

# Tenants' Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2025

**Newington**  
Housing Association  
(1975) Ltd.



## Major Adaptation delivered for our Tenant.

**In recent months, the Association has worked closely with a local family within the New Lodge area of North Belfast to deliver a much-needed major adaptation to the family home.**

A member of the household had ongoing medical needs, which meant that their long-term home for almost 20 years was no longer fit for purpose.

By working in partnership with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Belfast City Council and Belfast Health and Social Care Trust; through our disabled adaptation process, the Association was able to incorporate a new extension onto the property, which included a bedroom and associated bathroom, all at ground floor level.

This new extension now enables the family to remain within their home and the local community, and the works give a young member of the household the

facilities and space where their care and specific needs can be achieved, in a private and dignified manner.

Commenting on the new extension and facilities, our tenant Mairead said "I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Association. The new extension has been one of the best things that has happened in our lives. I know we as a family have had to wait for it, but it was well worth the wait as it has significantly improved the quality of our lives, especially my daughter Clodagh. I want to personally thank the Association and everyone else who was involved in making this possible."

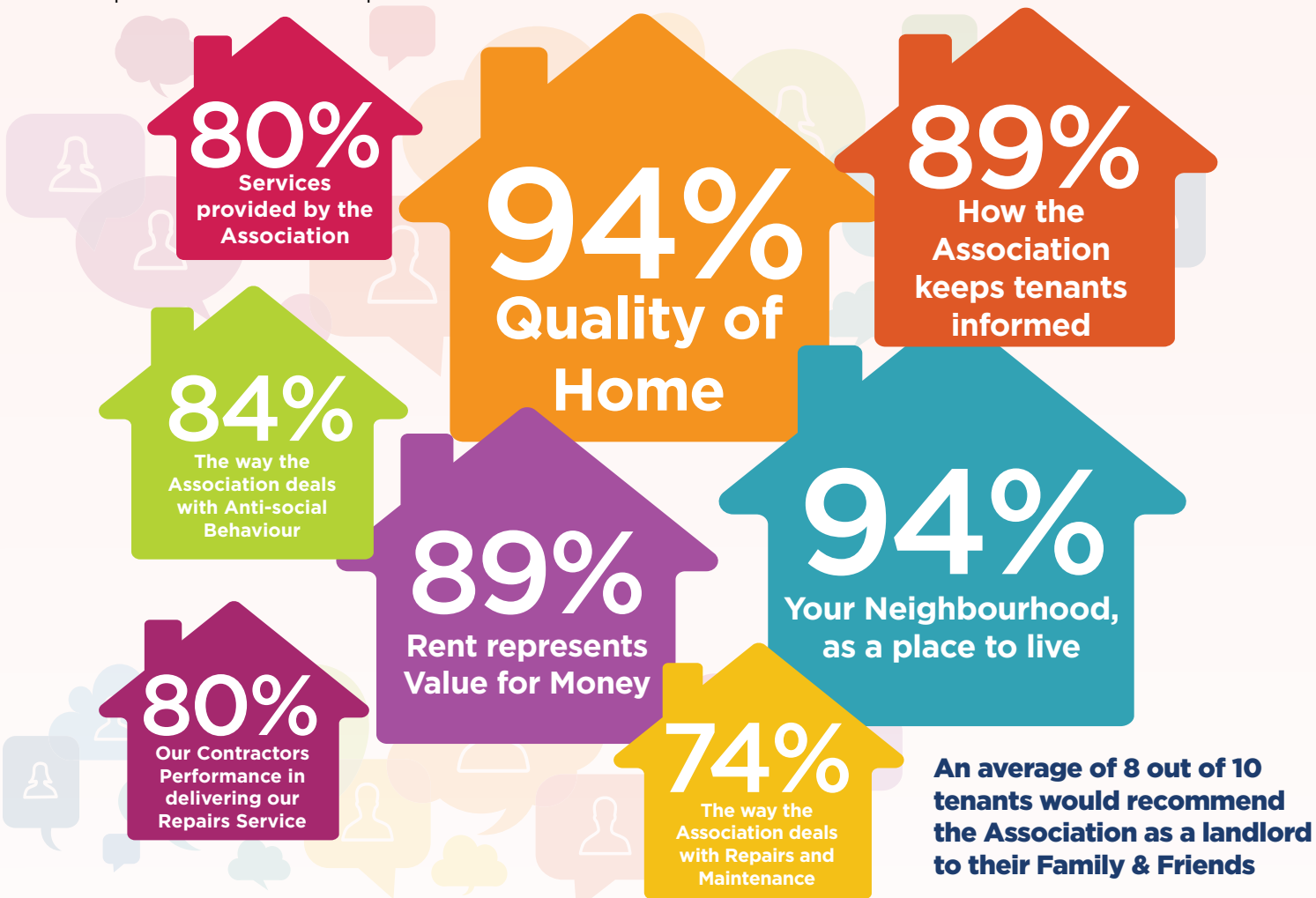
The Association would like to extend a special mention to PSC Ltd, who carried out the works in a timely manner, with minimal disruption to the family.

