

### UPDATING CONTACT DETAILS

Can you please contact Flax Housing Association on **02890 592110** to **update your contact details**.

This is **essential that we can contact you** involving repairs, planned maintenance and general contact.



### USEFUL NUMBERS

#### NIHE:

03448 920 900

#### Phoenix Gas:

08454 55 55 55

#### POWER NI:

08457 455 455

#### Belfast City Council -

##### Pest Control:

02890 270431

##### Noise Control:

02890 373 006

##### Waste Management:

02890 270 657

### OUT OF HOURS VISIT SERVICE

The Association would highlight to tenants, that tenants can avail of an out of hours Visit Service.

The facility is for tenants who work during our normal opening hours of 9.00am - 5.00pm.

Tenants who wish to use this service can contact the Association to arrange a more suitable time.

**Flax Housing Association wishes to highlight the availability of an independent debt advice charity that offers guidance for people in debt.**

**The charity Debt Support Trust is open from 8am – 7pm Monday to Friday and can be contacted on 0800 085 0226 or online at**

**[www.debtsupporttrust.org.uk](http://www.debtsupporttrust.org.uk)**

**You will not be charged for their advice and any information that you give or receive is treated in the strictest confidence.**

**Flax Housing Association Staff and Committee Members would like to take the opportunity to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!**



**Flax Housing Association**

**Gatelodge  
8 Flax Street  
Belfast  
BT14 7EQ**



**Phone: 028 90 592110**

**Fax: 028 90 594440**

**E-mail: [admin@flaxhousing.com](mailto:admin@flaxhousing.com)**

**Out of hours Emergency Number:  
0800 7313 081**



**Flax Housing Association**

**Winter Edition**

**2013**



# TENANTS NEWSLETTER

## CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR OPENING TIMES

We will close on Tuesday 24th December 2013 at 1pm.

\* We will re-open on Thursday 2nd January 2013 at 9.00am

\* For emergency repairs, please call Fold Telecare on:

**0800 7313081**

\* If you need to report a gas escape, call Phoenix immediately on

**0800 002 001**

\* You will be able to pay your rent throughout the festive period at any outlet that displays the Paypoint sign using your rent card.



## TENANT PROPERTY DAMAGE

Every tenant has an obligation to ensure damage caused deliberately or negligently in their home, is repaired. The Association have encountered major damage to properties vacated by tenants.

Incidents such as unauthorised alterations, theft of fixtures and fittings, pipe work, radiators etc. will incur major costs. The tenant will be held responsible for the costs and if necessary court action will be initiated. Should you need advice regarding your responsibility as a tenant, please contact our office where one of our staff are more than happy to help. Please see the leaflet enclosed for more information.



## RESTARTING YOUR BOILER- SOME HELPFUL HINTS!

First thing to check is that the power supply to your Central heating is actually on. Maybe it's a fuse or the main circuit breaker board has tripped and just needs resetting.

### Reset Button

The reset is normally a button on the front of the boiler, or a dial, which needs to be set to zero and then turned back on.

### Heating Controls

Central heating programmers, timers or room thermostats, Remember all it takes is, one wrong button pressed and no heat or hot water,

### Gas supply

Gas supply can cause lots of central heating or boiler breakdowns, Usually the card needs to be inserted and the gas meter reset button pressed in order to re establish the gas supply to your gas boiler

### Pressure

System pressure on most sealed systems can run low causing the boiler to stop working; this is usually on combination gas boilers.

## In an Emergency please telephone Flax's Out of Hours number on: 0800 7313 081

**Please note an Emergency repair is classified as defect affecting the health and safety of the tenant, risk of extensive damage to the property. Please consider the following before phoning**

- Are there particular needs of the tenant e.g. vulnerable, wheelchair bound, elderly etc?
- Is there a risk of serious injury?
- Is there a risk of a major health hazard?
- Is there a risk of extensive damage to property?
- Is there a risk of major inconvenience?

**If the answer to the above is NO, please phone your repair request through to the office the next day.**

**Frozen Gas Regulators:** Open the gas meter box and put a towel around the meter to protect it either use a hair dryer, hot water bottle or pour hot water over the regulator to defrost any ice that has formed but be sure to dry off immediately and it should defrost quickly. This should rectify the problem as the regulator will shut off if there is a blockage.

## Welfare Reform Information and Bedroom Tax

**The Bedroom Tax was introduced in other parts of the UK in April 2013. It has not been introduced in Northern Ireland yet.**

MLAs at the Assembly are still debating the Welfare Reform Bill. Until the Assembly passes this bill and it becomes an Act the Housing Executive can't cut your housing benefit because you have more rooms than you need. Pensioners and partners of pensioners will not be affected by this change. When Universal Credit replaces the current benefits system this change may affect couples where only one partner is of pensionable age.

The Department for Social Development has given the following dates as deadlines for Welfare Reform

- Changes to housing benefit (Bedroom Tax): Spring 2014
- Introduction of Personal Independence Payments: Spring 2014
- Changes to Employment & Support Allowance: Spring 2014
- Reform of the Social Fund: Spring 2014
- Benefit Cap: Spring 2014
- Universal Credit: Summer 2014

MLAs at the Assembly will have to pass the bill before any of these changes become law so these dates may change.

