, this is often more complicated in Northern Ireland than other parts of the UK because there are fewer suppliers and less choice.

Six companies supply domestic electricity in Northern Ireland - Power NI, SSE Airtricity, Budget Energy, Bright Energy, Click Energy and Electric Ireland.

The Consumer Council's website has an interactive section where customers can compare current tariffs and check if they are getting the best deal.

However, they are all affected by global wholesale energy price rises and all six electricity firms increased their prices this year.

Lack of competition is a particular problem in the gas market in Northern Ireland as there are only two suppliers - Firmus Energy and SSE Airtricity.

Ask your energy supplier for a cheaper rate

Some customers are reluctant to switch utility companies, even when they have the choice to do so.

If switching is not something you would consider, it still may be worth checking with your supplier if you are getting their most competitive rate.

Before you contact them, have your latest bill to hand so you know your current tariff.

It is also worth shopping around first so that if you see a cheaper deal, you can use the offer as a bargaining chip to check if your own supplier will match the lower tariff.

They may not be able to compete depending on your location but there is no harm in asking.

Some firms offer discounts if you agree to manage your account online rather than receiving paper bills.

Choose energy efficient appliances

It may be more expensive to buy newer, more energy efficient appliances but some of them could be a wiser investment in the long run.

A recent study by consumer group Which? assessed the running costs of tumble dryers, washing machines, fridge freezers, ovens and dishwashers.

The results, found significant savings can be made over the lifetime of a machine, depending on the model.

The least efficient models in the study were found to collectively cost **£490** a year to run while the most energy-efficient cost **£154** annually.

One **£260** tumble dryer cost **£135** a year to run while a more efficient **£800** dryer cost just **£29** a year.

Put a jacket on

If you have ever complained about being cold at home, you have probably heard that particular piece of advice from the exasperated bill-payer. Layered clothing could work out cheaper than turning up the thermostat when you feel the chill.

Belfast Warm and Well

The Belfast Warm and Well Project aims to help local people struggling to keep their home warm this winter, by offering advice and practical support to stay warm and well.

Belfast Warm and Well, will be coordinated by National Energy Action (NEA) who will work with local community and voluntary groups, to provide helpful independent and confidential advice and practical support.

If you are vulnerable and finding it difficult to keep your home warm, contact NEA on 028 9023 9909 or warmandwell@nea.org.uk to see if they can help.

The project is available to vulnerable people who are finding it difficult to keep their home warm. Vulnerable refers to a number of different groups including:

- People aged 65 years or older
- People living with disability or long term physical or mental health condition
- Pregnant women
- Households with young child (from new-born to school age)
- People on a low income.

Signs that a person may be finding it difficult to keep their home warm could be, for example:

- The home is cold – you may have to keep your coat on when inside
- There is condensation on the windows
- There are signs of damp on the walls or ceilings.

Stay warm, stay well



If you are concerned that someone you know is vulnerable and finding it difficult to keep their home warm, ask them if they would like to speak with NEA and if they do, contact NEA on 028 9023 9909 or warmandwell@nea.org.uk

Useful Information about Mechanical Heat Recovery Ventilation System

Over the coming weeks our contractor Brookvent will be commencing a programme of servicing all Mechanical Heat Recovery Ventilation (MHRV) systems which are installed within over 200 of our homes. If your home has been fitted with a highly efficient MHRV system, it is designed to provide superior indoor air quality while at the same time reduce the space heating demand/cost of your home.

Below is some information about MHRV systems installed within our homes and the benefits of using them.

How does it work?

MHRV works by recovering heat from extract air that would normally be expelled to the atmosphere (by extractor fans and window vents) and transferring this heat to fresh air being drawn into the home via a heat exchanger, which the system filters and distributes throughout.

The system is designed with ducting supplied to each habitable room (Living room, Bedroom) and each wet room (Kitchen, Bathroom) within the property. Each wet room is fitted with an extract valve, and each habitable room with a supply valve. The system continually extracts from the wet rooms, boosting if necessary, removing the pollutant air quickly and effectively at its source. This air then passes up through the system of ducting and travels through a heat exchanger where its heat passes to the fresh, filtered air which is being brought into the property at the same time.