Finally, the Association would like to wish the Saunders family many more happy years within their newly adapted home.

# Newington's Tenant Experience Survey

During February 2025, the Association carried out a Tenant Experience Survey to evaluate our performance in respect of the services we provide.

The percentage of respondents who are either satisfied or very satisfied with our services, are shown below:



## Why not join Newington's Match Savings Scheme



Newington Housing continues to work in partnership with Newington Credit Union to deliver a Match Savings Scheme to our tenants. When joining the scheme, you must initially save a minimum of £10 per month on a regular basis for the first 6 months.



At the end of the 6 months, we will check with Newington Credit Union to ensure you have adhered to the terms of the Scheme. If you have met the terms of the Scheme, the Association will deposit the amount of £60.00 (i.e., match the minimum savings amount you will have saved over the first 6 months into your account as a reward).



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



YOUR CREDIT UNION  
Planning for tomorrow

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

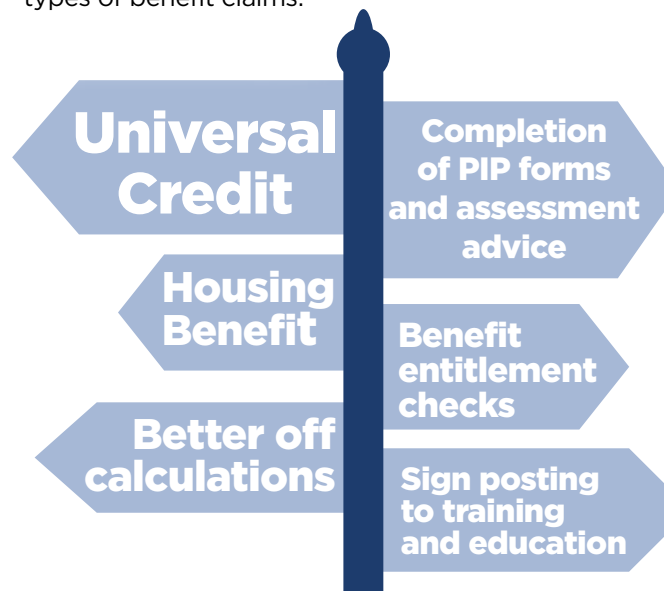
## COMMUNITIES NEWS

UC Universal Credit

## Welfare Advice Officer

Newington have a Welfare Advice Officer, Caitlin McCotter, who is based within our office two days a week, (i.e. every Wednesday and Thursday) from 9am to 5pm.

Why not contact the Association to book in an appointment. This service is also open to the general public, and you don't need to be a Newington tenant to use it. Caitlin has recently helped with the following types of benefit claims:



## Other help from Newington Housing Association

Please speak to a member of our team if you are interested in any of the following -

- Food bank vouchers
- Family support referrals
- Social supermarket referrals
- Welfare advice service
- Employment support service
- Mental health support referrals (mind skills)
- Camberwell Eat, Meet and Heat Hub - every Tues. from 5pm
- Newington's Match Savings Scheme

Information about our

## Annual Student Bursary Scheme for 2025

The Scheme will be opening in June and will be advertised via our social media platforms and on our website.

