



# NB Housing

Homes that build community

## Tenants Newsletter

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### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Community Update  
Pg 2
- Advice from our  
Maintenance Team  
Pg 4
- Our New Homes  
Pg 6
- Save Money on Your  
Energy Bills  
Pg 7

## HAVE YOUR SAY!

### Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2021

Enclosed you will find your Tenants Satisfaction Survey.

This is your opportunity to voice your opinion and views on the services NB Housing offers. It will assist us to make improvement where necessary and therefore it is important we get your feedback.

Should you require any assistance in completing the form please let us know and we will try our best to facilitate this.

As a thank you for returning the survey with your comments before 13th April you will be entered into a free prize draw!

The lucky winners will receive £100 (1st prize), £50 (2nd prize), £25 (3rd prize).



## Easter & Spring Break

As you are aware our offices are currently closed to visitors to comply with government guidelines due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our staff are working from home to ensure continued service delivery to our tenants.

- Easter break: Monday 5th April and Tuesday 6th April.

- Early May Bank Holiday: Monday 3rd May.
- Spring Bank Holiday: Monday 31st May.

In the event of an out of hours emergency repair, please call Radius Connect24 on 0800 7313081

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & TENANT PARTICIPATION

## “Cook It” Programme

Over the past number of weeks, we have started to roll out new programmes of engagement with tenants, starting with the Cook It programme. We delivered slow cookers to participating families and delivered the ingredients for the meal to be prepared. We then held a weekly zoom class to show how to prepare the dish of the week.

This was a very successful programme and everyone who took part enjoyed making the food with their families. The idea is to promote healthy eating on a budget with each meal costing under £5! In partnership with the Food for Life scheme, we have had lots of positive feed back and will be doing more initiatives like this again soon.



## The Tenant Participation Strategy for Northern Ireland- Pre- Consultation Event

We are working with the Department of Communities and Supporting Communities to develop the new Tenant Participation Strategy. Pre-Consultation events are going on at present and if you would like more information or would like to get involved please contact our Community Development & Tenant support officer Sadie Reid at NB Housing.

## Spring Programme

With spring time quickly approaching, how would you like to start planting your own window boxes! This programme will demonstrate how to plant spring flowers in a window box. We will deliver everything you need to get started, the window boxes, soil and plants. The sessions will be hosted on Zoom, but again if you wish to participate please contact Sadie Reid on 02890592110 as places are limited.

## Tenant Forum

We want to thank those tenants who have expressed an interest in our Tenants Forum / Focus Group. We at NB Housing encourage tenants to get involved with how we shape our services, it is important your voices are heard. Given the current COVID-19 restrictions we have set up a What's App group so you can get involved.

Tenant Participation facilitates tenants coming together and using their voice as a collective for improvement, change or just to share experiences.

This means that communities feel empowered and integrated into society as a whole. Not only will tenant participation give a voice to tenants in relation to their housing, it will also increase tenant confidence and knowledge which will assist them to achieve in all aspects of their lives.

If you are interested in becoming involved we would like to hear from you, just give Sadie call on 028 90 592110.

# Photo Gallery



On 7th December, some staff and young people from Ardoyne Youth Club dressed up as Santa & his elves and delivered food hampers to our tenants at Holy Rood. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the guys delivered the hampers to the tenants' door and we took socially distanced photos. This year we were unable to have our usual Christmas celebrations so we planned the hampers as a surprise and everyone was delighted with their goodies.



Ardoyne Youth club visited Holy Rood House on 12th February and gave our tenants a beautiful gift for St Valentine's Day.





# Advice from our Maintenance Team

## Repair Reporting

When you report a repair, our staff will complete a COVID-19 risk assessment with you. Social distancing rules should always be adhered to when a NB Housing staff member or contractor is in your property. All staff and contractors will be wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) whilst in your home.

As tenants you must accept personal responsibility and follow the government guidance in place and advise contractors to wear face coverings when attending your home. If face coverings/PPE are not worn or not available, you have the right to refuse the person entry into your home, if this happens, please let the Maintenance Team know immediately on 028 90592110.

NB Housing are working hard to ensure that repairs are completed within normal timescales; however, some repairs may take longer than usual and we appreciate your understanding at this time.

## Remember...

If anyone in your household develops symptoms of Coronavirus or has been instructed to self isolate, please contact us immediately on 028 90592110 or email [repairs@nb-housing.org](mailto:repairs@nb-housing.org) so alternative arrangements can be made.

## Our Repair Categories

**Emergency:** Repairs which could risk health and safety or if not attended to, lead to further repairs being required. These repairs will be carried out within 24-hours.

