

THE NEWSLETTER OF ARBOUR HOUSING

Live.
Share.
Grow.



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ARBOUR HOUSING

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Welcome

Hello and welcome to this new edition of Arbour Voice – which is produced with you, the tenant, in mind.





Kieran Matthews,
Chief Executive
Arbour Housing

We hope you find it enjoyable and informative. If you've any comments regarding content or suggestions for future editions, please contact us. We do welcome and value your feedback.

CONTACT US

Please see below different methods to get in contact with us:

 028 3833 9795

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DIGITAL ZONE

If you have problems accessing a computer or the internet, did you know that our office is equipped with a Digital Zone for tenants? Use it to apply for or to manage your claim for Universal Credit online, or any other internet/computer needs you may have. It's here for you. We have staff on hand if you need additional support, and if access to the office is an issue, we can arrange for a staff member to visit your home to help. Just ask.

028 3833 9795



ANNUAL TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY

Our Annual Tenant Satisfaction survey will take place in March 2023, and we would encourage as many tenants as possible to take part. It's really useful for us to get your views. Taking part in the survey gives you the opportunity to let us know what it is like to rent from us. This information will help us to improve our services to all our tenants, so we do welcome your views and experiences of this. To take part in the Annual Tenant Satisfaction survey, please let your Housing Officer know you wish to participate.



SUPPORTING TENANTS

To support our tenants through this difficult time we presented hampers to our vulnerable tenants in December.





MAYOR WELCOMES FIRST RESIDENTS OF KNOCKENAGH LANE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Mayor of Antrim and Newtownabbey Alderman Stephen Ross recently visited the new social housing development Knockenagh Lane, in Rathfern, to welcome the first families to receive keys to their new homes.

This new social housing development built on the former site of Carnview Children's Home, consists of apartments, semi-detached houses and two wheelchair accessible bungalows, providing new homes for local families, particularly the elderly and disabled.

During his visit, the Mayor met with a number of new homeowners including Helen and Andrew Ryan who received their keys to a new accessible bungalow, he said:



"This new housing development in the heart of Rathfern will provide much needed housing for the local community. It was great to speak to some of the new residents and hear how these new homes will greatly improve their quality of life. I would like to wish them all the very best for the future."

Alderman Stephen Ross

Greg Woods from Arbour housing added:

"I would like to thank the Mayor for his support at the first handover of keys to the new residents. This development is in a highly sought after location and is a great asset to the area. I look forward to welcoming more new families to Knockenagh Lane in the next handover phase."



GOLDEN THREADS PROJECT

We partnered with Relate NI to hold a six-week mental wellbeing programme for all our Lurgan Residents in Lurgan Town Hall throughout October and November.





Together: building a united community



NEWRY ROAD PRE-TENANCY EVENT

In November 2022 we welcomed 21 households to our first Housing for All scheme located, on the Belfast Road, Newry. A pre-tenancy event was held for residents to cover all tenancy-related topics and deliver a presentation on shared housing. Each shared housing scheme is supported through the development and delivery of a five-year Good Relations Plan.

The Good Relations Plan is managed by Arbour Housing and it includes 'bonding' programmes which are delivered to the new shared neighbourhood residents, and 'bridging' programmes which are delivered between the new shared residents and residents from surrounding communities.

WELCOMING NEW TENANTS

Welcome Packs were delivered to all our new residents of Belfast Road, Newry to help them settle into their new homes in time for Christmas.



UNIT T COMMUNITY KITCHEN

TOASTY TUESDAYS

We would like to invite you to join us for a tasty lunch consisting of soup, sandwich tea/ coffee and some sweet treats.

Every Tuesday
12noon - 2pm
until March 2023



Also available is our community fridge with surplus foods to share.

EVERYONE WELCOME



NEWCASTLE COMMUNITY MAKES TIME FOR LUNCH

Arbour Housing, together with Clanmil and Ark Housing, is supporting a Newcastle community project that is bringing people together for lunch, friendship and activities every month.

The Community Lunch project is being brought to Newcastle by Kathy Black of Unit T and will welcome anyone in the Newcastle area who is socially isolated to come along and get to know local people.

After lunch, the group can try out an activity which is linked to one of the 'Five Steps to Wellbeing' theme: Connect; Be Active; Take Notice; Keep Learning and Give.



Arbour and Radius Housing sponsored sports kits for young coaches involved in the United Through Sport young leaders' youth program.

This picture was captured on a residential visit to Glasgow.





Managing your money

HELP WITH ENERGY BILLS

- Households across Northern Ireland will receive £600 from the government to help with energy costs. This is intended to support whoever pays the household's energy bills.
- Keypad Meter and Standard Credit customers will receive a £600 voucher in the post from the Post Office. Vouchers need to be redeemed at a Post Office branch. The voucher and supporting paperwork will be needed.
- Direct Debit customers will receive a £600 payment direct to their bank account.
- No application is needed. Beware of scams.
- Customers should receive the single payment or voucher by 28th February.

