



Residents News Update

Summer 2010



In This Issue:



Your repairs



Working together



Ways of getting in touch



Employment and Training



Building our communities



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

Editors Comment

Please enjoy the summer edition of our Residents newsletter.

In this edition we have an update on our new office opening, TSA's new standards; ways that you can help NLMHA improve our services; updated information on our established scrutiny panel; how we work to build on our communities, a gardening event promoting healthy lifestyles; how to get back into employment with the support of NLMHA and direct dial in numbers on how to get in touch without delay. With the request of our tenants we have looked into contractors that we recommend for repairs that are your responsibility. These jobs are only for NLMHA tenants and will be carried out at schedule of rates.

NEW OFFICE OPENING.....



After 20 years of serving the community from a con-

verted house in Stoke Newington, NLMHA has now moved into to a purpose built office in Upper Clapton. Our new office will provide much improved facilities for its tenants and better accommodation for staff.

The Office was officially opened by Peter Marsh, Chief Executive of Tenants Service Authority, on Tuesday 18th May 2010.

Among the guests present were The

NLMHA's New website...

Our new website has been launched. After receiving feedback from our focus panel, we took action in updating and re launching our website. All tenants were given the opportunity to contribute, by passing on any ideas they felt would help make the site better. Our new website reassures us that tenants will always have up to date information on what is happening at NLMHA and better means of communication.



New standards set by TSA

There are six standards that social housing providers must meet. They are designed to help improve the services provided. The six standards that have been set are:

- [Tenant involvement & empowerment](#)
- [Home](#)
- [Tenancy](#)
- [Neighbourhood and community](#)
- [Value for money](#)
- [Governance and financial viability](#)

These standards are the centrepiece of our regulatory framework. They describe the outcomes we have to deliver and the specific requirements we are expected to comply with in meeting these outcomes. TSA believe the best place for the quality of services to be discussed, agreed and scrutinised is locally, between providers and their tenants. So standards require providers to set out what they offer to tenants and should reflect the priorities of local communities.

Communicate with us so we can work together

North London Muslim Housing Association is always willing to communicate and encourage our tenants to do so with us. You as our customers can tell us how we are performing and what we can do to perform better.

The different forms of communication vary. Our aim is to work together in partnership so that our tenants feel part of the decision making process, on their housing and the environment that they live in.

Have your say by forwarding any suggestions, comments and ideas to us. You have the option of using different channels in communicating with us, whether that is via telephone, emails or in person. Our dedicated team welcome you to come forward.

It is your choice in how you want to get involved and no matter what form of involvement you wish to undertake we will fully support you. This in turn will help you have a housing association you are proud of.

Support for Tenants Associations

NLMHA is committed to supporting local residents groups as part of its Tenant Involvement Policy. We can give you a £500 start-up grant which all tenants can apply for. We will help with training courses on how to run Associations and will support them as best we can to fit around your needs.

If tenants are interested in starting a group, they can contact Sajna Begum on 0208 815 4205 or e-mail sajna@nlmha.com



Mahmood Bham and Ahmed Alibai, board members who attended a tenants and partners consultation event on our estate.

Scrutiny Panel

After our last newsletter we established a new group which consists of our tenants from different boroughs. The group has been formed in order to help us improve the services that we deliver as a housing association.

In our initial Scrutiny Panel meeting we have discussed and looked at the national standards in providing customer services to our tenants. Their feedback and comments have been taken on board and are in the process of being analysed. By working with our tenants we are aiming to stretch our services to meet local offers and provide better provisions for our customers.

After conducting our STATUS surveys this year we can see that our overall satisfaction of services provided from NLMHA is 81%.



Therefore we are doing very well and are aiming to do better.

Our scrutiny panel are scheduled to meet soon. We shall be looking into these standards further and consulting them on how to expand to establish better services for our customers.

If you are interested in joining this panel please get in touch with our Sajna on 0208 815 4205. Spaces are limited.

The following pictures show the amazing transformation. Follow the thread in order to see the change. If you have a passion for gardening and would like an event like this, please get in touch with Sajna.



Gardening Event held on 26th June 2010
 Tenants on Ansar Gardens approached us in order to help them make their estate look better. So we worked together in organising an event. The purpose was to create enthusiasm for gardening and enhance the look of front gardens and the estate. It will also encourage healthy lifestyles by encouraging tenants to grow and eat their own fruits and vegetables.



