



Annual Report 2023/2024 BUILDING COMMUNITY

Big Enough to Deliver & Small Enough to Care

A word from our **Chair and CEO**

This past year at Newington could be described as one of change and renewal. As well as 2023/24 being the first year of our new three-year strategic plan, there were also changes at both board and staff level.

During the year, four of our members stood down from the board. Our chair, Niall Kelly left the board having completed nine years of service.

Peter Privilege, a former chair, having been involved with Newington for over 30 years, retired from the Board.

Bernadette Hassan resigned from the board after 5 years of service and Heather Wilson resigned, after one year's service.

We would like to thank these board members for their voluntary service and dedication to the association, our tenants, and the wider community.

Throughout the year we continued to invest in our staff and the organisational structure was changed to address the challenges that exist in our operating environment. We welcome our new colleagues who have joined the Association in the past year and thank those former colleagues who have moved on.

We also launched or new Tenant Participation & Community Involvement and Community Investment Strategies for the period 2023 - 2026. We continue to work in partnership with members of our Tenants Forum and wider community partners, who engage with us on a regular basis to help shape new and improve our existing services.

We also remain mindful of the challenges facing our tenants and the community we serve and as a response, we continued to invest in projects and initiatives that assist in meeting these challenges.

As a result of these challenges our board increased our Community Investment Fund by 50% for 2023/24 to £125,000.

We are pleased to confirm that Newington again received a successful Regulatory Judgment from our Regulator, the Department for Communities, which demonstrates our strong culture of good governance, sound financial management and our commitment to investing in our tenants, communities, and our homes.



Leeann Vincent Chairperson

This culture is also reflected in the assurances provided by our internal and external auditors

We continued to work in partnership with Apex Housing Association, remain an integral part of the Apex Housing Group and this partnership enables Newington to access expertise and services directly from Apex, which would be cost prohibitive for us to provide ourselves. This partnership also continues to deliver value for money in the joint procurement of contracts and services.

We were delighted to see the restoration of the NI Assembly during the reporting period and remain hopeful that our local administration and executive will make the decisions necessary to address the challenges that we face as a society.

In September 2023, the Association commenced the implementation of a new Housing Management software package 'Homemaster' Software and this system went live at the start of April 2024. This new system will provide many benefits to both the Association and tenants moving forward.



Anthony Kerr Chief Executive Officer

The Association did face some significant challenges throughout the year. Instabilities in the UK financial markets resulted in several interest rate rises, and because of these, we incurred increased borrowing costs.

Our measured term contractor 'Nicor', like many operating within the local maintenance and construction sector, have seen a significant decrease in available skilled trades persons and higher costs (which has resulted in a dramatic rise in the cost of materials, operational outlays, etc.). As a result of these mitigating factors, as well as others, has led to a us not achieving the targets set by us for the completion of our Urgent and Routine response maintenance repairs.

We wish to extend a warm welcome to our new Board member, Carmel Grant, who is a current tenant of Newington and the current Chair of our Tenant Forum and congratulate and express our appreciation to our current colleagues on the Board, our resolute staff team and statutory and local community partners.

Our Communities Performance Report 2023/2024



Housing Management

During the year there were 32 allocations carried out by the Association (4 new-lets and 28 re-lets) at our general needs and sheltered accommodation.

Eight temporary allocations were also carried out at our supported accommodation at Mater Dei Hostel, which is jointly managed with our partner, Depaul Ireland.

An additional **seven** direct exchanges and two tenancy successions were also carried out by the Association.

During the reporting period, approximately **78.33%** of the Association's rental income was received directly from Housing Benefit or Universal Credit.

Total non-technical rent arrears increased from 3.55 % at end of Quarter 4 (2022/23) to 4% at year-end (i.e., at the end of Q.4 - 2023/24).

Via our Community Investment Fund, the Association spent £125k on various initiatives and projects.

The Association had an occupancy level of 97.5% on the 31st of March 2024.

Finally, during February 2024, the Association undertook an annual review of our rental charges, which resulted in a 6.7% increase in most of our rents from 1st April 2024 (i.e., 6.7% increase was applied to all properties which are currently held under a de-controlled tenancy).

There was also a 7.7% increase applied to controlled rents this year.