WHAT IS THIS PAYMENT?

This is a payment of £600 from government to households in Northern Ireland to help with energy bills. It is going to households who have a domestic contract with an electricity supplier.

The payment is made up of the Energy Bills Support Scheme (£400) and the Alternative Fuel Payment (£200). It is being provided by the UK government and facilitated by electricity suppliers and the Post Office.

Getting household energy bill support in Northern Ireland: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/getting-household-energy-bill-support-in-northern-ireland>

SUPPORT AND ADVICE

If you're struggling to pay your rent or worried that you might fall behind with your rent, contact your Housing Officer straight away on **028 3833 9795**.

We appreciate it can be difficult to talk about late rent payments and arrears, but we are here to help, and we can agree a repayment plan that is achievable for you.

Remember, the sooner you get in touch, the sooner we can help. You can also contact Advice NI on 0800 915 4604 or advice@adviceni.net for help with gaining control of your finances.

We also recommend you contact the Make the Call service, which makes sure you're getting all the benefits, services and support you're entitled to.

The contact details are:
Freephone **0800 232 1271** or email makethecall@dfcni.gov.uk

Budget planning is a great way to track and plan your spending to improve your finances and avoid debt. Contact your Housing Officer for further information on how we can help you manage your money.

The Consumer Council provides advice and support on a range of areas including cost of living, energy, food, and personal finances. They have several interactive tools online to help you save money on energy costs and household bills.

Check them out at www.consumercouncil.org.uk



KEYPAD BUTTONS EXPLAINED

- *** Press * before entering the top-up code.
- #** Press # to see credit balance.
- 1** Press 1 to see average credit value left in days, based on the last week's usage. This is a guide as usage may change week by week.
- 2** Press 2 once for credit used: previous day. Press 2 several times for electricity used: previous day, previous week, previous month.
- 3** Press 3 for unit rates and number of units used, current time and date.
- 4** Press 4 for the last five top-up codes entered.
- 5** Press 5 for total money entered into the meter.
- 6** Press 6 once for electricity currently being used in kilowatts. Press 6 twice for electricity currently being used in pounds and pence.
- 7** Press 7 for standing charge repayment rates per day if applicable.
- 8** Press 8 to identify the highest consumption in any half-hour in last 24hrs and when it occurred.
- 9** Press 9 for total units used.
- 0** Press 0 to display test, time and date.



Looking after the air quality in your home



In winter with dropping temperatures, we wanted to share some tips on keeping your indoor air quality as healthy as possible.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, we're all now much more aware of the importance of good ventilation - especially in our own homes.

As the construction quality of homes has improved over the years, there's less opportunity for stale indoor air to escape through ill-fitting windows and doors, floorboards, poorly insulated roof spaces, etc.

Cavity wall insulation, double-glazing and draft proofing can prevent 'natural ventilation' - leaving stale humid air trapped in the dwelling. If your home isn't properly ventilated, it will reduce the quality of the air you breathe. This can result in an increase in the following:

- **Moisture** - the typical house creates around 112 pints of moisture per week from showers, baths, cooking, etc., which can lead to condensation mould growth, streaming windows, etc.
- **Fumes** - tobacco, exhaust gases, etc.
- **Chemical emissions** - from everyday household furnishings, building products, aerosols, cleaning products (VOC's), etc.
- **Dust particles.**



POOR AIR QUALITY
= **CONDENSATION**
+ **DAMPNESS**
+ **MOULD**

To **improve air quality** and **comfort** in your home, there needs to be a good balance between **Insulation, Ventilation** and **Heating**.





WE NEED YOU TO DO YOUR BIT

Does your house have

- Air valves in hallway or each room? **(A & B)**
- Trickle vents in windows? **(C)**
- Extractor fans in your kitchen, bathrooms, utility rooms, WC? **(D)**

Do not switch these off, close or block vents or adjust the air valves. They have been carefully designed and located to ensure the ventilation is correct for your home.

Note: if a system has been fitted, it will use very little energy to run, as these are powered by ultra-low watt motors and typically achieve an 'A' rating energy efficiency.

Depending on what's installed in your house, your system may be providing air from your roof space that has benefited

from solar heat, and may also be redistributing warm air at ceiling level.

By doing this you're improving the indoor air quality. This has two major additional health benefits:

- reducing mould spores - a trigger for respiratory problems and allergies
- reducing house dust mite populations by lowering humidity levels - a main trigger for asthma and allergies



1



2



3



4

OTHER HELPFUL HINTS & TIPS

Keeping your home condensation-free:

1. Try to keep the house as warm as possible for as long as possible - reduce your thermostat settings at your boiler or radiators and run for longer.
2. Don't dry clothes over radiators - do this outside.
3. Vent your tumble drier to the outside.
4. Don't use paraffin or Calor gas-type heating.





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Building for today and tomorrow

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HELPLINES

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Aware Ni 028 9035 7820