**YOU MAY APPLY FOR A BURSARY IF:**

- You are aged over 18 and entering a third level or higher-level education course on a full or part basis.
- You have not received a previous bursary from Newington HA

If you would like more information about the Scheme, please contact our Community Engagement Officer, Sadie Reid on 028 9074 4055 or email [s.reid@newingtonha.co.uk](mailto:s.reid@newingtonha.co.uk)







# Our **Brian Mullan** Community Fund

On top of the seven grants totalling £6,360 that we distributed in July 2024, via our **Brian Mullan Community Fund** (i.e. via our summer funding pot), in December, the Association distributed a further 20 community grants ranging from £250 to £1,000 to local organisations operating and delivering services throughout North Belfast.

In total, the Association distributed £26,000 within this financial year, via our Brian Mullan Community Fund. Below are some brief synopses of a few of the projects supported during the winter funding round of our Brian Mullan Community Fund.

## Indian Community

**Centre** - Funding was awarded to promote social engagement, deliver arts & crafts workshops, health & well-being sessions and outdoor activities.

## Cliftonville Community

**Centre** - This was a very successful Christmas event for the wider community, which was enjoyed by many local families.

**Mindskills** - To provide much needed mental health training to local groups. To train people in mindfulness, stress management and purchase arm bands to promote hope.

Organisation	Amount awarded
Eglinton Men's Club	£1,000
Wolfhill Centre (Christmas Event)	£990
Mental Health Movement	£1,000
Star Amateur Boxing Club	£1,000
Belfast Blaze	£945
Star Neighbourhood Centre	£1,000
Trinity & New Lodge Senior Citizen's Group	£1,000
Ben Madigan Women's Group	£1,000
Holy Family Youth Club	£979.85
St. Patrick's Young Men FC	£1,000
Ardoyne YC & New Lodge YC	£1,000
Seniors on the Shore	£1,000
Glenbank Community Garden	£1,000
Mindskills	£700
Cliftonville Community Centre	£1,000
Newington Residents Group	£1,000
Greater Shankill Citizens Group	£1,000
Indian Community Centre	£1,000
Newington Day Centre	£1,000
North Belfast Men's Shed	£1,000

## Rollout of our **Brian Mullan** Community Fund Awards for 2025

Applications for our next round of the **Brian Mullan Community Fund** were advertised in May 2025 for the summer projects. We will be advertising these on our social media outlets, so please watch out for this if you work within the North Belfast area and are running any summer events.

## Some local projects and community initiatives held over the past few months.

**Newington have been working in partnership with local groups to provide support for our families.**

This year we worked with the Trussel Trust to provide food hampers to families in need.

We worked in partnership with the family support hubs to help with uniform drives and distribution of vouchers to families in hardship.

Newington staff took part in fundraising for the Cash for Kid's programme, where we raised much needed funding.

We also delivered toys to around 50 local families as part of this programme and this undoubtedly helped to take the pressure off families, at a very stressful time.

## New Lodge Youth Centre Youths Awards Night

New Lodge Youth Centres Champions for Change project facilitated a North Belfast youth awards with over 150 nominees for 10 youth awards.

The awards recognised young leaders across North Belfast who have inspired their peers and wider communities. Newington Housing Association sponsored 2 of the awards on the night and presented these awards to the deserving young people. It was amazing having over 200 local people from North Belfast together in Ulster University Belfast campus to celebrate young people and the work of the youth organisations.



## NEWS Group Update

Over recent months, this group took part in various activities including, Stress Management, Money Management, Arts and crafts (including wreath making), Clay pottery, sewing and cookery classes.



## Youth Forum Update

The Youth Forum took part in a project to help the homeless. They purchased and packed food items for the homeless and delivered these around homeless projects within the North Belfast area, such as The People's Kitchen, Mater Dei Hostel and other local centres.

This was an important issue for the Youth Forum who raised the money and used it to buy items like snacks, pot noodles, and other easy used non-perishable items, to help support people who were homeless and struggling.



## Tenant Forum Update

Our Tenant Forum meets monthly in the Association's offices. This year, the Forum have worked on various initiatives, including street clean ups and advice clinics. The Forum also helped re-designed the recent Tenant Experience Survey, which was distributed to all tenants.