What are the benefits?

Energy Saving - Recovering the heat from your extract air instead of simply sending it to atmosphere can lead to significant energy savings by reducing the cost of your heating bill. With MHRV's the fresh, filtered air entering your habitable rooms is pre-warmed by the pollutant extract air being taken out of the property.

Minimises Noise Pollution - Removes the need for noisy extractor fans and window vents in every room, minimising inside and outside noise pollution.

Fresh, Filtered Air - A MHRV system continually extracts pollutants at their source and supplies fresh, filtered, warm air to your habitable rooms. This continual cycle of fresh air movement reduces the relative humidity

in the home and eliminates problems associated with poor air quality such as condensation and mould growth. This helps to provide a much healthier and conducive environment for allergy sufferers and asthmatics alike.

Did you know:

- Indoor air can be up to 50 times more polluted than outdoor.
- Indoor air may contain over 900 chemicals, particles and biological materials with potential health effects.
- 81% of people are at risk of suffering from a respiratory or dermatological condition because of poor air quality inside their home.
- Because you are creating a self-contained environment with a superior ventilation system, your air will be cleaner and better for you.
- The main appeal of MHRV's is the supply of warm, fresh air in a constant flow. When you open a window to let some air in, especially in winter, you're losing a large amount of heat that will need to be replaced.
- The constant supply of warm air through the MHRV system means you can reduce your energy costs because the environment is kept fairly constant.
- The benefits of heat recovery stretch beyond just simple energy savings with a reduction in things like humidity and condensation that can cause health problems and affect walls and structures over time.
- The improved air quality means that your home isn't filled with irritants like pollen and pollution as the ventilation is filtered throughout the building.
- For those who are concerned about their carbon emissions, MHRV systems also lower the levels of carbon dioxide.

FAQ's

Should I ever switch the system off?

MHRV systems are designed to operate 24/7 and **should never be switched off** (with the exception of carrying out maintenance). This is extremely important in new, airtight/ highly insulated homes whereby these systems are tasked with providing the only means of ventilation. They are designed to provide your home with a constant supply of fresh, filtered air maintaining high levels of air quality.

How much energy will the system recover?

The Energy Savings Trust (Document GPG268) estimate that 1/3rd of the space heating bill of a modern home is lost due to purpose provided ventilation (i.e., 1/3rd of the heat generated by the homes heating system is lost via window/ wall vents, extractor fans etc.).

MHRV systems are up to 90% efficient and are capable of recovering up to 90% of that 1/3rd being lost. (i.e., if your space heating bill is £600 for the year, £200 is estimated to be lost due to purpose provided ventilation, MHRV is capable of recovering up to 90% of this value (£180).

NB. System efficiencies are dependent on ventilation rate requirements which are typically defined by house size however, even a system operating as low as 80% could recover up to £160 in this scenario.

How much does it cost to run?

As noted above, MHRV systems by their very nature recover more than enough energy to pay for their running costs. MHRV systems use low energy E.C. fan technology to ensure running costs are kept as low as possible while providing the required performance. The systems operate with a Specific Fan Power from as low as 0.53 watts/ litre/second, this equates to a running cost of as little as £30.00 per annum/£00.58 per week (based on a 100m² dwelling with a Kitchen & 2 Bathrooms).

How often should I change my filters?

How often you are required to change your filters really depends on the activity in your home, and also the location of your home. There are two filters located in each unit, one is designed to filter the incoming fresh air prior to supplying it to the home, and one is designed to filter the extract air coming from the home to protect the system. **As part of our upcoming servicing programme, the Association will be replacing all air filters installed within the MHRV systems.**

What are the advantages of using a MHRV systems?

Below are some advantages of using the MHRV system installed within your home:

- They provide controlled, preheated fresh air throughout your home
- The Heat Exchanger reduces heating demand
- It filtrates the incoming air from outside

What are the average running costs to Newington tenants who have a MHRV system installed within a 100m² property?

The average annual running cost tenants is approximately £30.00. That equates to about £00.58 per week.

What is the potential saving for me as a tenant?

The final, and perhaps one of the most important **benefits of MHRV** systems is the **reduction in energy bills**, because the warm air is being reconstituted, it takes the workload off the gas boiler installed within your home.