The Association did not apply any uplift to our service charges for 2024/25.

Note: The Association also partially owns one shared ownership dwelling, which we do not receive an income for.

Housing Stock and Average Rent & Service Charges for 2023/24



The Association currently owns and manages **720** homes and partially owns one shared ownership dwelling, which we do not receive an income for.

During 2023/24, we acquired four additional new homes into direct Management which saw our stock rise from 716 homes to 720

NHA Owned Homes

115 230 259 98

General Needs (Size of Home)	Total stock owned	Average Weekly Rent & Service Charge (combined)
One bedroom	43	£79.94
Two bedrooms	212	£108.76
Three bedrooms	259	£118.87
Four bedrooms	98	£115.54
Five bedrooms	17	£116.89
Six bedrooms	1	£145.23
Totals	630	

Supported Housing (Size of Home)	Total stock owned	Average weekly Rent & Service Charge (combined)
One bedroom	7	£71.65
Two bedrooms	6	£71.65
Totals	13	

Sheltered Housing (Size of Home)	Total stock owned	Average Weekly Rent & Service Charge (combined)
One bedroom	65	£105.49
Two bedrooms	12	£107.55
Totals	77	

Allocations & Lettings 2023/2024

The Association completed the following lettings from 1st April 2023 - 31st March 2024:

General Needs New-lets:	4
General Needs & Sheltered Relets:	28



The Association also processed seven Direct Exchanges, two Succession of Tenancy and 8 temporary allocations (i.e., at Mater Dei Hostel) within the reporting period.

Breakdown of General Needs & Sheltered Lettings in 2023/24

No. of General Needs Lettings:	28
No. of Sheltered Lettings:	4

Our Arrears Performance during 2023/2024

Below is a breakdown of Current Tenant (Non-Technical) Arrears at the end of March 2024. There were 227 current tenants in arrears with the Association at the end of March 2024, who between them owed the Association a total of £139,172.

No. of Tenants in Arrears	Level of Arrears due from Tenants	Total Amount Due from Tenants
99	Owing up to £199	£7,042
46	Owing between £200 - £499	£14,893
57	Owing between £500 - £1,499	£50,087
25	Owing £1,500 and over	£67,150
227		£139,172

Non-Technical Arrears as a % of Total Income Receivable	NHA Target	Performance
Current & Former	<5%	4%
Rent Collection	>98%	99.05%
Rent loss due to void properties	<4%	1.14%

The Association had Current and Past Tenant arrears totalling £358,547 at the end of the reporting year. Below is a breakdown of all technical and non-technical arrears due.

Туре	Non-Technical	Technical	Total
Current	£139,172	£175,781	£314,953
Past	£43,594	£00.00	£43,594
Total	£182,765	£175,781	£358,547

Rent Collection & Performance 2023/24

Key Performance Indicators

Rent, Rates and Service Charge to be collected (Total Income Receivable) during 2023/24	£4,564,426
Rent, Rates and Service Charge collected during 2023/24	£4,520,972
Percentage of Income collected during 2023/24	99.05%

Write Off

During the reporting period, the Association processed the write off of bad debts for totalling the sum of £3,938.97, in relation to past tenant debt that was no longer likely to be recoverable by the Association.

Registered reports of Anti-Social behaviour 2023/24

The Association received 35 complaints within the period from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024 in respect of Anti-Social Behaviour/Nuisance.

The majority of complaints received within the year were actioned and closed by the Association, however one case remained active and under investigation on 31st March 2024.



Social Value, Tenant Participation, Community Engagement & Investment

At Newington, we are committed to ensuring that new and existing tenants are aware of the support available to assist them to sustain their tenancies.

Mechanisms and procedures are in place to ensure that tenants are signposted or directly referred for financial, tenancy or personal support and these procedures are at the core of our day-to-day services. By providing this service, it helps to maximise the use of the various essential services that are provided locally. We continually strive to invest locally and believe we are making a real contribution to people's lives.

We continued to promote initiatives that encourage tenant participation. Our Tenant Forum has now been in place since April 2017.

During 2023/24, Forum members took part in various initiatives including organising and delivering community events, seasonal projects, training and the development and delivery of our new Tenant Participation & Community Involvement Strategy 2023 - 2026 and Community Investment Strategy 2023 - 2026.

