



Residents News Update

Winter 2010



'We are happy since we moved to Gosse Court, all my children have their own space. Excellent service from housing staff.' Mohamed Mahiout.

In This Issue:



Tips on Keeping Warm



Anti Social Behaviour



Resident's Events



Education & Employment



Making Improvements



Tips on Condensation

'Logo design' and 'publication title' by NLMHA residents.

Editors Comment

Please enjoy this winter edition of our newsletter. With the support of our valued tenants we have had many events and programmes running within our area of operation, and with the festive period which has just passed it has been the best time to bring everyone together to celebrate and share. With the request of many tenants this newsletter has been designed to help our tenants get through this winter season with a lot of information on how to look after your properties and prevent problems from arising.



NLMHA would like to thank Mohammed Sowkat Hossein for his dedicated services as a Finance Director since 1998-2010. Sowkat has now left us and gone on retirement. We would like to wish him all the best in the future.

Meet the board



Mahmood Bham

'I want to work with NLMHA as I realise the importance in providing a good service to our tenants and listen to what they have to say in meeting their needs. As a current board member for North London Muslim Community Centre, I have knowledge of community needs which I can address as a new member of NLMHA board of management. My passion for listening and providing the needs of the communities has encouraged me to join. As a former driving instructor I work with different people from different backgrounds and ethnicities and have full knowledge of what their needs are in Hackney and therefore wish to meet them.'

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NLMHA are taking ACTION...

if communal areas are not clear.



Tenants must not leave items such as bicycles, pushchairs, shoe racks, clothes for drying, mats shoes or any other combustible items. If there was a fire this would result in the items producing toxic fumes and smoke as well as being a trip hazard in the communal area and therefore risking lives. We have contractors in place and therefore items will be removed. You may also be recharged for the removal.

Maintaining your smoke alarm

To keep your smoke alarm in good working order, you should:

- test it once a week, by pressing the test button until the alarm sounds
- change the battery once a year (unless it's a ten-year alarm)
- replace the whole unit every ten years



Tips on how to keep your home warm

To keep warm at home warm during the day try to:

- Heat your main living room to around 18-21°C (64-70°F) and the rest of the house at least 16°C (61°F)
- Heat all the rooms you use in the day
- Make sure you keep your living room warm throughout the day and heat your bedroom before going to bed
- Set the timer on your heating to come on before you get up and switch off when you go to bed
- In very cold weather set the heating to come on earlier, rather than turn the thermostat



Please ensure your boiler is serviced on a yearly basis. (By law all boilers must have a gas safety certificate) This is a free service provided by RG francis on



Extractor Fans

Please ensure that all extractor fans are working correctly to ensure that there is natural air circulation within your property. Ventilation can help to

reduce condensation by removing moist air from your home and replacing it with drier air from outside. Please contact our maintenance department if your extractor needs attention.

Disposing Waste

We would like to kindly request that all tenants take responsibility in disposing all waste correctly. If you need additional support in how to dispose your waste matter please contact our office, as staff are more then happy to assist you in making it easy.

- **All tenants must ensure that bin bags are disposed in bins provided, and not left on the side**
- **Recycling material is put in the correct slots, separating different materials**
- **Bulk items are removed by calling your local authority. See the back of this newsletter for contact details.**

Snow Code

In October 2010 a snow code was provided by the Department for Transport. The code gives guidance about clearing snow outside properties, pathways to properties and public places.



The code offers advice on how to safely clear snow and includes tips such as:

- Don't use hot water as this will melt the snow and may create black ice, increasing risk of injury.
- Use sand or ash as a salt substitute should salt supplies run out.
- If shovelling snow, make sure it doesn't block paths or drainage channels
- Clear snow for those unable to do it themselves.

The snow code also reminds people that salt from salt bins are not for private use.

What you need to know about Anti Social Behaviour

WHAT IS ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR?

Anti social behaviour includes a range of problems, noisy neighbours, abandoned cars, vandalism, graffiti, litter, youth nuisance and abuse consisting of threats or violence. It creates an environment in which crime can take hold and it can wreck people's everyday lives.