A Heat Recovery units operate at 90% efficiency. Based on a Space Heating bill for a property at £900 per annum (i.e., approx. £17.31 per week), £300 of this is typically lost due to purpose provided ventilation. MHRV's could save up to 90% of this loss using Heat Recovery (£270).

Therefore, by using a MHRV installed within a 100m² property could save an estimated £4.61 per week (i.e., based on an average weekly saving of £5.19 minus £00.58 average weekly running costs). That's a potential saving of nearly £240.00 per annum to tenants.

The Association would encourage all tenants whose homes have a MHRV system installed, **to never switch the system off.**

Finally, if you require any further advice relating to the MHRV system installed within your home, please contact our **Property Services Department** on **028 9074 4055**.

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.

Winter Advice

HELP YOUR NEIGHBOUR

The cold weather can be a difficult time for people who are vulnerable.

If you know someone who is elderly, has a disability, or is housebound, check on them and make sure they are okay.

During extreme weather conditions many older people will not be able to get out and it is at this time that a visit from a neighbour is most appreciated.

DON'T FREEZE UP THIS WINTER

During spells of severely cold weather it is possible for water pipes in your home to freeze which may lead to a burst pipe when the thaw sets in. This can cause inconvenience and damage to your home and belongings. These are some simple precautions you can take to reduce the risk of frozen pipes or deal with situations when pipes burst.

HELP PREVENT YOUR PIPES FROM FREEZING

- » Keep your home as warm as possible, even when you are out, by setting the central heating to come on for short periods throughout the day;
- » If you feel you are able to, lift the trap door to the roof space slightly to allow warmer air to circulate around pipes and water tanks. Remember to close it afterwards;
- » Open the doors to the sink unit to allow warmer air to circulate round the pipes;

» Allow warm air to circulate round the house by slightly opening doors to all rooms and minimising drafts from outside;

» If you are away from home, ensure that the central heating comes on for regular short intervals and ask someone to check regularly for frozen pipes.

DEALING WITH FROZEN PIPES

- » Turn the water supply off at the stopcock;
- » Protect everything around the pipe that appears to be frozen to avoid damage if it bursts;
- » Open the tap nearest to the part of the pipe you think is frozen so the water can flow through when it has thawed;
- » Thaw the ice in the pipe with a hot water bottle or hairdryer (taking care to keep it well away from any water), beginning from the tap end and working back towards the cold water tank;
- » Never use a heat gun or blow torch;

FIND YOUR STOPCOCK

The stopcock is used for turning off and on the cold-water supply in your home.

When you turn the stopcock in a clockwise direction the water supply will be shut off.

Stopcocks are usually found in your kitchen, below the sink unit.

However in some houses the stopcock is found in a front or back hall or in a larder unit.

It is important that you know where the stopcock is and that it is working.



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**.

Domestic Violence

Incidents of Domestic Violence tend to increase over the Christmas period, if you are a victim or know someone who is a victim **DON'T tolerate it, DO report it.**

Contact police on 999 in an emergency or 101 for non-emergency or Women's Aid on 02890 66 60 49

Help your neighbour

The cold weather can be a difficult time for people who are more vulnerable. If you know someone who is elderly, has a disability, or is housebound, check on them and make sure they are okay. During extreme weather conditions many older people will not be able to get out and it is at this time that a visit from a neighbour may be appreciated.

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.



Belfast Family Support Hubs bring 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 **028 9074 4055**, for further information.



The easiest way to swap your social home

HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED A MUTUAL EXCHANGE?

A mutual exchange is a home swap between two (or even sometimes more) social housing tenants. It can happen for many reasons, such as needing more (or less) space, moving for work or to be closer to family. It's a great option for social housing tenants who can't access or don't want to wait for the normal allocation process. It gives you more control and means you're able to choose a home that suits your needs better in a place you want to live.

If you require any further information on the Home Swapper service, please visit www.homeswapper.co.uk or contact your Housing Officer directly on 028 9074 4055.

