



Residents' News Update

Summer 2017



Firefighters fighting fire during training

Housing associations like NLMHA are prioritising fire safety, following the fire at Grenfell Tower.

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The Grenfell Tower fire

At NLMHA, we were shocked and dismayed by the terrible fire at Grenfell Tower on 14 June 2017.

We want to reassure you that we take your health and safety very seriously.

Regulations

We work hard to meet Government fire standards and we regularly check our fire safety arrangements.

You can be sure:

- We follow all fire regulations.
- We meet health and safety law.
- We follow the recommendations of experts including London Fire Brigade.

Before the Grenfell Tower fire, we were already carrying out fire risk assessments at all our properties. We have up to date fire risk assessments. These assessments were carried out by an external fire risk assessor.

Since the fire, we have given the Government all the information it asked for about our properties. We have also followed new Government advice.

In this issue of *Resident news*, you will find important information about staying safe from fire. If you still have concerns, please phone us at the office.

Our Vision:

To make a positive difference to our residents' lives through the provision of quality and affordable homes to those who are in need.

Our Mission:

To provide quality homes and services, strengthen and bridge communities and improve the lives of our residents.



Important fire safety tips from London Fire Brigade



Keep your home safe

- Fit good quality smoke alarms and check them at least monthly.
- A kitchen heat alarm will detect a fire, without being set off by cooking.
- If you must smoke, do it outside and put out cigarettes carefully. Never smoke inside your property.
- Keep matches and lighters away from children.
- Don't leave lit candles unattended.
- Don't sit too close to a fire.
- Don't overload electrical sockets.
- Don't cook when you are over-tired or if you have been drinking alcohol.
- Never leave pans unwatched.
- If a pan catches fire, turn off the heat if you can. Don't throw water onto it – you might create a fireball.
- Check everything is safe before you go to bed. Close doors, switch off electrical items that don't need to be on at night.
- Avoid charging phones overnight.

Be prepared

- Make an escape plan and practise it with your family.
- Keep door and window keys close by.

See the Fire Brigade's new YouTube video about being prepared for a fire:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTBwVw_IeJY



In a fire

- If your own home is affected by smoke or fire, don't try to put it out. Get out and close the door if you can. Call 999.
- If you can't get out, go to the safest room and use towels to block any gaps to keep out smoke.
- If the fire is somewhere else and you live in a block, you are usually safer staying put and calling 999 for advice.
- But if you are in a communal area when a fire starts, get out of the building straight away.
- Never use the lift in a fire.

See the Fire Brigade's new YouTube video, which explains what to do in a fire:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vy4L8B7KI9k>



Safe electrical items

The source of the fire at Grenfell Tower was probably a faulty fridge.

- Before buying any secondhand electrical items, make sure it has been safety checked.
- Switch off any appliance as soon as it is faulty. Do not use it again. Get it repaired or replace it with a new one.



Fire safety: landlord and tenant



Our fire responsibilities

We have to meet fire, health and safety law. This includes carrying out regular fire risk assessments.

- We have to keep stairs, hallways, steps and pathways free of slipping and tripping hazards and in good repair.
- We have to make sure that tenants are not leaving their belongings in communal areas. They can block access and make a fire more serious.
- We have to check that locks and door entry systems work properly.
- We have to keep refuse areas clean and tidy.
- We have to make sure automatic fire detection systems work properly.
- We have to keep common areas well lit.

Your fire responsibilities

You **MUST** keep communal areas clear of your personal items.

London Fire Brigade warn that leaving items in corridors, stairways and entrances is a big safety risk.

This is because they can:

- cause a fire and produce toxic fumes
- make a fire more serious or spread more quickly
- get in the way of people trying to escape from a fire, and
- make it harder for fire crews.

Following the Grenfell Tower fire, we will always take action if we find your belongings left in communal areas.

This means you must immediately remove any furniture, bikes, buggies, laundry, doormats, plant pots or other items from areas outside your flat. If you don't do this, we will remove anything we find and dispose of it.

We also lock all our utility meter cupboards.

Please do not leave rubbish outside your door – take it straight down to the communal bin store.

We have been advised to issue an important new fire safety rule:

- You must not keep barbecues, or other materials that can catch fire easily, on any balcony.



Remember: In 2013-14, more than 500 fires started in communal areas.