The majority of NLMHA tenants live happily alongside their neighbours and NLMHA actively encourages people to form tenants groups who can work together to bring about positive changes in their neighbourhoods. We are aware, however, that there are times when tenants behave in an anti social way or cause harassment. NLMHA is committed to dealing with this as we expect all tenants to be shown consideration and respect to their neighbours.



Anti Social Behaviour Orders are court orders to protect the public from behaviour that causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress. Breach of an order is a criminal offence.

NLMHA can apply for ASBO's. They cannot be applied for by members of the public, but people do get involved by collecting evidence and helping to monitor breaches.

ABC

An Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC) is an agreement between a person who has been involved in Anti Social Behaviour and one or more local agencies whose role it is to prevent such behaviour (such as the police). The contract will list the anti social acts in which the person has been involved and which they have agreed not to continue.

DEMOTED TENANCIES

According to the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003, there are a range of powers to enable social landlords such as NLMHA to tackle the problem of anti social behaviour.

'Demoted Tenancies' were introduced by part 2 of the ASB Act and enables Associations to place a tenant on probation for a period of one year.

If a tenant misbehaves, or allows a member of his or her household or visitor to do so, NLMHA can apply to the Court for a demotion order.

'The demotion order has the effect of terminating the existing secure or assured tenancy from the date of the order, and if the tenant remains in occupation following the order, a new tenancy is created with reduced security of tenure'.

The court must be satisfied that the tenant, a member of the tenant's household or visitor has behaved or threatened to behave anti-socially or used the premises for unlawful purposes and that it is reasonable to make the order

If a tenant continues to misbehave, the landlord can serve a notice and begin the second stage of the process and commence possession proceedings. If the claim is successful, the tenancy will come to an end.

Tenants lost their homes

In recent years Housing Associations evicted tenants following complaints from residents about abusive and threatening behaviour.

In these cases the tenants were evicted because they ignored the warnings by the association and they failed to comply with the terms of tenancy agreement. On these grounds together with evidence from the other residents the Housing Associations were able to evict tenants.



Resolving disputes quickly

These 6 strategies will help you settling disputes quickly and peacefully for the benefit of everyone involved:

1. Remain calm.

2. Let the other person do the talking.

3. Genuinely consider the other person's point of view.

Imagine yourself in his shoes. Never say "you're wrong." In fact, try hard to look for areas of agreement and build on them.

4. There's power in the words "Yes, yes, I see exactly what you're saying. You mean....."

This shows the other person you hear him/her. That's all they usually want — to be validated. By agreeing with them, you gradually break down the other person's anger.

5. If the situation turns verbally abusive, put a stop to it.

Firmly but calmly state: "You're very angry right now and you're saying things you don't mean (give them the benefit of the doubt). I'm going to excuse myself. We can talk again after you calm down." Then leave the room or ask them to leave.

6. If you are wrong, quickly admit it and take responsibility. You could say, "You're absolutely right, it is my fault and here is what I'll do to fix it."

These words have tremendous power. Not only does it validate the other person's viewpoint but it also diffuses the tension. You might be surprised by what happens afterwards. The person could end up defending you. You'd be amazed how an attacker suddenly becomes an ally.

Save Money on your bills

The National Housing Federation have launched My Home Energy Switch which has been designed to help housing association tenants save money on their energy bills.

My Home was launched three years ago by the National Housing Federation to help housing association tenants enjoy access to some of the essential financial services that can at times be difficult to access. My Home Energy Switch gives housing association tenants a free, impartial online or telephone comparison and switching service that helps tenants save on their gas and electricity bills.

Get cheaper gas and electricity with My Home Energy Switch

When you think about switching your energy, one of the main areas to consider is how much money you can save. This is easy to find out - simply compare energy prices online at myhomeenergyswitch.org.uk, delivered in partnership with uSwitch and the National Housing Federation, and you'll be told the cheapest plans available right then and there.

Compare energy prices and suppliers

Get cheaper gas and electricity with My Home Energy Switch

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How to find the right energy supplier for you

Once you have compared energy prices online, you can also use our comparison service to find out what other people think of your new energy supplier. You'll find a customer rating next to each supplier, and if you click on this, you can find out specifically what other customers rated the suppliers in each of these areas.