A lot of tenants participated in this event. We felt a lot of community spirit as tenants helped to work on the communal area flower bed. Tenants who were not working on the communal area took the opportunity to clear out the weed in their front gardens, using tools that we provided and advice from our professional gardener. As time went by more and more tenants started to come out and get involved. Tenants were very helpful in arranging this event. They contributed by bringing food and distributing it, helped marketing it and by being so positive about reaching our main goal of the day. Everyone received vegetable plants and seeds with free kits for maintaining them. The professional gardener provided them with advice on how to maintain and enjoy their produce. Children on the estate had a separate group session on growing their own seeds in compost. Everyone enjoyed themselves very much, in fact when the chairs and tables had to go tenants started bringing out their own chairs and tables in order to continue with the event. The main purpose of this event was to promote health and wellbeing and maintaining the appearance of the estate by giving tenants the ownership to look after it. We were very successful in achieving our goals!



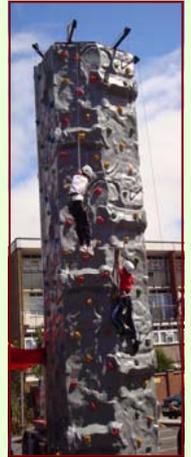
Outcome...

- Educational value for children and adults
- Appreciation of how food is produced as part of encouraging a healthy diet
- Improvement of physical and mental health as a result of regular outdoor activity
- Sense of achievement and empowerment as communities gain new skills, or used existing skills.



Building our Communities

The AGM to celebrate 1 year of our tenants association on Middleton Grange. It gave the group the opportunity to update residents and partners of the achievements to date. They also discussed future plans. The group launched their own website and were proudly marketing it. This will have all updates on what is happening in and around the estate. NLMHA and the other RSL's have helped in creating this tenant association and now we are working as a catalyst whilst the group is running programmes and organising events.



Priory Court funday was an amazing event. The turn out was great. It helped the community come together and build on social cohesion. Tenants were given the opportunity to meet their neighbours and local services that are available to them. On the day there were lots of activities for everyone to enjoy. These included arts and crafts, face painting, flower stand making, belly & salsa dancing and lots more. There were also information stands on how to get people back into education and work.



Holly street had a healthy road show. NLMHA worked with other landlords to arrange an estate based event. The theme was to encourage healthy lifestyles within our communities. We had various external organisations who attended in order to promote their services and allowed our tenants and residents to take advantage of this. It also gave them the opportunity to network and look into new avenues they can take in order to have a brighter future.



Our Hackney women's group works in a way where we bring women from different backgrounds together. They share their common interests and work on making them better by putting them in practice. These meetings are held once a week., and activities vary from week to week.





Interested in g



Get in contact with
Tenant Participation O
0208 815 4205 or se

TP officer can sup-
port you in getting

By doing the courses you
will have enough experi-
ence and qualifications in

TP officer will
support you in
attending ESOL
classes so you

Learning the English language
will give you the confidence to
push your abilities further. By
getting onto a course that will

NLMHA are willing to work with our tenants in order to help them get back into education, training and employment. We want to work as a support provision and help you achieve your goals. Our TP officer will allocate facilities and services local to you, therefore it will be more convenient for you. At present we are working with various service providers. We have a few tenants who are participating in these classes and also have 2 tenants who have successfully completed their



Getting back into

Sajna Begum our
officer by calling her on
and her an email on



Help with improving
your CV or create a

We can work with profes-
sionals in order to help you
boost your cv and increase

Work in partner-
ship with organi-

In order to help you with
your job search we will identi-
fy organisations that will

Interested in Working in Construction?

We are pleased to announce that (Islington and Shoreditch) and our North River Alliance partners have joined the Construction Training Initiative (CTI). Around twenty other housing associations are already members of this initiative aims to help people start a career in the construction industry. The scheme is open to everybody who is over 18, unemployed and enrolled on a construction course at college. It offers the opportunity to earn a wage whilst gaining a qualification in your

Case Study of Alice....

After leaving school Alice went to Art and Design College but dropped out as her mum could not afford to pay for the retakes that Alice needed to complete her first year. Alice then took a job in printing where she worked her way up to manager without getting any formal qualification. Sadly, after 6 years she was made redundant.