Partnership working with others at a local level

We have continued to sustain all our existing partnerships, whilst continuing to forge new ones with various community, voluntary and statutory organisations.

This is to ensure our tenants receive the support to help them to fully integrate well within their new or existing surroundings. Newington continued to attend various

multi-agency partnership initiatives (i.e., Multi Agency/Community Safety Forums) to address any instances of Anti-Social Behaviour and/or hate crime in all areas where Newington provides homes.

The Association remained an active member of the North Belfast Smile Sure-Start's Management Committee.

Our Community Investment during 2023/24

Via our Community Investment Fund budget, which is set by our Board each year, we supported a range of strategic and community activities to allow us to provide greater financial support and to make more positive differences, locally.

Below are some of the main activities we have supported throughout the reporting period.

Seasonal Events Funding (£3,500)

The Association supported the delivery of several seasonal events during 23/24, including the New Lodge Festival.

Financial support to a local advice service (£5,000)

During the year, the Association provided financial support to a local community housing advice service, namely New Lodge Housing Office.

Support for local Community Initiatives (£37,932)

The Association supported several community groups and organisation's during 23/24, including the following:

- New Lodge and Holy Family Youth Club's Summer Intervention Projects
- Local Food Banks
- Community Restorative Justice Ireland
- Ashton Community Trust's 'Lancaster Resident's Group Community Website
- Several smaller donations to local groups organisations to deliver projects within North Belfast

The Association also held or financially supported other tenant & community events throughout the year and provided sponsorship to local groups such as Midland Boxing Club, Newington ABC, Youth Action NI, RCity Youth CIC, TAMHI, Lancaster St. Resident's, St James Street Resident's, Newington Day Centre, Newington Residents Group, Kids Together, etc.

Community Training Events (£10,000)

This funding was provided to support the delivery of training seminars to welfare advisors currently working throughout North Belfast, under the umbrella of the North Belfast Advice Partnership.

Brian Mullan Community Fund (£14,720)

In November 2023, via our Brian Mullan Community Fund (BMCF) the Association distributed community grants ranging from £250 to £1,000 to 16 local organisations operating and delivering services throughout North Belfast. The total amount distributed was £14,720.

Via our Brian Mullan Community Fund, Newington tenants have played a pivotal role in distributing nearly £80k to over 80 local organisations/community projects within the past 7 years.

Student Bursaries (£5,200)

This year, the Association distributed twelve student bursary awards totalling the sum of £5,200. Eight bursaries were awarded to new students, along with four renewals to existing awardees, to help them financially during this current academic year.

Camberwell Hub Initiative (£3,352)

By working in partnership with representatives from Newington Residents Group and other local stakeholders, the 'Camberwell Hub – Heat, Eat & Meet initiative' continued to be rolled out and focussed on creating a welcoming environment for residents to call for some warmth, food and advice/support.

Kindness Fund (£7,155)

It was evident that the current cost of living crisis continues to have a major impact on our tenants. In early 2022, the Association established a Kindness Fund to provide some low-level financial support to tenants struggling to purchase gas, electricity, or other essential items. During 2023/2024, the Association provided financial support to 34 tenants totalling the sum of £7,155.

Welfare Advice (£20,700)

The Association spent over £20k on the provision of a part-time welfare advisor via Tar Isteach and also distributed funding to advice organisation's that make up the North Belfast Advice Partnership.

Camberwell Grow NI Project (£7,000

Newington continued to fund our partner Grow NI to ensure the successful delivery of our community gardening project at our Sheltered Scheme, Camberwell Court. This project encourages social interaction, improves resident's mental health and wellbeing, and helps them to develop new skills, through involvement in gardening, cooking, etc. This project has been developed to ensure that our residents have access to this, and a range of other activities that are delivered onsite.

Tenant & Community Support (£10,335)

Over £10k of Newington's Community Investment budget was spent on initiatives which promoted tenant participation, the delivery of community involvement opportunities, capacity building, to enhance good relations and the delivery of local projects.

The Association also supported the publication of New Lodge CEP Community Magazine, attended several Tenant and Community Information Days.