Switch your gas and electricity: step by step

Get cheaper gas and electricity with My Home Energy Switch

It's easy to switch supplier with My Home Energy Switch - we'll take you through the options, show you the best deals for saving on gas and electricity prices and do all the paperwork for you. My Home Energy Switch compares prices for gas and electricity - you can switch one or both of your suppliers with us, and we can help you find the best deal if you only have electricity. Unfortunately, we don't provide comparisons for people with homes powered by oil/LPG systems.

All you have to do is follow a few simple steps:

[Step 1: tell us your postcode](#)

[Step 2: tell us about your current suppliers and energy use](#)

[Step 3: tell us what you want](#)

[Step 4: see a list of suppliers and pick a plan](#)

It is as simple as that. And could be your new initiative to save money on your household bills.





Our diverse communities celebrate multi faith festivals

With the festive season that has just passed, North London Muslim Housing Association have taken the lead role in organising many multi faith events around our area of operation. Our aim was to draw people together from diverse backgrounds and community's in order to celebrate, share and explore different religions including Eid, Diwali and Christmas.

These vibrant events have helped to raise awareness and build an understanding of religious values and beliefs. Our tenants and residents got together in order to organise activities to provide information about their way of life, develop relationships with individuals and promote social interaction using festivals as a tool to come to together.

NLMHA engaged people from the community and worked closely with partners to ensure that everyone in the area was involved. We motivated tenants and worked as a catalyst to deliver and meet the aims of this project. The events have helped build social and community cohesion as tenants took lead roles and were passionate in making this happen. They were very useful in running consultations and discussing housing related issues with tenants.

Multi faith events took place in Shahjalal House, Colthurst Crescent, Gosse Court, Holly Street, Rahat Lodge, Waltham forest and Stock Newington Ward. All events had the same aims and objectives and we were successful in meeting them.





Health and Safety on Priory Court

In order to raise awareness of health and safety and taking precaution of fire, a safety event was organised with local partners, the London fire brigade and ambulance services. Our Partners took responsibility to ensure that visits were made within their properties in and around Priory Court. Fire marshals personalised sessions ran to ensure all smoke alarms were in working order. Those that needed replacing were replaced. The event was a success. The tenants who did not attend were visited at their property on the day.



Islamic Awareness Week

This event was organised with the aim to increase and broaden the public's understanding of Islam.

NLMHA had a display board, books and publications out with information on the importance of family life and having a good environment within the community. This showed our participation to the wider community and how our association work together in helping our tenants live an Islamic blissful lifestyle in social housing.



Waltham forest Open day

This event was organised by partners within the Waltham forest area, with the purpose of bringing all services together in order to make tenants aware of what they can benefit from. Job agencies and training providers were present at this event. Everyone enjoyed the day with a drama play organised by the youth, the play was exploring different religious festivals and why we celebrate. This was useful in reaching the diverse community. There was also a massage corner, and a manicure stall which many enjoyed. This allowed many of our tenants to see what services are available to them in and around their area. Many have joined after school clubs and courses.



NLMHA supporting tenants and youth into Education & Employment

NLMHA are aiming to break language barriers that our tenants face. This will give them a smooth transition into society and help them build confidence. It will help tenants communicate and work with NLMHA in order to work towards a brighter future in social housing. We are working in partnership with other services in order to help over 25 of our tenants to get back into education, training and employment. NLMHA have a waiting list for those who would like to start English classes (ESOL) or any other training courses. If you are interested please contact Sajna on 0208 815 4205 or email on sajna@nlmha.com.



NLMHA are also working in partnership to set up workshops in order to provide 1-2-1 support in CV writing, how to search for jobs, completing application forms and interview tips. By carrying out these workshops it provides encouragement and support for tenants to get back into employment. These workshops provide personal support, working through all the processes in a systematic way with the help of a professional, to increase the chances of getting back into employment. If you are interested in benefiting from this project please contact Sajna on 0208 815 4205 or email on sajna@nlmha.com.