Useful Numbers

NIHE: **03448 920 900**

Phoenix Gas: **03454 555 555**

POWER NI: **03457 455 455**

BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Pest Control: **02890 270431**

B.C.C Noise Control: **02890 373 006**

B.C.C Bulky Waste Collection: **02890 270 230**



Smell gas? To report a smell of gas or gas emergency please call **0800 002 001**

For people who are deaf or with hearing loss, please call **minicom - 0800 731 471**

Night-time Safety

BE SAFE ON THE STREET

Whether you walk, run, cycle or drive the following precautions will help keep you safe.

- » Avoid short cuts and isolated areas
- » Stay away from confrontational situations
- » Carry a personal attack alarm
- » Always use a known taxi firm
- » Avoid lonely bus stops or quiet areas
- » Be Safe when Socialising
- » Avoid going to the pub, club or party alone
- » Do not leave bags, coats or mobile phones unattended
- » **NEVER** leave your drink unattended and **NEVER** accept a drink from someone you do not know or trust
- » Do not drink from large open containers such as punchbowls
- » If you begin to feel drunk, dizzy or disorientated, seek help from a trusted friend or member of pub/club staff.
- » Do not drink and drive and do not accept a lift from anyone who has been drinking
- » Carry enough money for a taxi
- » Do not get separated from friends and do not head home alone

Please remember when you are in a residential area Be Considerate, Be Respectful, Be Quiet and Be Tidy.

Alcohol is the number one Rape Drug, many rapes happen when people are drunk. Follow these steps to protect yourself:-

- » Don't get so drunk you don't know what you are doing
- » Don't go alone to a strangers house when you are drunk. Arrange to meet them when you are sober.
- » Don't accept drink from someone you've just met and don't share drinks.
- » Plan how you are getting home. Don't walk home alone, stay with friends.

BE SMART

Say NO to any sex you don't want.

Make sure you are clearly understood

Alcohol affects your judgement so watch what you drink

Rape stays with you for life

Take care of each other

CYPSP's Resource Pack for Children & Young People

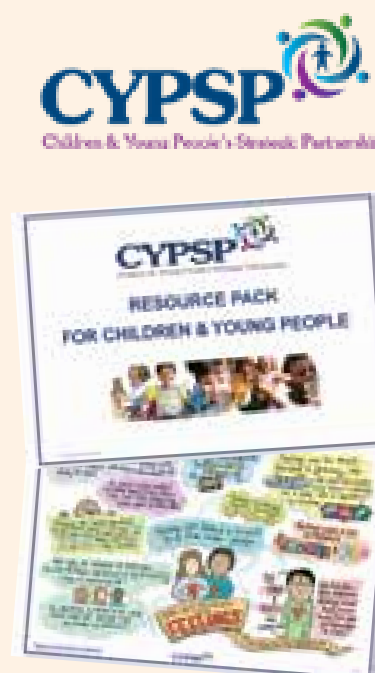
CYPSP's Resource Pack for Children & Young People has been refreshed and updated to include more resources and activities on disability, mental health, bereavement, education plus much more.

Also included are some activities to help keep the kids entertained over the holidays, including colouring and activity sheets and play, craft and snack ideas.

Download copy at: <http://www.cypsp.hscni.net/children-young-peoples-resource-pack-october-2021/>

Resources and activities are free and in the public domain.

CYPSP will continue to update the resource periodically, so keep an eye out on their website and social media platforms.



Christmas with Dignity 2021

Our aim is to provide Gift Vouchers to those struggling financially this Christmas

We invite you to support our Christmas with Dignity Appeal by donating cash to our paypal account foodbank@northbelfastadvice.org or purchasing vouchers

Gift Vouchers from £5, £10 £15+ would be most welcome

Gift Vouchers Ideas

Supermarkets, Butchers

#SpendLocal – green grocers, bakeries, café's, restaurants, beauticians, barbers, hairdressers, nail salons etc
Toy Stores & One for All Voucher

All vouchers can be dropped off into Ardoyne Association office, 111 Etna Drive, Belfast.



