



# TENANTS' NEWSLETTER

Spring/Summer 05



## Celebration time for Shahjalal House

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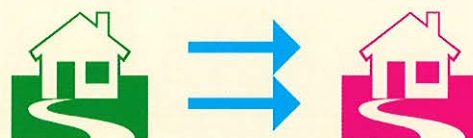
Whose Celebrating?



## New Tenant Group on the Block

We are happy to announce and welcome a new tenant group in Ansar Gardens, Waltham Forest. Residents were first introduced of the concept of a Tenant Group last year when Shahina made a visit to each tenant and asked whether Ansar Garden residents would like to set up a Tenant Group.

As a result, the first tenant group meeting was organised at the Sure Start Community Centre and attracted almost half the residents. It gave them an opportunity to discuss issues affecting their estate as well as giving them an opportunity to socialise with each other. It was decided that two residents would be the tenant reps and they would consult the Tenant Participation Officer on a regular basis to update issues affecting their estate.



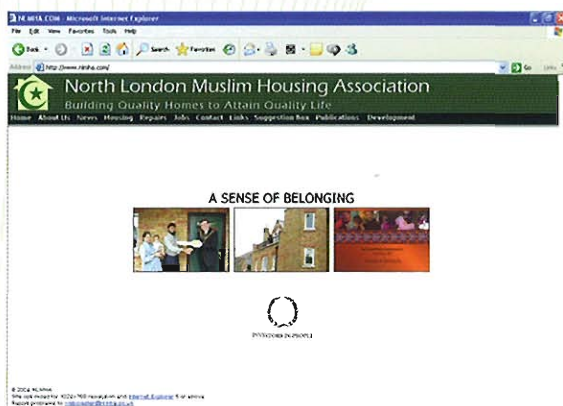
## Would you like to Transfer?

Transfers are offered to tenants who have a housing need to move to a different home, usually because the size and facilities in the current home are inappropriate.

Some basic rules apply to transfer applicants

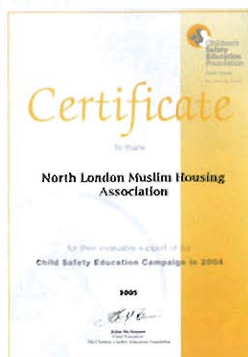
1. Rent accounts should be clear
2. The tenant's existing property should be in a lettable condition in line with the Association's Base Standard
3. A tenant must have been in their existing home for a year before a transfer is considered

To apply for a transfer you will need to complete an application form, available from NLMHA office. A points assessment scheme is used to place applications in order.



## Website Launch

We are delighted to announce the launch of our website. You can access our website by keying in [www.nlmha.com](http://www.nlmha.com) on a computer. The website will improve customer's access to information as well as provide a means for customers to communicate views and ideas to NLMHA. By listening to your feedback we will be able to judge how well we are doing and learn how to improve the services we provide.



## NLMHA backs up Safety for children

NLMHA are one of the local businesses supporting the Children's Safety Education Foundation who are working with the children at The Jubilee Primary School in Stoke Newington. The aims of this project are to provide personal safety, social health and citizenship education to children and young people with the assistance of the local business community.



## Faith In The Future

FITF organized 'Don't Suffer In Silence' workshops to deal with Bullying in Hana Mews and Gujarat House. Both adults and children attended the workshop breaking the barriers between the adults and youth creating an environment where children were able to share their experiences.

The sessions were a means of education for everyone who attended and helped the community to come together and discuss an issue that affects us all in some way.



## Hana Mews

All Hana Mew residents including Shian Housing officers and tenants were invited to the meeting held at the Round Chapel in Hackney. It was a good opportunity and enabled everyone to get together and discuss issues affecting their estate.

## Gujarat House

A car parking consultation was organised for Gujarat House residents at the Stoke Newington Library and it was a successful turn out. Residents were consulted regarding the limited car parking space at their estate and the meeting was concluded with the consent of tenants present at the meeting.

## New Arrivals and Staff Restructure

We are pleased to inform you that NLMHA have recruited and promoted some of our staff to help us provide a better service. Please note these changes.

### New Arrivals

**Miss Masima Begum,**  
Administrative Officer

**Mr Zaid Patel,**  
Trainee Finance and Administrative Officer

### Recently appointed to new position

**Mrs Sarah Dean,** Assistant Technical Officer.

### Staff Restructure

**Mr Aziz Rahim,**  
Housing Services Director

**Ms Aisha Akhtar,**  
Housing Services Manager

## Tackling Rent Arrears

NLMHA will now be implementing the Housing Act 1988 on possession claims, Ground 8. This mandatory ground for possession for 8 weeks rent arrears. This means that if at least 8 weeks rent is unpaid at the time a Notice of Seeking Possession is served to a tenant, the court will be obliged to grant NLMHA possession of the property.