NLMHA have been working in partnership with other RSL's and UK online to have computers on our estates. We have successfully secured 6 computers with internet for our tenants to use. Having access to these computers have given us the opportunity to set up basic courses in order to take new learners through the process of using computers, internet and other things as and where the skill gaps are. Tenants on the estate have been volunteers in running these sessions twice a week. They have been given full training and support, which are skills and experience that they can take with them and be useful in the future. At present we have programs in place to help our tenants learn how to pay their bills online, how to search and compare prices and other useful day to day usage of it. By running various consultation programs this project is a great success, with many tenants involved. Our future goal is to develop on this project by increasing opportunities.



How to avoid blocking your drains...

Advice to keep your drains clear from nasty blockages.

Thousands of people suffer the misery of blocked drains every year - a result of unsuitable products being flushed down the loo or washed down the drain. The majority of blockages are caused by cooking fat and oil, which congeal in the sewers, forming a thick layer around the pipe. This prevents sewage from flowing and can cause it to back up.

Wet wipes and sanitary items also contribute to some of the most troublesome blockages.

Taking precaution!

It is important to remember that if you take some precautions then you can avoid blocked drains altogether. Try to avoid large items getting flushed down your drains. You can do this by putting strainers in all your sinks. Don't let soap go down the drain. It is a common misconception that soap will simply dissolve away in the drain. Wash your drains frequently. You can do this by pouring boiling water down the drain occasionally or pouring a cup of baking soda followed by a cup of vinegar. Wash this away with hot water and your drains should smell fresh.



Love your loo!

Sewers are only designed to take away water, toilet tissue and human waste. The smallest of items, like dental floss and cotton buds, can have a damaging effect as they collect in the filters at sewage treatment works and can cause machinery break down. All paper and plastic waste, such as sanitary products, nappies, wet wipes etc should be disposed of in bins.

Stop and think about your sink!

Fat and oil poured down the sink after cooking is most likely to block your drains. Fat may be in liquid form when you pour it away, but it quickly cools down and becomes hard, forming a thick coating around the inside of the pipes. When fat mixes with other items, such as wet wipes, it can form a solid obstruction, restricting the flow in the pipe and causing a blockage. The wastewater running through the pipe will then find an alternative place to flow out from, which may cause flooding.

**TAKE NOTE: INTERNAL BLOCKAGES ARE TENANT'S
RESPONSIBILITY AND NOT NLMHA. IF WE SEND OUT CONTRACTORS TO DEAL
WITH INTERNAL BLOCKAGES TENANTS WILL BE RECHARGED FOR THIS SERVICE.**

Improving your housing association property



All assured tenants of registered housing associations have the right to improve their accommodation with the association's written consent.

outside of your home or fitting an aerials or satellite dish. Your tenancy agreement provide you with information and examples of what improvements and alterations need to be approved by your association before you can carry them out.

WHAT KIND OF IMPROVEMENTS CAN YOU MAKE?

Some examples of improvements you may be able to do with permission include:

- erecting garages, sheds, or greenhouses
- fitting a new bathroom suite
- fitting new kitchens / kitchen units

To apply for permission to carry out your own alterations, please write to the housing association.

Top tips on condensation



You can reduce almost all the condensation in your home if you follow the top tips listed:

1. When possible, hang your washing out to dry. If you have to dry clothes indoors, put it in the bathroom with the door closed and a window open. Do not dry it on radiators, or in front of the fire. If you have a tumble drier, make sure it has an outside vent to carry away the warm moist air.

2. Keep pan lids on when cooking, and use minimal water for cooking.

3. Keep kitchen and bathroom doors closed when the rooms are not in use, this prevents warm moist air from spreading to other rooms.

4. Ventilate your bathroom for about twenty minutes after use - leave a small window open for air to circulate.

5. Ventilate your home for about an hour a day by leaving all internal doors open and opening a small window upstairs and one downstairs, which are at opposite positions in the house. This is called 'cross-ventilation'.

6. Ventilate your cupboards and drawers. Try to ensure they are placed against internal, rather than external walls. Place heavy furniture on small blocks to allow air to circulate underneath, and avoid having furniture flush against walls for the same reason.