Alice began part time work with Sainsbury's in their customer services, when she read that CTI was taking on adult trainees at her local library. Interested in a career in plumbing, she contacted CTI who told her what she could expect from working in the construction industry, and invited her to come back and talk to them once she had enrolled at college.

Alice attended West Thames College and completed her level 2 technical certificate. She then enrolled at Acton and West London College for her level 3 Technical Certificate (6129) and again contacted CTI. She was inducted onto CTI October 2008 and placed on site for her first waged placement in March 2009. Alice adapted to life on site extremely well, producing a very high standard of work and impressing all of her colleagues with her determination to succeed. She remained on this site until February 2010 during which time she completed her NVQ Level 3 and was eventually employed by the sub contractor.

Without the support of CTI it would have been virtually impossible for her to demonstrate her ability and achieve her work based qualification.

Customer Service

We provide a choice of communication so that our tenants can contact us to easily find information about NLMHA and our services. For instance,

- NLMHA has an accessible office at its heart of operation.
- We offer a full range of customer contact opportunities by telephone, e-mail, letter, web-enquiry, face to face contact and via third parties.
- All new tenants receive an extensive signing up meeting, a Tenancy Agreement, Tenants Handbook and other information about their new home.

Our Resident satisfaction with the ease at which they can contact NLMHA = 80% (Customer satisfaction questionnaire 2009 –2010).

We have investigated tenants who are not satisfied and revealed that some do not understand our standard telephone system. The following will help to explain our standard telephone system.

Please note that we always publish the direct telephone numbers of staff in Housing and Maintenance department (back page of Tenants Newsletter) as our continual improvement programme so that our tenants receive best possible service.

The Direct way to get in touch....

OPTION 1 Maintenance Department

When you contact this department, they will ask you questions to try and find out exactly what the problem is . They will then raise an order for a contractor to make an appointment to carry out the repair or they would arrange to come out to investigate the problem further. To help ensure that the quality of repairs, we have an officer who makes follow up calls after a job has been done. If you are not satisfied with the job done by our contractors, then do get in touch so your problem can be followed through.



Ibrahim



Sadique



Menekse

Maintenance Team

OPTION 3 For all other queries



Masima

Administrator

If your call is not related to housing services or maintenance please select option 3 and your call will be answered and dealt with as soon as someone is available.

To make it easy for you to get through to relevant departments, without delay this article has been prepared to direct you. When calling the association please dial 0208 815 4200 and follow the instructions.



OPTION 2 Housing services

Our dedicated housing services team specialises in housing management and will provide you with a personalised service while dealing with your enquiry. Sometimes they might pass more complex enquires onto relevant staff, depending on what your query is regarding. Our team are available to help in working as a support mechanism so please do call if you have any queries. Our team are committed to appreciating our customer needs and delivering the kind of service they like to receive themselves.



Sajna



Dorothy



Ikbal



Amanda



Bilal

Housing Management team

New Complaint Procedures

'Board of Management' of NLMHA recently established 'Complaints sub Committee' to deal with complaints when it reaches the internal final stage. We have amended our policy and procedure based on the above and also incorporated suggestions from the Housing Ombudsman Service to cover current legislations and good practice.

Procedures and Complaint Steps

Step 1: Discuss the matter with a member of staff

If a tenant is unhappy with any aspect of our service then he/she can speak to a staff member in the section which handles the matter. If anyone wants to progress further with the complaint about NLMHA or the services it provides should be made in writing and we are happy to assist. We will try to send you the acknowledgement letter within 5 working days and try to reply within 15 working days.



Discuss with a member of staff

Step 2: Writing to the Manager

If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily, a formal complaint can be sent to the manager. To do this you should complete our form which is designed to collect all the necessary details or write a letter. We will record the complaint and will try to send a letter within 5 working days to acknowledge the complaint and giving the name of the manager dealing with the case. Within 15 working days we will write giving details of how we intend to deal with the matter. If we are unable to send a full reply in this time we will write to the complainant to explain what is happening and when he/she can expect a full reply.



Write a formal letter



A manager will get in touch

Step 3: Appeal to the Complaint Panel – Board of Management

If following the manager's reply the complainant is still not satisfied, he/she can appeal to the Complaint Panel – Board of Management in writing. The Panel will try to send a letter within 5 working days to acknowledge the complaint and giving the name of the members dealing with the case. Within 15 working days the Panel will write giving details of how they intend to deal with the matter. If we are unable to send a full reply in this time we will write to the complainant to explain what is happening and when he/she can expect a full reply.