Every tenant needs contents insurance

Survivors of the Grenfell Tower disaster lost everything they own in the fire. Many will not have contents insurance.

We insure the buildings you live in, but not your personal items.

We recommend taking contents insurance to cover your belongings in case of fire, theft, vandalism, leaks or accidents.

You can find insurance by:

- searching comparison websites like www.confused.com or www.gocompare.com for insurance for people who rent their homes, or
- checking out the My Home scheme provided by the National Housing Federation



with Thistle Tenant Risks. Phone 0345 450 7288 or go to www.thistlemyhome.co.uk

Smoking is a fire hazard too

Smoking in communal areas is against the law.

For fire safety reasons, smoking outdoors is safer than smoking in your home.

Please dispose of cigarette butts carefully. They could start a fire.

Never throw them out of the window, which can be dangerous and could start a fire.

Be considerate. Pick up your own cigarette butts. Don't leave them for someone else to clear up.



Keep us informed

We need you to tell us if you notice that safety equipment, in your flat or in communal areas, fails.

Please check that any smoke detectors or carbon monoxide alarms you have in your home are working properly and let us know immediately if they are not.

Developing our communities

Family activities

Residents from Gosse Court, Windrush Close, Cazenove Road, Hana Mews, Oriana House, Marconi Road and Ansar Gardens all joined our programme of activities over easter.

They took part in boat trips, sporting challenges and family days out – boosting community cohesion and encouraging people to get fit and feel better.

We also took the opportunity to talk to the residents about welfare reform and the support we can offer.



Healthy living

Residents from Shahjalal House and the Holly Street estate took part in healthy living and eating event, in partnership with Shoreditch Trust.

On the day, there were opportunities to sign up for cooking courses and exercise sessions.

Learn Direct

Our partnership with Learn Direct means that we can signpost residents for help with job searching, job applications, preparing for interviews and finding work placements. Call the office to find out more.

Housing surgeries

One Support will soon start providing residents with weekly housing surgeries at our office.

You will be able to access advice on housing and financial matters, and get help to keep up with your rent.

They can also refer you to another agency for support if you need this.

Parking

After consulting residents, we have appointed a new parking contractor to manage parking at eight estates. They will start work shortly.

Don't leave rubbish, when you move



Your tenancy agreement is clear – when you move out, you must take all your rubbish with you.

When people move out leaving rubbish or their belongings behind, it costs us time and money to sort it out. Please be aware that we will recharge the cost to you and it is likely to be very expensive.

Having to get dirty or rubbish-filled flats cleaned and tidied adds to the time it takes us to get a flat ready for reletting. Ideally, we want to send contractors in straight away to do any repairs, so that we can relet your home quickly.

Fast turnaround of empty properties is good for our waiting tenants – who are often in serious housing need. If we lose less rent from having a property empty, we also have more money to provide you with services.



Right to buy update

Several housing associations around the country are taking part in a pilot right to buy scheme, where tenants have the right to buy their homes at a discount.

The Government recently extended the pilot schemes to run for several more years. Roll out to other landlords will happen later.

NLMHA is not involved in these pilots, so we will not be offering right to buy to our tenants for some time yet.



Universal credit- update

Universal Credit is now live in all our areas.

How this affects you

If you are an existing claimant and you are not already on Universal Credit, for as long as your claim stays the same, you will not be moved onto Universal Credit until at least July 2019. The Government expects to move all claimants by March 2022.

If you are a single person with no children, any new claim for working age benefits will be a claim for Universal Credit.

If you are a couple or family with fewer than three children and you use Poplar Jobcentre, any new claim you make will now be a claim for Universal Credit.

If you live in any of our other areas, you will still claim the old benefits, because the new system is rolling out. However, Waltham Forest and Enfield are due to move

Universal Credit reminder

Universal Credit will eventually replace the six main working age benefits. These include:

- Housing Benefit
- Jobseekers' Allowance
- Income support
- Employment & Support Allowance
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit

Under the new scheme, the housing element of Universal Credit is paid direct to you, so that you pay your rent yourself. **If you do not pay, you risk legal action and you could lose your home.**



to the new system in November. Newham and Hackney will move to the new system in 2018.

If you are a family with three or more children – until November

2018, any claims you make will be for the old-style benefits. New rules will apply after that.

Lower benefits for families

From 6 April 2017, new limits were brought in for family benefits.