## Refugee & Asylum Training delivered by Small World Workshop /Together CIC

In February, most of our staff undertook Refugee & Asylum training within our office.

During the training staff learnt the difference between asylum seeking and refugee status, how the process of claiming asylum works, about the transition process for those granted leave to remain/refugee status, the current Refugee Resettlement Schemes in NI and the vulnerability of people who come to seek asylum in NI.

There was also an in-depth discussion around cultural awareness issues, challenges and how people who arrive to seek asylum or as refugees can be supported.

On behalf of everyone who attended, we wish to express our gratitude to Stephanie from Small World Workshop/Together CIC for delivering the session, which was enjoyed by all.





# Chartered Institute of Housing (Ireland) Awards

## Partnership Working delivering for Young People



Newington Housing Association (NHA), New Lodge Youth Centre (NLYC) and Holy Family Youth Club (HFYC) were delighted to have been shortlisted for the 'Working in Partnership' category at the 2025 All Ireland Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) Awards.

Work has been ongoing for several years with the three organisations, working in partnership with young people, and has resulted in a number of innovative projects being developed within the New Lodge and Limestone/Newington areas.

NHA has provided over £32k in financial support in recent years working in this partnership with both youth clubs.

Projects, the partnership work has delivered on include a youth committee covering both areas, summer intervention programmes, NLYCs annual Romania project as well as Winter Wonderlands for both areas.

Also, we have financially supported the development of the external green space located beside NLYC and provided funding towards a minibus for HFYC, along with funding for youth awards in December 2024.

The Association is acutely aware of the importance of investing in young people and working alongside organisations who have first-hand knowledge and the expertise to change lives.

The Association had previously been recognised by the Chartered Institute of Housing (Ireland) in this category for our Annual Student Bursary Scheme, which is



delivered in partnership with Newington Credit Union. The Scheme financially supports young people and those returning to education.

The Association recognises that young people will be future residents of the area and thus it is extremely important that they are given every opportunity to shape their community and their future, and thus as a local organisation, we are fully committed to continue our work in partnership with HFYC and NLYC to achieve this.

**Below are quotes from representatives of our key partners and young people that we have supported recently:**

*"NHA has provided key support not only in sponsorship but community leadership in the Greater New Lodge community particularly for young people who face many barriers in their lives. The support NHA provides enabled young people to obtain opportunities which would not be possible. The ethos of giving back to support communities to overcome barriers they face is apparent in all aspects of NHAs work".*

**Sean McMullan, Senior Youth Worker NLYC**

*"Newington Housing Association have been a great help and supporter of our work in New Lodge Youth Centre. They are always there to support our work and are caring about the people of our community. I have worked with them on many different projects such as our committee and social action projects. Being able to have the opportunity to create an event for myself and my peers for our next stages of education in the university was a great experience".*

**Tori O'Reilly - Youth Committee & Romania Project**

*"We worked in partnership with NHA to allow us to operate a summer diversionary programme, this was much needed due to the increase in sectarian and ASB in the area and in Alexandra Park in particular. We were unfortunately bracing ourselves for a summer of a possible explosion in sectarianism and related violence. The support received, and the work carried out ensured that the community was able to enjoy one of the most peaceful summers in years in the area."*

**BJ McKevitt, HFYC**

*"Being able to receive the support from Newington Housing Association was a great help in my studies which also took a lot of stress of me to be able to purchase essentials for my university study. This bursary supports local people to be able to have a more enjoyable experience from our communities as money at times can be a huge obstacle for people".*

**Cadhla Coogan, Student Bursary Recipient**



## New Lodge Youth Centre and Ardoyne Youth Club's Romania Project

**Young people from New Lodge Youth Centre and Ardoyne Youth Club recently returned home from a life-changing trip to Romania.**

The 'Romania Project', which started in 2015, enables young people to participate in a year-long project at home, before taking their experiences abroad.

This year 22 young people from both centres made the trip to Baraolt, Romania. This area is very poverty-stricken, and the local people are mainly Hungarian, but are under the governance of Romania.