Belfast Met Courses being delivered at Girdwood Community Hub



For 16-24 year olds who are disengaged from the education/training system:

- Prince's Trust Team Programme – new 12 week programme commencing Jan 2022
- Futures
- College Connect

For economically Inactive of all ages:

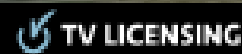
- Skills for Industry

Others:

- Level 2 Childcare
- ESOL
- Essential Skills – Numeracy, Literacy, ICT (including entry ICT)

For more information go to www.belfastmet.ac.uk or contact Kevin Lavery, klavery@belfastmet.ac.uk – Tel. 028 9026 5062 / 078 4110 2276

Advice about Scams



Since the start of the pandemic, we've seen the number and variety of scams increase. Research by the Government's Joint Fraud Taskforce found that 8 out of 10 UK adults had received a scam text in the last three months and landline call scams continued to be a threat for older people, with almost two thirds of all over-75s saying they had received a potential scam call.

That's why TV Licensing is working to help customers protect themselves against fraudsters. To help stop the scammers, they are asking people to **STOP – CHECK – ASK** if they receive any suspicious communications that appear to be from TV Licensing.

STOP Scammers will attempt to trick you into giving away your personal or bank details. Always be wary of letters, emails, texts or phone calls that promise you money or a refund.

CHECK Has the sender spelled your name correctly and are there any grammatical mistakes? You should also make sure they have included the correct licence number, which you can check on the TV Licensing website.

ASK If you're ever unsure about a communication you've received, it's always best to ask someone – perhaps a friend or trusted advisor. You can go to the TV Licensing website and sign in to your licence at tv.co.uk/yourlicence to check if anything is actually wrong or call TV Licensing on 0300 303 9695 to speak with someone who can help.

You can find more information about how to avoid scams and how to report on by visiting <https://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/faqs/FAQ288?wt.mcid=bbcover75scams>

Defrosting of Vehicles

The PSNI provide the following advice to motorists about securing their vehicles during winter weather, especially when motorists warm and defrost their vehicles before travelling.

"The cold weather presents a number of challenges to motorists, not least that vehicles may be iced over. Many motorists might choose to start and run their car's engine for a short period before driving. This represents a classic example for seasonal, opportunistic crime."

We They urge motorists to remove keys from the ignition of their vehicle when they are not in the driver's seat. In addition to this, they advise never leave the your vehicle with the doors or windows opened or unlocked, even for the briefest of moments.

Always take time to be aware of the immediate surroundings and persons moving around close by. Stay with your vehicle whilst defrosting it. All motorists should be aware that leaving the vehicle unattended with keys present may negate any insurance cover against theft."



While you're out shopping... so are they!

Opportunistic thieves are constantly on the lookout for easy chances to steal, especially on the run up to Christmas

There are some simple steps that when taken will greatly reduce opportunities for a thief to take advantage of and thereby the likelihood of anyone's Christmas holiday period being ruined through theft, burglary or car crime.

- » Don't tempt thieves by leaving presents on display in your home or car
- » Be cautious about storing expensive gifts in your home
- » Don't keep large sums of cash in your home
- » Make sure your home is secure and keep doors and windows locked
- » Mark your property with a UV pen with your postcode, house number and initials

Vehicle Hijack



There has been a small increase in hijackings within Belfast; however, you are unlikely to be a victim. You can reduce the risks even further by following the advice below:-

- » Keep doors locked
- » Keep your windows up at all times
- » Keep valuables out of sight
- » Park in well lit, busy areas or attended car parks
- » When approaching your parked vehicle be alert, avoid listening to music as this will distract you from potential threats
- » If you feel afraid remember to use your horn to attract attention.



Beware of BOGUS CALLERS and if in doubt, always use the Quick Check Scheme

The Quick Check Scheme has been running for a number of years and exists to provide reassurance to members about callers to their door claiming to be from Utility Companies.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland in collaboration with the Utility Regulator and five energy network companies, Firmus energy distribution, Northern Ireland Electricity Networks, Northern Ireland Water, Phoenix Natural Gas Ltd and SGN Natural Gas, has recently relaunched the scheme.

The principal difference in the service is that callers to Quick Check will now speak directly to the police on the 101 number.

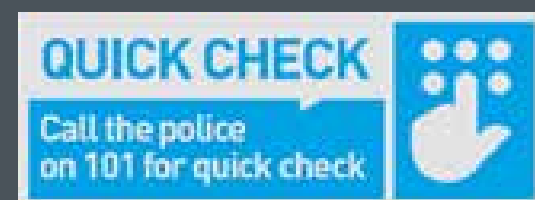
The majority of callers to your home will be there for genuine reasons. However, there are those who may pose as official callers from utility companies.

