



Spring Edition

TENANTS NEWSLETTER

2015

Easter Closure Times

We will close on **Friday 3rd April 2015** at 4pm for Easter.

- * We will be closed **Monday 6th and Tuesday 7th April 2015**.
- * We will re-open on **Wednesday 8th April** at 9am as normal.
- * 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**.

Happy
Easter



Recoverable Charges



A Recoverable Charge is where the Association would hold the tenant liable for work required to a property (e.g. damage to doors, windows, skirting). The costs of the material and labour to repair the damage will be the tenant's responsibility whether or not they are still a NB Housing tenant.

Recoverable charges will also include for additional costs such as a skip and labour to clear out a property at the end of a tenancy. A recoverable charge will also apply if you fail to keep to an appointment, when a tenant fails to grant access to our contractors to complete maintenance calls, or if a contractor has had to call out in an emergency which later turns out to be a repair which is classified as tenant responsibility.

Please note that NB Housing will always follow up on any recoverable charges regardless of when they occurred. An opportunity will be provided to discuss the charge and come to an agreement for repayment. However, should no response be received or an agreement fails to be maintained, NB Housing may instigate legal proceedings. This may ultimately result in Court action, the costs of which the tenant will be held liable to pay.

If you currently have received a letter regarding a recoverable charge, or do so in the future, please contact Aine Latten at our Crumlin Road office on 02890 351131. or Lauren Turner at our Flax Street office on 02890 592110 to discuss.



Gas Emergencies



What do I do If there Is a gas leak?

In an Emergency, Call the 24 Hours Gas Emergency Service on 0800 002 001

Natural gas is a very convenient, clean and versatile fuel. But like all fuels it must be handled wisely to ensure its safety and efficiency.

DO

- * Do turn off the gas supply at the meter
- * Do open doors and windows for ventilation
- * Do extinguish all naked flames
- * Do check gas appliances to see if the gas has been left on unlit or that a pilot is out
- * Do allow immediate access to our engineer

Phone our 24-hour emergency line on
0800 002 001

DO NOT

- * Do not turn any electrical switches, including door entry systems, on or off
- * Do not use matches or light naked flames
- * Do not smoke
- * Do not leave it to someone else to call the emergency service

Also, for all reports of 'smell of gas in the basement' customers are advised:

1. Do not enter the basement
2. Evacuate the entire premises

The call handling team will also try to establish if the building is multi-occupancy, vulnerable customers and other useful information that can be passed onto the first response engineer.

How to Isolate Your Gas Supply

To turn off your gas supply, you first need to locate the gas isolation valve. In more modern houses, the gas meter and isolation valve are often located outside in a meter box.

For assistance in isolating your gas supply, please refer to the following video clip on Phoenix Natural Gas YouTube channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A1nDYgBnhlo&feature=youtu.be>



Need a Repair?

Contact details

If you request a repair, then please provide accurate contact information and provide access to our contractors. If you request a repair which you fail to provide access for, you will be liable for the abortive administrative fee.



Boiler Service

The Association has written to all tenants who are due an annual boiler service over the next few months. When you're contacted by our appointed contractors, please make an appointment. This will ensure your boiler is safe, running efficiently and saving money.



Tenancy Fraud



The demand for social housing is increasing and those seeking a home have to wait longer.

NB Housing Association seeks to provide suitable homes to those in housing need. We will not tolerate an abuse of this vital resource and have individuals gain at the expense of others within our community.

If your circumstances have changed and you no longer require social housing, please terminate your tenancy and we will offer the opportunity you were given to someone else.

Do not move out and sub-let.

We use this opportunity to highlight this issue and invite our tenants to raise their concerns about tenancy fraud with us.

If you have information of N B Housing tenants sub-letting, please notify me. All information will be treated in the strictest confidence and all notifications will be investigated.

Mr Dermot Leonard
Director of Housing and Services
North Belfast Housing Association
282 – 290 Crumlin Road
Belfast Tel: 02890 351131



False Alarms!

The Association is receiving reports of increasing numbers of false alarms with regard to the fire alarms.

What is a False Alarm?

When your fire alarm system is activated two things happen:

A visual/audible alarm goes off warning occupants

A signal is sent to the fire and rescue service

A **false alarm** is... when there isn't actually a real fire but the alarm goes off.



There can be lots of reasons, other than a real fire, why the alarm goes off:

- Cooking fumes (e.g. burnt toast)
- Steam (e.g. shower rooms, industrial processes)
- Smoking materials (e.g. cigarettes, matches, candles and incense)
- Aerosol sprays
- Dust build up (poor housekeeping, lack of preventative measures for dusty work such as drilling)
- Humidity and temperature change
- Accidental or malicious damage to a 'Break Glass' point

Testing or maintenance – without having/following process to manage this.

A false alarm in which either an engineer or the Fire Brigade are called out, will result in a substantial recoverable charge being made to the tenant.

Reducing false alarms will save you and the fire and rescue service money, will reduce wasted efforts and may save lives.



Tenant Forum



The next Tenant Forum Meeting will take place Tuesday 23rd June at 4pm in the Crumlin Road office. We will look forward to seeing you then.

Lets keep Litter Under control!



We all have a responsibility to ensure our household rubbish is disposed of properly. Proper disposal will keep our neighbourhoods presentable, clean, tidy and free from potential vermin. We would encourage all of our tenants to ensure gardens, pathways, bin stores and communal corridors are free from rubbish. Bins and recycling receptacles have been provided in our apartment buildings and tenants are encouraged to recycle appropriately. This will not only allow ample space in the bins for household rubbish, but will also protect the environment.

If you are in need of replacement bins, or recycling receptacles the council can be contacted at **0800 032 8100** or email wastemanagement@belfastcity.gov.uk.

If you have large or bulky items for disposal the council can be contacted on **028 9027 0230**, they will let you know if they can collect and will give you a date and time for collection.



How do I Make a Complaint?



If you are dissatisfied with the service we provide, please do not hesitate to contact us. Information on how to make a complaint is provided in your tenants handbook or can be provided by contacting or calling into our offices.

We value 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.

Just call us on 028 90 592110 or 028 90 351131. If we cannot resolve your complaint immediately, we will forward a complaints form or take your complaint over the phone. Your complaint will be acknowledged and investigated. The NB Housing team aim to treat complaints as opportunities to improve our services to tenants, so please contact us when you need to.

CONTENTS INSURANCE

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.

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

Fold Telecare

(Out of hours repairs)

0800 731 3081

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.

North Belfast 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

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



Gatelodge Office

Gatelodge, 8 Flax Street

Belfast

BT14 7EQ

Tel: 02890592110

Email: reception@flaxhousing.com

Crumlin Road Office

282-290 Crumlin Road

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BT14 7EE

Tel: 02890351131

Email: info@filorhousing.org