Tenants who are in rent arrears receive letters/telephone calls from their 'Housing Officer'. Please contact your Housing Officer if you have any question regarding paying your rent. You will receive full support so that you can maintain your tenancy.

## Don't let others put your tenancy at risk!

Though residents have a right of inviting friends and family to their homes, it should be noted that if they cause any form of Anti Social Behaviour creating problems on the estate, to other residents or their properties then NLMHA will be taking legal actions against tenants as this is clearly a breach of the tenancy agreement.

# Celebration Time

For the past year Shahjalal House tenants have been constantly meeting up for the tenants group meeting every 3 months and discussing the issues affecting their estate. However, with the Bengali New Year celebration coming up it was time to use everyone's effort into organizing a party.

After weeks of organizing and planning Shahjalal House tenants finally had their party on Saturday 16th April 2005. It was a successful event with all the residents turning up as well as helping in organizing the event.

Everyone got involved and helped with the preparations for the party. As a result it was a successful day, with party games including pass

the parcel, musical chairs for everyone, and a raffle draw. The 2 winners were announced for the Easter Egg Competition.

There was plenty to eat since residents brought home made samosas, onion bajis, vegetable noodles, jelly, fruit salad with yogurt, kebab and NLMHA provided the Chicken Briyani and other light refreshments.



## Why is a Tenant's Group Important

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There are many reasons why people living in an area may find a Tenants' Group important.

For example:

- To gain a sense of 'community' by meeting and helping other people.
- To keep people in the area informed of all the issues that affect them.
- To campaign for something (e.g. a better repair service, play facilities, somewhere to meet etc)
- To arrange outings and social events (e.g. a coach trip, a street party, bingo or keep fit etc)

### What type of areas does Tenant's Group cover?

Well, because the Tenant's Group will be set up for a variety of reasons, any and all suggestions you feel are important can be discussed and investigated.

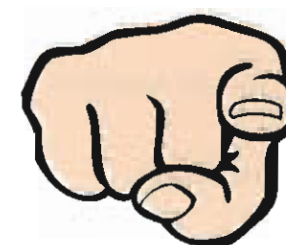
### What will you need to do?

All we want from you is to hear your suggestions, comments and ideas on how you feel you can make your area better and how we can get all residents to work together to make your environment a nice, clean and safer place to live.

### Who else will be involved?

Community Development and Tenant Participation Officer Shahina Zaidi from North London Muslim Housing Association will be working with all residents interested.

## It Could Be You!



Are you a NLMHA tenant living in any of these boroughs?

Hackney?  
Newham?  
Waltham Forest?

Would you like to be involved in making your area a better place to work and live?

If so, get in touch with the Tenant Participation and Community Development Officer.

We can help you apply for grants to develop a range of community projects or even set up a new tenant group from scratch.

## Are you aware of the changes made to benefits payments? No? Then let us help you.

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Since April 2005, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has ceased paying most benefits (except housing benefit) by giro or order book. You need to have a suitable account to receive your money. Have you made the change?

Our Service Delivery Officers will arrange to meet with you and help you to :

- understand if / how the changes affect you
- open a bank account (if necessary)
- complete the direct payment documentation
- make the changes.

Please contact the Change Benefits and Banking Team on 0845 304 1009



## Complaints Procedure

Whilst we hope that we provide a good service to all our customers, sometimes we may get it wrong and we would like to hear from you if you are not satisfied with any aspect of our service.

Our Complaints procedure is accessible to all our customers on an equal basis. Therefore if you need help to make a complaint, please speak to your Housing Officer or Technical Officer. Our approach will be to try to put things right - quickly and politely.

If you would like to make a complaint, this is what you should do:

Write to us giving full details of what you wish to complain about, including dates, times, names and details of anyone else who may have been involved.

Housing Officer or Technical Officer will be able to deal with your complaint in the first instance.



## Having Problems with your neighbours? Not sure what to do?

Mediation helps people resolve problems by sending people who are not involved to work with those who are having difficulties. Mediation can help people in a dispute to talk with each other, understand each other needs and find a way forward using mediation.

To find out more and see whether mediation with your neighbour might help please contact the mediation service in your borough.

**Newham** - Conflict and Change on 0208 552 2050

**Hackney** - Hackney Mediation Services on 0208 356 4794

**Waltham Forest** – Alert on 0208 539 3007



## Welfare Benefits

Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit are being introduced as part of the Government's programme for tackling poverty and making work pay. You can apply for Tax Credits if you are responsible for a child or if you work and have a low income. Most people with children will qualify for a Tax Credit but you will need to fill in a form to claim the credit.