Our Community Investment during 2023/2024

Newington's Board continued to invest in our tenants and residents within the wider community.

For several years NHA's Board of Management has annually committed 2% of our rent receivable to deliver targeted strategic investment initiatives. From April 2023, this budget has been increased to 3% of rent receivable, to allow us to provide greater financial support and to make more positive differences, locally.

The Association continued to work in partnership with our key stakeholders and partners to enhance the lives of those currently residing within existing wellestablished communities.

Newington continued to invest and support local communities through direct requests for funding, as well as funding to support a range of community activities for young people, families, and our older tenants.

The following is a breakdown of our Community Investment expenditure during 2023/2024:

3,500 **Seasonal Events**

Funding

Support for local Community Initiatives

Student Bursary Scheme

Community **Training Events**

8,000 Youth Intervention

Financial support to local advice service

(Camberwell Court)

5,352 **Camberwell Hub Project**

Tenant & Community Support

Community Fund

Kindness Fund

Total

Our main highlights during 2023/2024

Between April 2022 and March 2023, the Association has delivered or financially supported the following project and initiatives:





Distribution of 12 Student Bursaries to NHA tenants/ household members



Food Financial supported wo local foodbanks

Projects



funding awards via our Brian Mullan **Community Fund**



Tenants

The holding and funding of several Tenant & **Community Events**







Funding award to Grow NI to continue to deliver gardening project at **Camberwell Court**





Community

The holding and funding of several Tenant & Community Fun Days, events, and projects



Holy Family Youth Club's Summer Intervention Projects



retention of the Welfare Advice Post.



Funding to support the publication of **New Lodge CEP Community Magazine**



Repairs and Asset Management **Performance** Report 2023/2024

Repairs and Maintenance

During the year the number of homes in management increased from 716 to 720 as we acquired four additional new homes into direct Management.

The Association also partially owns one shared ownership dwelling, which we do not receive an income for.

The Association continued our role out of programmed major repairs and improvements to our homes and the total expenditure capitalised in the financial year was £387,192. The level of expenditure will fluctuate from year-to-year dependent on the age and condition of our homes.



During 2023 - 2024, the Association spent approximately £296k on planned and cyclical maintenance improvements and approximately £480k on response /general repairs to our existing homes.

The Association expects to maintain its level of operations and performance, we are committed to investing £740k on planned and cyclical maintenance works to our homes during 2024/2025.

Response Maintenance Performance

In total, the Association raised 2,999 response/general repair orders between 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024. A total of 2,615 (87%) of all jobs were completed on time within the reporting period, a breakdown of which is detailed below.

Туре	Jobs Raised	% Jobs completed on time	Performance (%)
ICO	708	700	99%
Emergency	672	638	95%
Urgent	884	731	83%
Routine	735	546	74%
Total	2,999	2,615	87%

Voids

The Association had eighteen void properties on the 31st of March 2024.

Of the eighteen, there were three lettable void properties (i.e., properties available for letting or undergoing minor change of tenancy works), plus a further fifteen unlettable voids, nine of which were undergoing major improvement works and the remaining six at 214 Limestone Road, being held for possible demolition or redevelopment of the apartment complex.

Re-letting of NHA Properties in 2023/2024

Total Relets	28
Average Re-let times (Days)	56
Total Void Loss	£51,896

Disabled Adaptations

The Association completed 12 no. disabled adaptations within 2023/2024 at a cost of £43,360.

Our Group Structure Agreement with Apex Housing

On 6 April 2015, Newington Housing Association became part of the Apex Housing Group. Whilst retaining its independence as a Housing Association, Newington HA has aligned itself, voluntarily, to a dynamic and innovative organisation within the NI social housing sector.

The driver for the formation of this partnership initiative will realise efficiency savings, boost surpluses and increase the potential borrowing capacity of both organisations.

Via our Asset Management Strategy, we are committed to investing over £740k on planned and component/capital works to our homes during 2024/2025.

- Optimise future returns on assets
- Include performance management and scrutiny functions which are effective at driving and delivering improved value for money performance
- Allow us to identify a clearer understanding of the costs and outcomes of delivering specific services and any underlying factors which may influence these costs
- Ensure financial resilience and provide both Associations with the capacity to continually grow
- Increase housing supply
- Sustain and develop fit for purpose services to our tenants and additional investment in our homes
- Will deliver greater benefit to our existing and future tenants and local communities.