**Urgent:** Less serious repairs that do not present a health and safety risk but could cause major inconvenience. These repairs will be attended to within 4-working days.

**Routine:** The majority of repairs will be classed as routine. These repairs will be completed within 20-working days.

NB Housing employs Radius Connect 24 for out of hours emergency repairs. You may contact them on freephone 0800 731 3081 to report emergency repairs when the office is not open including weekends and public holidays.

## Broken Glass

Broken glass is deemed tenant's responsibility regardless of cause. We urge all tenants to ensure that they have adequate home insurance in place. Home contents insurance can cost as little as £6 per month and we encourage all tenants to shop around for the best deal.

## Alterations

You should not make any alteration without requesting the Associations written permission. An alteration may involve such works as:

- Removing internal walls
- Erection of railings
- Conversions to attics
- Conservatories
- External decoration
- Changes to electrical fittings
- Hard landscaping

Permission will not be given if the alterations:

- Make the dwelling unsafe
- Increase costs of maintenance
- Reduce the value of the dwelling

Please note that tenants will be responsible for making good any work completed that has not received the permission of the Association.

## Tenant Satisfaction Surveys

Once you report a repair to the association, you will receive a tenants satisfaction survey either by post or text.

We request that all tenants complete these surveys to inform us how well we are performing.





## Stay Gas Safe This Spring

Your health and safety are always our top priority and we are working to ensure you and your family are protected from the possible fatal risk due to gas and carbon monoxide. It is vital that you play your part and allow access to our contractors to enable your annual boiler check to be completed.

You will be notified by text and letter that a boiler service order has been raised. Our Contractors will contact you to arrange an appointment and will complete a COVID-19 risk assessment prior to calling to your home.

If you don't provide access to ensure the boiler is serviced in accordance with legislation and by the date provided in the order, then the association will have no option but to commence proceedings to gain access which may result in the temporary suspension of your gas supply. All enforcement proceedings costs are deemed recoverable from the tenant.

**Please provide access, it not only ensures your boiler is safe, it also ensures it is working properly ensuring you are not using too much fuel.**

## How To Reset Your Boiler

- Check that your meter has more than 15 units of gas. If not, please top it up.
- Turn the boiler off at the wall switch
- Put your top up card into the PAYG meter
- Hold in the red and black buttons together (until it beeps). Read what it says (it should flash up X units "on" or "off") This tells you if the meter is on or off
- Release the buttons and remove cards
- Then switch the boiler on at the wall switch
- Ensure your wall thermostat is turned up high (once heating is running again you can reduce temperature to your liking)

If you follow these steps and your boiler still does not work, please check the boiler for a fault code e.g. F38/Er105 and contact our maintenance team on 028 90592110 during office hours or Radius Connect 24 out of hours on 08000 731 3081 who will arrange for an engineer to call.

## Planned Maintenance Update

Unfortunately, due to ongoing COVID-19 pandemic our internal Planned Maintenance works are still on hold until further notice. We hope that internal planned maintenance will recommence in 2021 and will provide updates in future newsletters.

## End of Tenancy Repairs

When terminating your tenancy, NB Housing expect properties to be left in a good lettable standard including the property being cleared of belongings. All gas/electric top up cards must be returned with your keys. When you submit your termination notice a member of the Maintenance Team will make contact to arrange an inspection. Please refer to the tenants section of our website to view our Termination of Tenancy leaflet for more information.

## Apartment Living

The common areas in apartment buildings are not to be used by tenants to store personal belongings. Any items found in the common areas will be disposed of. All corridors should be clear and not prevent or restrict free movement as these are protected escape routes.

Bin areas are for the exclusive use of the residents residing in that building. All residents should use the bins for non-recyclable waste only and ensure recycling bins are used. Any bulky household items can be disposed of at your local recycling centre or collections can be arranged via your local council. The Association is not responsible for disposing of bulky waste.

# Our New Homes

## An update from the Development Team

The Development Departments' role within NB Housing is to source and deliver new housing opportunities. Our Development Strategy sets an ambitious target of 150 new units to meet the increasing housing needs. Below we have highlighted some of the recent properties we have been working on.

### The Brae, Ballygowan

The Development Departments latest new build development is The Brae, Ballygowan. The handover of the scheme is programmed to take place in Spring 2021. Once complete the scheme will provide 3 new build family homes. If you would like to keep up to date with the progress of the scheme like our Facebook page or follow us on Twitter!