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Working Tax Credit can be paid if you are working 16 hours or over. As part of Working Tax Credit you may qualify for help with childcare. The Tax Credits are administered by Inland Revenue.

If you are receiving Housing or Council Tax Benefit you must let the council know whether you are awarded a Tax Credit. Any tax award is treated as income and will affect your benefit.

For more information and an application form you can contact the Inland Revenue on their website at [www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk](http://www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk) or phone the helpline on 0845 609 5000.



## Repairs and Maintenance

Please ensure that you have adequate contents insurance as NLMHA will not be held responsible for damage to your furniture & carpets etc in the case of burst pipes or flooding.

If you have timber frame windows and are suffering draught problems please come into our reception to collect a leaflet on keeping warm.

If you wish to carry out any repairs or alterations on your home, you must write in, to seek permission stating the nature of the works to be carried out. We will normally confirm our decision in writing. If you have carried out works without our permission you may be liable to re-instate the property back to its original state and maybe be found to be in breach of your tenancy.

## What's Available In Your Borough

### Hackney

#### Asian Women's Advisory

Provides an advice and information services to local Asian women particularly those experiencing language/cultural barriers, isolation, domestic violence, disability and family pressures.

Please call 0208 533 5796

### Newham & Waltham Forest

#### KIRAN Asian Women's Aid

Provides temporary accommodation for Asian women and their children escaping domestic violence. It offers confidential advice for women fleeing various forms of abuse including physical, mental and sexual abuse, or from financial exploitation.

Please call 0208 558 1986

## Would you like to learn or improve your English and Maths For Free?

Did you know East London Advanced Technology Training in Hackney offers free English and Maths courses. They even pay for your travel expense and help with childcare cost.

NLMHA and ELATT have arranged an induction for NLMHA tenants on **Wednesday 20th July 2005 from 11am - 1pm** to give you a chance to find out what courses are available and how ELATT can help you.

Light refreshments will be provided in a relaxed atmosphere. If you would like to attend and find out more please contact **Shahina on 0208 815 4200** to book your place today.

## Do you feed birds outside your home?

Did you know that by feeding birds outside your homes you're actually encouraging RATS into your homes?



Please do not leave bread, rice or any other food for the birds to eat, because its likely that a RAT will get there 1st!?



## Tenant Record Update

We are in the process of updating our Tenant Record and need your co-operation.

We will be in contact soon if we have not already done so. Please note this information is very important for NLMHA.



## DUMPING RUBBISH

It has been brought to the attention that some people are continuing to dump rubbish in communal areas. Can all tenants please ensure that household rubbish is disposed of properly in black bin bags and any cardboard boxes are taken apart, minimising the size and then put them into black bags.

Please make proper use of your bins and help keep your area clean and tidy. Remember, that rubbish not only gives the area you live a bad appearance; it also attracts mice, insects etc and is very unhygienic.

**Note:** It is a breach of your tenancy agreement to dump unwanted items of rubbish. If this continues the Association will have no choice but to increase the service charges and this will not be eligible for housing benefit.



## BULK REMOVALS

Please note the following numbers for these services:

**Hackney:** 0208 356 6688

**Newham:** 0208 552 0922

**Waltham Forest:** 0800 232 323

Please use the above services, which are free of charge and do not dump furniture in bin-stores, as this creates problems for the bin men who cannot then move the bins and for the caretaker who cannot clean the bin-stores.

### 4 Easy Steps to Remove Your Bulk Items the CORRECT WAY

1. All you need to do is call the borough you live in
2. Tell the operator (person on the phone) you have an item you need them to remove.
3. He/she will then ask you for your address and details about the item you want removed.
4. The operator will arrange a date for the collection of the , and ask you where you will place the item to be collected.

If you are still unsure, you can confirm with the person on the phone that you will not be charged for this service.



## VERY IMPORTANT NOTICE: Bank Giros

All tenants are reminded that when paying your rent by Bank Giro please ensure that you write the following information on the Bank slip.

1. Your name
2. Your address
3. Your tenant number

Without this information we are unable to process your rent payment.

If you have any difficulties understanding this document please contact NLMHA and we will make arrangements to have it translated.



**NORTH LONDON MUSLIM HOUSING ASSOCIATION**

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020 8815 4200

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## OUT OF HOUR'S EMERGENCY CONTACT

**TRANSCO:**  
Gas Leak

**0800 111 999**

**FIREFLY:**  
Heating/Hot Water/ Boiler Breakdown

**0845 712 5823**

**EAST THAMES HOUSING:**  
All other Emergency Repairs

**0800 158 111**