7. Do not draft-proof every window and door in any room with a condensation problem. Leave the top edges of doors and windows without draft-proofing to allow air to circulate.

8. Try to keep some heating in all rooms during cold weather - condensation is caused by cold surfaces so a little heat over a long period of time is more effective than a blast of heat for a short time.

Prevention is always better than cure, and following these simple steps will ensure that the condensation in your property is kept as low as possible, and should not give rise to any serious problems. If mould does appear, clean the area thoroughly with a fungicidal wash and shampoo carpets.



Want to earn some extra cash?

You can by working for the 2011 census. There are a range of part-time job opportunities in Islington, Hackney, Waltham Forest and Camden which you can now apply for- for some of which you can earn up to £5,000. There are a range of jobs on offer from address checkers and enumerators to census collectors. So, if you're a people person and know your area well you can register your interest and apply for job on www.censusjob.co.uk

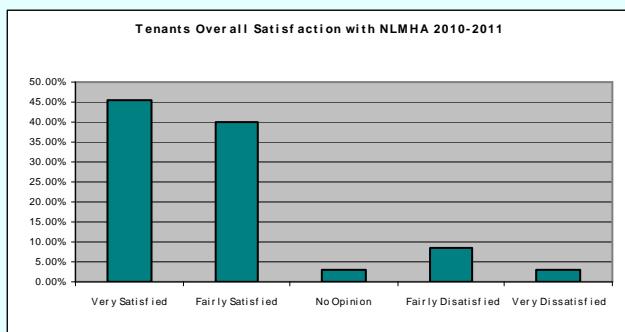


STATUS Surveys 2010-2011

NLMHA would like to thank everyone who has co operated and completed our 2010-2011 STATUS surveys and participated in completing our ongoing Tracker surveys. So far results have shown that we are continuously providing excellent service to our valued costumers. Your support in this rolling program is much appreciated. It is your feedback that helps us make improvements and continue good work.

Below are live statistics of results found so far.

Overall Satisfaction.....85.7%
**Tenants Satisfaction
with repairs.....94%**
Jobs completed first time.....91.9%



Interested in a career in construction?

In our previous newsletter we introduced CTI (Construction Training Initiative) which is a training scheme started by Notting Hill Housing Association. We would like to continue to encourage tenants to join this scheme. It is to help unemployed people into training and employment in the construction industry. Trainees are placed on site to gain practical experience at the same time as attending college. Learners are supported by dedicated staff and receive a training allowance/money. The scheme has been running for a number of years and has an excellent record in assisting trainees in to long term employment. For further details and more information please contact your TP officer Sajna on 0208 815 4205 or email on sajna@nlmha.com.



Your Contacts at NLMHA

Maintenance

Sadique Ali: 020 8815 4219 / Ibrahim Khan: 020 8815 4212

Rents

Amanda Hunt: 020 8815 4208

Tenants Participation

Sajna Begum: 020 8815 4205

Estate Issues / Antisocial Behaviour

Ikbal Hussain: 020 8815 4206

Transfer / Mutual Exchange or any other housing queries

020 8815 4206

For all other inquiries please call NLMHA Reception on **020 8815 4200**

Useful Information

Bulk Removals

Hackney: 020 8356 6688
Newham: 020 8430 2000
Waltham Forest: 0800 232 323
Community Skips: 020 8356 3344

Please use the above services, which are free of charge and do not dump furniture in bin-stores. This creates problems for the bin men who cannot move the bins. Therefore your bin area will not be cleaned.

Emergency Contact - Out of Office Hours



nationalGrid

0800 111 999

Gas Leaks



Thames Water

0848 920 0800

Water Leak / burst pipes



(rgf)

01245 459 800

Heating / Hot water / Boiler Breakdowns



NLMHA

020 8815 4200

All other out hours repairs

Report your repairs online at www.nlmha.com or email maintenance@nlmha.com

Other useful information

National Money / Debt Helpline

Childline

Samaritans

NHS Direct

HomeSwapper

Domestic Violence Helpline

24hr free-phone confidential service

0808 800 4000

0800 1111

www.childline.org.uk

0800 776 600

0845 4647

www.homeswapper.co.uk

0808 2000 247



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