Firstly, large families on low incomes get no extra support if they have a third or subsequent child after this date. This applies to Child Tax Credit, Housing Benefit and Universal Credit. But there are some exceptions, such as multiple births.

Secondly, the family element of tax credits is abolished for people who start a family on or after this date. This means a loss to families of £545 each year.



No to anti-social behaviour

Please can we remind residents to be good neighbours over the summer months.

Recently, we have served people with notices for letting gardens get overgrown, for being noisy and a nuisance to other estate residents.

During the summer, with windows open, it is even more important to consider other people. Please try to make sure that no-one in your household creates too much noise. And if you are holding a party or other event, warn your neighbour first.



Our new developments

NLMHA is continuing to add new homes to London's housing stock.

Bellevalia Court in E5 (pictured below and right) will be handed over to NLMHA in August 2017. There are eight flats for affordable rent – all for tenants put forward by Hackney Council. There are also three flats for shared ownership.

YMCC House (pictured below right) will provide 10 homes for shared ownership and 10 for affordable rent. For more details on the shared ownership homes, call NLMHA on 020 8185 4200.



Tenant Board member vacancy

We are looking for a tenant who would be interested in joining the Board of NLMHA.

To find out more, call Ikbal Ikbal Hussain on 020 8815 4200 or email Ikbal@nlmha.com

Our performance in 2016-17

Resident satisfaction

We were pleased with the results of last year's residents' satisfaction survey.

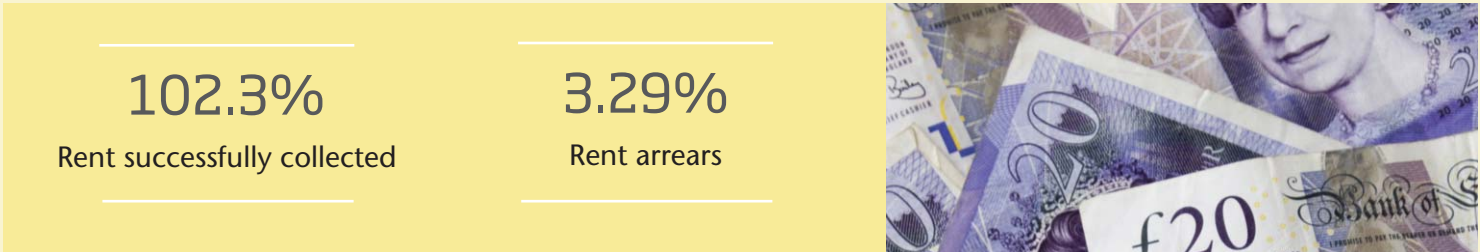


Complaints received



Rent payments

Staff have worked hard to keep our rent collection high and arrears low.