Before the recent trip, a year of preparation was required, with a focus on group work and volunteering. A big part of the programme was young people working on their personal and social development and the young people

spent a lot of time throughout the year volunteering in the 174 Trust and building relationships with young people with disabilities.

There was also volunteering with the People's Kitchen and working with vulnerable people who are homeless across the city.

In Baraolt, the group undertook several projects including working with vulnerable young people, working in a family centre as well as Baraolt's High School.

The work there involved working with young people of a similar age and those in the Romanian social services circle.

The project is designed to empowering young people with better social skills, who have returned home as community leaders to their peers.

## A reflection from our CEO

**Reflecting after my return from the trip, I can honestly say it has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my professional career. It was an emotional and inspiring trip, and I am so impressed by the 22 young people and their youth leaders.**

Our youth services are undervalued and under appreciated. Our youth clubs are not somewhere where we drop our kids off for a game of pool or a chat with their mates.

The Romania Project is not a week-long trip to take kids to Romania. Over the past year this project has been equipping young people who are themselves overcoming significant challenges and barriers to have the strength and resilience in themselves and each other to succeed.

We don't live in an equal society and North Belfast does not get its fair share of resources.

I now have first-hand experience of what can be achieved by the fantastic youth leaders in New Lodge Youth Centre and Ardoyne Youth Club, with very little resources.

I am incredibly proud of the community where I live and work and it is a privilege to work in partnership with great organisations who nurture our future community leaders to succeed.

I was encouraged whilst in Romania to live in the moment and I very much cherish the experience.

I will never forget this experience and am so grateful to have shared this with so many inspiring young people.



**Anthony Kerr**  
Chief Executive Officer



## Delivery of our Planned Maintenance Programme for 2024/2025

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 Component Replacement, Planned & Cyclical Maintenance Programmes during 2024/25.

**In total we invested approximately £970k.**

**Some of the highlights from the programme were:**

- Delaware** £75K External Redecoration & Roof Repairs
- Camberwell** £268K Replacement Smoke Ventilation Windows and Boiler Replacements, Internal Redecoration
- Mater Dei** £40k Full heating System Upgrades
- Ventilation** £90K System upgrades throughout our homes

## Our Planned Maintenance Programme for 2025/2026

The Association has commenced the rollout of our Capital Investment, Planned & Cyclical Maintenance programmes for the year ahead. Via our Asset Management Strategy, we were committed to investing over £1.5 million on the completion of works to our homes during 2025/2026.

## We are committed to investing: £1.04 million in capital investments works such as:

- Roof Covering Replacement & Insulation (4 Properties)
- Lift Replacement (1 Scheme)
- Replacement Fire Alarm Detection (1 Scheme)
- Heating Upgrade & Boiler Replacements (28 Properties)
- Refurbishment Works to long term void properties (3 Properties)
- Ventilation System Replacements (7 Properties)
- Kitchen Replacements (22 Properties)
- Kitchen Door Replacements (27 Properties)

## £204K in planned maintenance works such as:

- Fire Safety Remedial Works (23 properties)
- Internal Redecoration to communal areas (6 schemes)
- External Redecoration schemes (40 properties)

## £330K in cyclical and service maintenance to ensure the safety of our residents



**Delaware - £75K External Redecoration & Roof Repairs**



**£970k**

**£1.04 million**



**Full Kitchen & Cupboard Doors Replacements**



## The Association are currently exploring the potential of several development opportunities throughout Belfast. They are as follows:

**New Lodge Redevelopment** - We continue to work with NIHE regarding the proposed redevelopment of the New Lodge Long Street Redevelopment scheme. We are excited that we are nearing a point where a design team can be appointed and commence some community engagement in due course on the proposed design of the new development.

**Limestone Road** - The Association is continuing to engage with stakeholders regarding the feasibility of the redevelopment of our property at 214 Limestone Road and the adjoining property owned by the NIHE. We are at very early feasibility stage, but it is our long-term goal to see a new development to regenerate these sites and bring much needed accommodation to the area.

**Rehabilitation Schemes** - Over the course of the year the Association has purchased some additional one of houses which we are packaging together for refurbishment works. We hope to get project approval from the NIHE in the coming months and commence works on site later this year to deliver a further 8 homes to those in need by adding these properties to our stock profile.