### How will the changes affect me?

We can't say for definite how you will be affected by Welfare Reform. It all depends on what happens at the Assembly. It is likely that the system in Northern Ireland will be similar to the bedroom tax in G.B.



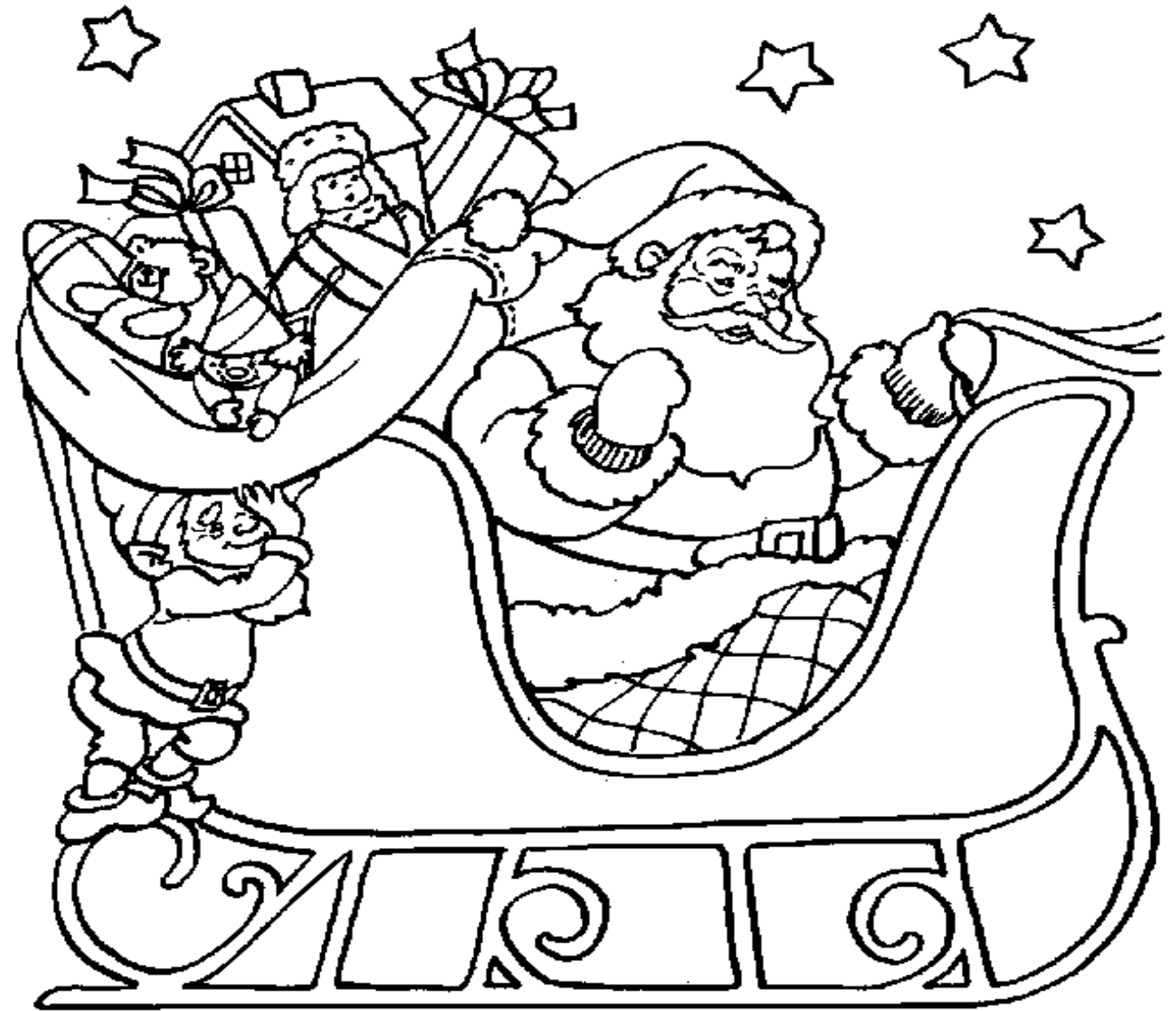
## Renew, Reuse, Recycle!



The Belfast city Council has introduced a new recycling service to all households with recycling boxes. By the end of November 2013, everyone who currently has a black kerbside box for recycling will get new recycling boxes and a food waste collection.

When you move to the new recycling and food waste collection, your black bin will be collected fortnightly and your recycling and food waste will be collected weekly. Some apartments will also get a food waste collection and new recycling facilities. Enclosed there is a useful leaflet to help you sort your waste correctly.

## KIDS CORNER - CHRISTMAS COMPETITION!



**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **AGE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

For your chance to win, colour in the picture Santa's Sleigh and send it to us at the address below by Friday 13th December 2013, stating your name, age and address.

The competition is open to children of 11 years and under. The winning picture will receive a £20 Toys R Us Store Voucher.

**Flax Housing Association, Gatelodge,  
8 Flax Street, Belfast, BT14 7EQ**