Our Stock Condition Surveys

These surveys provide vital information to us as an Association as they help provide data so we can plan for planned maintenance and major upgrade works to vour home.

For example, this helps us plan for replacement kitchens, windows, doors & heating systems etc.

Our stock condition surveys programme commenced in November 2023 and 194 out of 380 homes were completed during 2023/24.

The Association completed the remainder of the surveys by the end of June 2024.



Assets and Planned Maintenance

Throughout the year, we continued to invest in our homes and carried out essential works to ensure the homes we provide are safe and well maintained.

Despite the challenges within the construction and maintenance sector, the Association steadily progressed through and invested in our homes via our Planned & Cyclical Maintenance Programmes. Unfortunately, some of the works planned for completion by the end of March 2024 have overrun and will be carried out during 2024/2025.

Below are some of our main highlights of work undertaken by us between April 2023 and March 2024.



We replaced 54 Kitchens within our homes during the reporting period. A further 9 kitchens were added to the Contract and were ongoing under-going works at the end of the year.



100% of all relevant properties within Newington ownership have undergone regular fire risk assessments within the past year.



We carried out **internal** redecoration at Camberwell Court (Chat Rooms), Lisieux House and 232 Limestone Road.



23 gas boilers were upgraded (replaced) by us within the past year.

99.72% (725 out of 727) of the gas boiler in our ownership were serviced within the last year. With regards to the two that were not service, action has been taken by us to ensure the safety and welfare of the relevant tenants.



We completed thermal **works** to properties within Indianna Ave.

We carried out servicing of current Ventilation System which are installed within some of our homes. The servicing element has now been fully completed and a further programme to upgrade ventilation units is still ongoing.



The Association has commenced the rollout of our Planned & Cyclical Maintenance programmes for the year ahead.

Via our Asset Management Strategy, we were committed to investing over £740k on planned and component/capital works works to our homes during 2024/2025.





Planned Maintenance Works for 2024/25	
External Upgrading Works	£64,500
External / Internal Redecoration works	£71,000
Fire Remedial / Improvement Works	£50,000
Thermal Improvement Works	£25,000
Total Void Loss	£210,500

Component / Capital Spend Works for 2024/25	
Kitchen Replacements	£46,000
Servicing of Smoke Ventilation System	£40,000
Replacement of Smoke Ventilation Systems	£91,000
Thermal Refurbishment Works	£200,000
Gas Boiler Replacements	£91,000
Miscellaneous Boiler & Ventilation Fund	£62,000
Total anticipated expenditure	£530,000



















Our Board of Management and Full Board Meetings Attendance during 2023/2024

In total, the Association had 16 different members served on the Board of Management during 2023/2024, of which four members stepped down during the reporting period

Below are details of Board members attendance during the year.

Name of Board Member/Position	No. of Full Board Meetings that required attendance	
Mr Niall Kelly - (NHA Chair who stepped down in Feb. 2024)	4 out of a possible 4	
Mrs Brenda Callaghan	4 out of a possible 4	
Mr John Stephen Drummond	4 out of a possible 4	
Mr Mark Glinwood	4 out of a possible 4	
Mr Chris McCarroll	3 out of a possible 4	
Mrs Leeann Vincent (New NHA Chair)	3 out of a possible 4	
Mr Sean McKenna	3 out of a possible 4	
Mr George Walsh (MBE)	3 out of a possible 4	
Miss Laura Privilege	3 out of a possible 4	
Mr Michael Bright	3 out of a possible 4	
Mrs Carmel Maginness	2 out of a possible 4	
Mr Philip O'Flaherty	2 out of a possible 4	
Mr Peter Privilege - (stepped down in Sept. 2023)	2 out of a possible 2	
Mr Larry Mooney	1 out of a possible 4	
Miss Heather Wilson - (stepped down in Nov. 2023)	0 out of a possible 2	
Ms Bernadette Hassan - (stepped down in Sept. 2023)	0 out of a possible 2	

Board Expenses in 2023/2024

Newington's Board of Management members claimed £672.48 in expenses during the reporting period.