**CAVEHILL ROAD**

**WATER WORKS**

**CLIFTONVILLE ROAD**

**LIMESTONE ROAD**

**NEW LODGE REDEVELOPMENT**

**ANTRIM ROAD**



# Alterations and Home Improvements

As a Newington Housing tenant, you can make reasonable improvements to your home. Before starting any work, you must first ask and receive the consent of the Association.

Some examples of alterations include but are not exclusive to:

- External decorations, erecting sheds, patios or conservatories
- Installing new windows, kitchens or heating systems
- Erecting aerials and satellite receivers

Alterations which are unsafe or would reduce the value of the property will not be approved.

The Association will not unreasonably withhold consent for alterations to take place but may require certain conditions met such as:

- Competent and fully insured contractors are used to carry out the work.
- The Association may ask for inspections at certain stages of the work.

All statutory approvals are received before work commences (Building Control and Planning Permission).

When a tenant replaces items or carries out alterations, they will become responsible for all future maintenance of the items.

Please refer to your Newington Tenant Handbook's, Section 5.8, Page 21 or speak with a member of our team, who will talk you through what is needed before you start any work.



# Our Home Adaptations Service Performance & Information

The Association has been very busy processing home adaptation works to a number of its properties. Over the year we have had almost 50 referrals for works to be assessed and completed.

Our Assets Team have completed over 30 of these referrals with the remaining referrals continuing through the adaptation process.

This has improved our resident's quality of life as they are able to remain in their home.

As an Association we have spent in excess of £200k on the 30 completed adaptations to date, with this to continue to rise as we complete the remaining ongoing adaptations.

## How to Avail of our Adaptation Service?

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 carry out 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.



# 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.



## General News

# Say hello! to our new Board Members



Everyone at Newington is delighted to welcome six new members onto our Board.

**Aisling Anderson** is a current tenant of Newington Housing and has a background in community development. As well as previously being a member of the Newington Tenants Forum, she was involved in local resident associations. She is currently employed in Bryson Charitable Group working in employability and training support for hard-to-reach young people.

**John Reid** is an architect with over 40 years of experience. He has managed large and small projects in both London and Belfast and is an expert witness and mediator for the Royal Institute of Architects Ireland. He is a trustee of the Wave Trauma Centre in Belfast.

**Danny McQuillan** is the Chief Executive of Start 360 a charity that provides support services to young people, adult offenders, and families across Northern Ireland in the areas of Health, Justice and Employability.

**Susan Russam** is the Chief Executive of Gems NI a charity the supports disadvantaged people into training and employment. Susan is a former Chair of Filor Housing Association and a former board member of Open Door and Trinity Oaklee HA.

**Christine Sheridan** is Director of Human Resources at Belfast City Council having previously worked in the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and Co Ownership HA. She has served on the board of Middletown Centre for Autism.

**Feargal McGuinness** is currently the Head of Land Strategy at the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government. He has a wealth of experience in research, policy and strategy development and although working for central government is based in Belfast having recently returned home to raise his family in North Belfast.

## Meet some of the new members of Our Team!



**Nicola McKee**  
HA Receptionist Administrator

Nicola's background is in homeless services, private rental and most recently pensions and sales. Nicola has a passion for housing requirements throughout the North Belfast community and that is what lead her to return to this vocation.

Originally from Co. Down, Nicola moved to Belfast in the early 2000's and hasn't looked back, she has a strong connection with the North Belfast community and its close-knit services.

Since starting in the role, Nicola has become an integrated part of the team and is embracing getting to know the tenants of Newington Housing.

Nicola's hobbies include baking, gardening and spending quality time with family and friends.



**Jason Beattie**  
Property Services Officer

Jason's background is in Construction and Engineering sectors. Most recently in the working on the Removal of Asbestos. Jason is enjoying his new post as a Property Services Officer and getting to know the tenants of Newington Housing Association.

From Randalstown, Jason has travelled all over Belfast for work and is quite familiar with North Belfast.

Jason is currently studying for his NEBOSH Certificate in Health & Safety. His hobbies include, managing an U13s football team and spending time with his family.



## 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.**