Working in partnership with the Utility Regulator and the companies listed above anyone who wishes to check the identity of someone who says they are calling on the pretext of inspecting gas, electricity or water supplies can now call the 101 number to verify their identity.

If you are concerned about the identity of someone at your door, call 101 and you will be given the option of going through to the Quick Check facility.

Your call will be answered by a trained police call handler who will take the details of the company which the caller claims to be working for. The call handler will then contact the organisation/utility supplier to determine whether the caller is genuine.

If they are not who they say they are or you think that there is something suspicious, the operator will be able to send the police directly to you.



Members of the public should follow this advice when dealing with unexpected visitors:

- Callers should always be asked for proof of identity. Genuine callers will be only too happy to provide this information and to wait outside the property until it is verified. No caller should be given access to the property until the householder is sure they are genuine
- Never leave doors unlocked and do not leave keys in an unsafe place (such as under doormats or flowerpots)
- Follow this advice when answering the door:
 - o Before answering the front door, make sure the back door is locked.
 - o If there is a door chain, remember to use it before opening the door.
 - o Ask the caller for their identification and check it carefully.
 - o Ask them to wait outside and close the door - genuine callers will not mind.
 - o Ring Quick Check on 101. The call will be answered personally and promptly by a trained police call handler. They will check with the company that the person at the door is genuine. If they are not or they think that there is something suspicious, the operator will be able to send the police to you.
 - o Do not let anyone into the property until you are satisfied as to who they are

Calls to the Quick Check 101 number from landlines or mobile phones* cost 15 pence, regardless of the length of time you are on the phone or the time of the day you call.

* Members of the public should dial 028 9065 0222 if they are unable to dial 101.

** Some mobile providers or contracts do not permit you to dial 101 – please check with your provider.

Health & Social Care Pharmacy First

Sore throats and colds are more common during the winter months.

With the Pharmacy First service this winter, you'll be able to get advice and treatment from your local pharmacist.

- **By phoning the pharmacy for advice**
- **Ring to make an appointment to arrange a private chat**
- **Arranging a video consultation**

This Pharmacy first service is available from 8th November 2021 until 31st March 2022.

Patients with any symptoms of Covid-19 such as a high temperature, cough or change in taste and smell, must **NOT** visit the pharmacy. Instead, you can receive advice by phoning or via video consultation.

Advice includes how to arrange a test, when to isolate and how to manage symptoms <http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/community-pharmacists.../>

Your local pharmacist is a qualified medical professional who can help you manage minor ailments this winter.



Ask your pharmacist FIRST for free confidential advice and treatment for symptoms of Winter Conditions



Children & Safeguarding

Have you ever considered contacting Social Services, NSPCC or the Police Service of Northern Ireland

Do you have concerns about the safety or well-being of a child or young person? Have you previously witnessed incidents where you feel children may have been put at risk. Don't wait until you're certain. If you have any concerns or suspicions, please report them by one of the following ways:

Option 1 – Contact Gateway Services/Child protection

Gateway is the first point of contact for all new referrals to children's social work service and is responsible for:

- » Making sure that all new referrals are responded to promptly
- » Linking with children and families to assess their needs and identify appropriate support services
- » Ensuring an immediate response to safeguard children in need of protection
- » Making sure children and young people receive ongoing social work support whenever they need it
- » Ensuring that everyone involved with a child can contribute to the assessment of the child and their family
- » Working closely with other agencies when additional support is needed.

If you are concerned that a child may be at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation, there is help available. Find out more about Child Sexual Exploitation by visiting: <http://www.belfasttrust.hscni.net/services/ChildSexualExploitation.htm>

Option 2 – Contact the Police Service of N. Ireland

Don't delay – call the police on 999, straight away.

Option 3 – Contact NSPCC

If you are hesitant about contacting Social Services or the PSNI, you can contact NSPCC 24 hours a day, 365 days a year by completing an online report visit <https://forms.nspcc.org.uk/content/nspcc-report-abuse-form/>

If you think a child is in immediate danger, you can also call their Helpline which is available Monday to Friday 8am – 10pm or 9am – 6pm at the weekends on **0808 800 5000**.