Nasser Patel Chair of NLMHA complaints committee

Independent Housing Ombudsman details:

Address:

Housing Ombudsman Service
81 Aldwych
London
WC2B 4HN

Telephone: 0300 111 3000 (freephone)

Fax: 0207 831 1942

Website: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

*Please note the Ombudsman will only consider cases if all the above stages have been exhausted.

Carrying Out Your Own ...

Our scrutiny panel suggested that NLMHA provide a list of contractors that we would recommend, for jobs that are tenants responsibility in maintaining your homes.



This has been requested from our residents seeking the services of a good reputable contractor to carry out works in their homes which is outside the scope of the Landlords responsibility or where you may want to carry out some minor home improvements that you will pay directly to the contractor.

We have nominated Hunter Property Maintenance who is one of NLMHA's approved contractors who will carry out any type of minor repairs or improvements within your home in agreement with you. They will provide you an estimate for the works and this will be on a fixed cost based on schedule of rates, which is normally cheaper than employing the services of other contractors. If you are happy with the estimate you have received you may proceed with the works directly in agreement with the contractor. This service is only applicable to NLMHA residents. An example of some of the popular repairs or improvement you may want to carry out include:

- Internal painting and decoration
- Plumbing works/external water pipe for watering garden
- Laying Laminated/ Timber flooring
- Installing kitchen appliances : Cookers/Hobs/ Extractor Fans
- Kitchen alterations (in agreement with Landlord)
- Gardening
- Paving gardens
- Installing new light fitting
- Wall tiles
- Floor Tiles
- Fitting new internal doors
- Fitting curtain tracks



If you require this service please call Hunter Property Maintenance on:
0208 595 1115 and quote "My Repair".

Mystery Shoppers

What is a mystery shoppers you might ask? well, they are a dedicated, but secret group of residents who ring or come into NLMHA's office in order to test our service levels or how well and efficiently we deal with queries. Our mystery shoppers are trained before doing this. They are given scenarios with the theme and what to ask and look out for whilst carrying out there mystery shopping. The shoppers mainly look out for how officers in different departments deal with their problems and the quality of the service they provide., by seeing how polite, how quick and how helpful they were.

The results that are gathered help us identify areas that NLMHA needs to improve on. We pass on relevant information to relevant departments and the issue is looked into. This is the extent we go to in order to get feedback and strive to improve our services, so our tenants can be happy.

We are seeking more involvement from our tenants.

Please contact our TP Officer if you would like to get involved in carrying out a mystery shopping.



Mutual exchange and Transfers

The following conditions must be met in order for you application to be live:

- All rent arrears must be clear
- Your property must be in good decorative order
- You must not be in breach of your tenancy conditions.



If your application is not live you will not be considered for a transfer or a mutual exchange.

Tail and Monitoring.....

Once a job order is carried out by our contractors we make calls to our tenants in order to find out how the job was carried out. If your are not happy NLMHA will look into the matter further and ensure satisfaction is met. NLMHA value costumer satisfaction and are constantly striving to achieve it.



Be our eyes & ears...

NLMHA are the main body and we want you to be our ears and eyes. As you can see and hear what we can not. If you know anyone who is breaching their tenancy, please come forward and keep us informed. We reassure you that your details will be kept in complete confidence and it will not effect you in any way.

Examples of breaching ones tenancy includes:

- Subletting
- Anti social behaviour
- Benefit fraud
- Keeping pets

Together we can make a difference.

Your Contacts at NLMHA

Maintenance

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

Rents

Amanda Hunt: 020 8815 4208

Dorothy Ike: 020 8815 4207

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



RG Francis 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

0808 800 4000

Childline

0800 1111

www.childline.org.uk

Samaritans

0800 776 600

NHS Direct

0845 4647

HomeSwapper

www.homeswapper.co.uk

Domestic Violence Helpline

0808 2000 247

24hr free-phone confidential service



North London Muslim Housing Association

15b-15c Urban Hive, Theydon Road, Upper Clapton, London, E5 9BQ



Tel: 020 8815 4200



Fax: 020 8806 6854



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