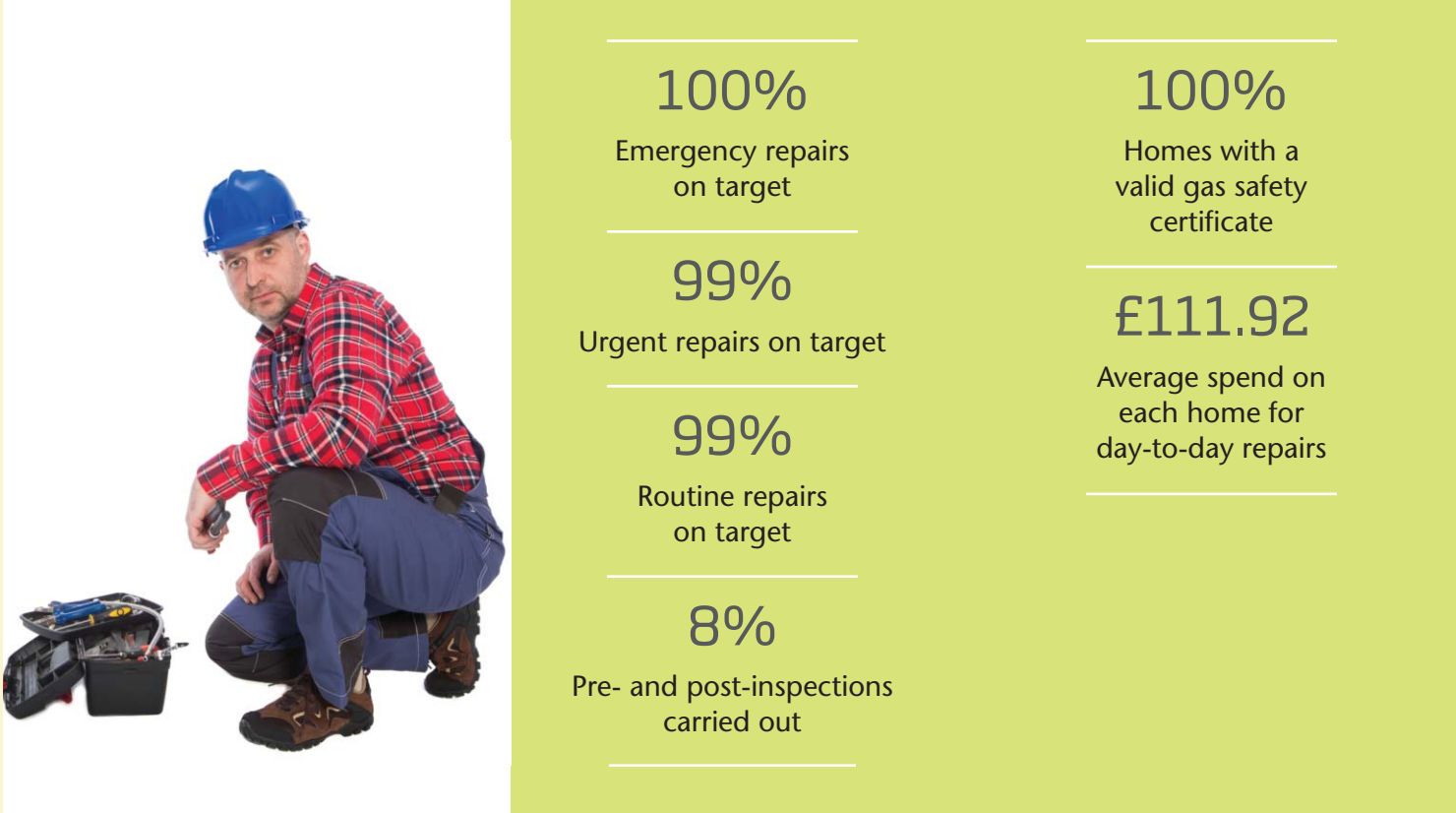


Lettings and empty properties

We aim to turn round our empty properties as quickly as we can.



Repairs and maintenance





We're here to help you!

You can call our Customer Service Team on:

020 8815 4200

Press 1 for repairs

Press 2 for all other enquiries

Mine Ozdemir and **Esra Demir** take calls on weekdays from 9:30am to 5:30pm, but we are closed for lunch from 1-2pm

Fax the Team on 020 8806 6854. Email customer.services@nlmha.com

Gas boiler, heating and hot water enquiries

Phone Robert Heath Heating on 0203 667 4584

All other repairs enquiries

Phone Haarith Balesaria on 020 8815 4213, or
Salim Patel on 020 8815 4211

Email maintenance@nlmha.com

Report your repairs online at www.nlmha.com

Rents enquiries

Phone Amanda Hunt on 020 8815 4208, or
Imtiaz Ahmed on 020 8815 4207

Enquiries about tenant participation, estate issues or anti-social behaviour

Phone Sandra Rodney on 020 8815 4205

Out-of-hours emergencies

Gas leaks

National Grid 0800 111 999

Water leaks/burst pipes

Thames Water 0848 920 0800

Gas heating/hot water

Robert Heath Heating
0203 667 4584

St Andrews heating (E.ON)

0345 302 4312

Other out-of-hours repairs

North London Muslim HA
020 8815 4200

Useful information

National Debtline

0800 800 4000

www.nationaldebtline.co.uk

Childline

0800 1111

www.childline.org.uk

Samaritans

08457 90 90 90

www.samaritans.org

HomeSwapper

www.homeswapper.co.uk

National Domestic Violence

Helpline 24 hrs, 0808 2000 247

www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk

Bulk waste collection Call:

Hackney on 020 8356 6688

Newham on 020 8430 2000

Tower Hamlets on 020 7364 5004

Waltham Forest on

020 8496 3000, or

Enfield on 020 8379 1000.



North London Muslim Housing Association

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

Website www.nlmha.com

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