### Emerson's Mill, Ligoneil

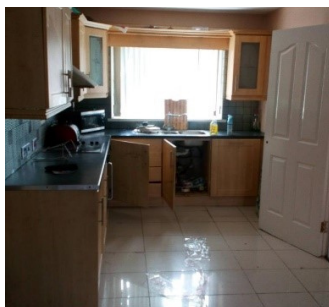
We recently completed a development scheme at Emerson's Mill, Ligoneil. The scheme contained 5 new build family homes and we were delighted to hand the keys over to the new tenants.



### Rehab Properties

NB Housing acquire properties throughout the year from the private housing market. Upon purchase we carry out significant rehabilitation works to these properties before they are let out to tenants in housing need. The pictures below are recent examples of before and after pictures.

#### Before



#### After



# Save Money On Your Energy Bills

## • Advice from the Consumer Council •

With many of us now spending more time at home, we are likely to be using more gas and electricity than usual. The Consumer Council is reminding NB Housing tenants to shop around to get the best energy deal.

### Gas and electricity - switch and save

Switching supplier can be quick, easy and hassle free. To support you in switching, The Consumer Council's free, online independent energy price comparison tool can show you the best electricity and gas deals available and help you save some money.

When you switch there will be no interruption to your electricity or gas supply, just contact the supplier you wish to switch to and they will manage the process for you. There will be no change to your household wiring, gas pipes or meter. Once you've switched, you will start receiving bills from your new supplier.

To start comparing go to [www.consumerCouncil.org.uk/onlinetools](http://www.consumerCouncil.org.uk/onlinetools)

If you're unable to access the tool, call The Consumer Council on Freephone 0800 121 6022 and someone will provide you with free advice or use the tool for you.

### Topping up your oil tank?

If you use home heating oil you can make savings by shopping around different suppliers for the best deal.

Every week The Consumer Council contact home heating oil suppliers from across Northern Ireland to bring you the average price for 300, 500 and 900 litres of home heating oil. You can use this information as a benchmark to see how much the average cost of oil is in Belfast.

Did you know the more home heating oil you buy the cheaper the price per litre? Always try to buy in bulk as emergency drums cost considerably more. If you cannot afford to buy in bulk, check if there is an oil buying club in your area by calling Bryson Energy on 0800 142 2867.

### More help and advice

The Consumer Council's website has a number of free resources, including a budget planner, to help you take control of your spending and identify areas where you can save some money. Visit [www.consumerCouncil.org.uk](http://www.consumerCouncil.org.uk), call on Freephone 0800 121 6022, email [contact@consumerCouncil.org.uk](mailto:contact@consumerCouncil.org.uk) or find us on Facebook and Twitter.

### Contents Insurance

NB Housing would advise all tenants that it is their responsibility to take out contents insurance. NB Housing is not liable for any loss or damage caused to tenants belongings. Contents insurance can be obtained from most Insurance Brokers .

### Out of Hours Visit Service

Temporarily suspended while lockdown restrictions are in place. We will keep you informed as and when restrictions are eased. However please do not hesitate to contact us on 02890592110 should you require any assistance..

### Debt Advice

NB Housing 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 8.00am-7.00pm 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.

### Recycling Centres

- **Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council:**  
<https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/recyclingcentres/>  
T: 028 9446 3113 & T: 028 9034 0000
- **Ards and North Down Borough Council:**  
<https://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/resident/bins-and-recycling/recycling-centres>  
0300 013 3333
- **Belfast City Council**  
<https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/recycling/centres>  
0800 032 8100
- **Mid and East Antrim Council**  
<https://www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/resident/waste-recycling>  
0300 124 5000
- **Mid Ulster Council**  
<https://www.midulstercouncil.org/resident/bins-recycling/recycling-centres>  
03000 132 132

### Useful Numbers

**Radius CONNECT24** (for out of hours emergency repairs) 0800 731 3081

**NIHE:** 03448 920 900

**Belfast City Council Pest Control:** 028 9027 0431

**Phoenix Gas:** 0345 455 5555

**Noise Control:** 028 9037 3006

**Power NI:** 0345 745 5455

**Waste Management:** 028 9027 0657

### NB Housing Contact Details

#### Gatelodge Office

8 Flax Street, Belfast, BT14 7EQ

Tel: 028 9059 2110

#### Crumlin Road Office

282-290 Crumlin Road, Belfast, BT14 7ED

Tel: 028 9035 1131

Did you know you can contact us through the 'Getting in Touch' tab on our website ([www.nb-housing.org](http://www.nb-housing.org)), can contact us via email: [info@nb-housing.org](mailto:info@nb-housing.org) or can text us on 074 9820 2221