Our current Committees and Members (Sept. 2024)

Finance & HR	Communities	Assets	Audit & Risk
Larry Mooney	Sean McKenna	Leeann Vincent	Philip O'Flaherty
Stephen Drummond	Philip O'Flaherty	Sean McKenna	George Walsh
Chris McCarroll	Mark Glinwood	Carmel Maginness	Mark Glinwood
Mark Glinwood	Brenda Callaghan	Brenda Callaghan	Stephen Drummond
Michael Bright	Lisa Privilege	Stephen Drummond	

Finance & Corporate Services Performance 2023/2024

Throughout 2023/24, the Association has progressed steadily and incorporated improvements to our business.

Our management cost per unit did increase from £1,167 in 2022/23 to £1,282 for 2023/24. This is mainly due to an increase in staffing numbers.

Our maintenance cost per unit has decreased from £2,619 in 2022/23 to £1,091 for 2023/24.

Both employee turnover and absence rates fell significantly during 2023/24 compared to the previous year. The Association recruited seven new employees within the year and had four leavers during this time.



















Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 31 March 2024

		2024	2023
	Note	£	£
Turnover	5	5,234,880	4,916,862
Operating costs	6	(4,083,455)	(3,913,064)
Operating surplus	7	1,151,425	1,003,798
Surplus arising from the sale of housing property		62,404	397,613
Transfer to Disposal Proceeds Fund	17	2,028	(397,613)
Interest receivable and similar income	10	14,652	2,854
Interest payable and similar charges	11	(807,462)	(526,865)
Other finance costs	11	0	(31,000)
Surplus on ordinary activities		423,047	448,787
Actuarial gain/(loss) in respect of pension schemes	24	246,000	1,511,000
Unrecognised Asset in respect of pension schemes	24	(305,0000	0
Total comprehensive income		364,047	1,959,787

All amounts above relate to continuing operations of the Association.

Statement of changes in reserves for the year ended 31 March 2024

		2024	2023
	Note	£	£
Surplus on ordinary activities for the financial year		423,047	448,787
Movement in share capital and capital reserve	0	0	1
Actuarial gain/(loss) in respect of pension schemes	0	246,000	1,511,000
Unrecognised Asset in respect of pension schemes	0	(305,000)	0
Net addition to capital and reserves		364,047	1,959,793
Opening total capital and reserves		15,940,144	13,980,353
Closing total capital and reserves		16,304,191	15,940,146

Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 31 March 2024

		2024	2023
	Note	£	£
Fixed assets			
Housing properties	12	65,598,356	65,841,997
Other tangible fixed assets	13	2,001,875	2,058,820
		67,600,231	67,900,817
Current assests			
Debtors	14	311,206	628,080
Cash at bank and in hand		1,299,881	1,340,676
		1,611,087	1,968,756
Creditors: amounts failing due within one year	15	(3,014,159)	(1,982,737)
Net current (liabilities)		(1,403,072)	(13,981)
Total assets less current liabilities		66,197,159	67,886,836
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year		(49,892,968)	(52,018,690)
Pension (liability) / Asset		0	72,000
Net assets		16,304,191	15,940,146
Capital and reserves			
Called up share capital	0	25	25
Capital reserve	0	192	192
Revenue reserve		16,303,974	15,939,929
Total funds		16,304,191	15,940,146

These financial statements are from our Annual Accounts, which were approved by Newington's Board of Management on 17th of September 2024 and were signed on the Association's behalf by:





Newington Housing Association (1975) Ltd.

300 Limestone Road Belfast BT15 3AR

Phone: 02890 744 055

Email: admin@newingtonha.co.uk

Opening Hours: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm on weekdays (Closed at weekends and on Public Holidays)

Out of Hours Emergency Number: **0800 731 3081**

Newington Housing Association (1975) Limited is registered under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act (Northern Ireland) 1969 and is a Registered Housing Association.

Newington Housing Association (1975) Limited is a registered charity **(Charity No. IP158)**.

Newington Housing Association (1975) Limited is registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (Registration No. NIC102477).

Newington Housing Association (1975) Limited is registered with the ICO (Registration. No. Z7623596)