They will listen to your concerns, offer advice and support and can take action on your behalf, if a child is in danger. You don't have to tell them who you are, if you don't want to, or you can ask them not to share your name or contact with the police or social services.

How to access the Gateway Service

Anyone can contact this service directly in one of the following ways:

By phone:

During office hours (9.00am – 5:00pm) - you should contact Gateway on **028 9050 7000**
At all other times (all through the night, at weekends and over Bank Holidays) - you should contact the out-of-hours Emergency Service: **028 9504 9999**.

In person:

Speak to a Duty Social Worker at
Gateway Services
110 Saintfield Road
BELFAST
BT8 6HD

Find out more about how you can remain anonymous below.

You can contact their Helpline anonymously if you do not want to tell them who you are. However, it's really helpful to have your name and contact details, as they may need to contact you for more information in order to protect the child or children that you are concerned about.

It may also help to protect a child if you give permission for them to share those details with the Police or a social worker, or sometimes another agency where necessary, so that they can seek further information from you if they need to.

If you are willing to provide your details, but do not want them to share them with other agencies, please select the 'no' option on the form when submitting a report online. If you are unsure or concerned about completing the form, please call the helpline on **0808 800 5000**. All communications will be recorded, and NSPCC keep records for 15 years.

Reporting Anti-social Behaviour & Neighbour Nuisance

Even though we are still in uncertain and challenging times, if you are unfortunate enough to experience behaviour which causes alarm, annoyance or distress to you or other members of your household, we ask that you report this behaviour to us immediately.

WAYS OF REPORTING NEIGHBOUR NUISANCE TO US

Report by phone: 028 9074 4055

(Monday – Thursday from 9:00am – 5:00pm
and 9:00am – 4:00pm on Friday)

Report by email: admin@newingtonha.co.uk

To report a problem online:

newingtonha.co.uk/pages/contact-us/

It is important that you also contact other statutory agencies, such as Belfast City Council and the PSNI. By you doing so, you can help to support any formal or informal complaints you make to the Association.

We can then liaise with you and the other agencies to jointly address any issues which have arisen and via this partnership approach it will help us determine the appropriate action deemed necessary to help reduce the likelihood of further issues re-occurring.

To report a noise problem to BCC online:

<https://dof.belfastcity.gov.uk/ReportNoise/>

Report by phone: 028 9037 3006.

Daytime: (Monday – Thursday from 8.30am - 5.00pm
and Friday 8.30am - 4.30pm)

Night-time: Monday to Sunday 8pm - 4am

If the number is busy, leave a message and they will call you back.

Please note, BCC provides a night-time noise service which operates seven nights a week. If the noise problem occurs between 8pm and 4am, please report it by phoning 028 9037 3006, while the noise is happening. All information you give them is confidential.

Report by email:

As mentioned above, you can email them directly at envhealth@belfastcity.gov.uk

Report by post:

Noise control, Cecil Ward Building,
4-10 Linenhall Street, Belfast, BT2 8BP.

WHAT CAN BCC DO?

At present, due to the changes in the way they are currently delivering their services, BCC may only be able to write to those responsible. If they cannot resolve the complaint, they may carry out a more formal investigation and take legal action if deemed necessary.

FURTHER INFORMATION & ADVICE

For further information and advice on how to deal with neighbours and loud music or other types of noise, please visit: <http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/buildingcontrol-environment/noisecontrol/noise-main.aspx>

CONTACT THE PSNI DIRECTLY

You can report serious incidents of ASB or Criminal behaviour to the PSNI by phoning 999 (In an emergency where you need immediate assistance or feel threatened) or 101 (In a non-emergency where you need assistance or advice).

You can also report any issues or concerns online by visiting: <https://selfservice.nidirect.gov.uk/firearms/PSNI/PSNIFORMS/OnlineIncident#/IntroAdult>



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 had their gas boiler serviced within the last 12 months or is aware that an engineer has recently called with them and failed to gain access (i.e. they have left a calling card with you), 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.**