

28th February 2022

Newsletter

House Sales Scheme for Housing Association Tenants to End on the 27th August 2022

Under the House Sales Scheme, eligible tenants of social housing landlords have the right to buy their homes at a discount. They are tenants of the Housing Executive or registered Housing Associations.

This scheme will close for in Northern Ireland on 28 August 2022. Tenants will however be able to make an application to purchase their homes up until midnight on 27 August 2022. Tenants should contact their landlord for further information. Residents of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive are not affected by the ending of the scheme.

It is important to note that you are not eligible to buy if you live in;

- sheltered housing
- a property which is part of a group housing scheme

a single storey or ground floor property, other than a flat, with no more than two bedrooms.



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BOILER SERVICING



It is a legal requirement that the Association carries out an annual heating inspection in your home. Without it, your appliances could become unsafe, putting your life and the lives of other members of your household at risk.

It is vitally important that you let our contractors into your home to carry out the annual safety check. We will write to you with a response slip to arrange a suitable date for the servicing. It should take approximately one hour for the engineer to service your boiler. If the time you have arranged with us is no longer convenient, just contact the office via telephone, email or text and a member of our staff will be happy to make every effort to re-arrange it.

It is important to note that a heating service will not cost you, as a tenant, anything, but it could save your life.

Rubbish & Special Collections

Please be aware that all tenants are solely responsible for the disposal of their rubbish. This includes large items such as old furniture and carpets etc.

If you have any large items that need removed please phone Belfast City Council special collections on

02890320202.

If you are a tenant in sheltered dwellings you can also report these items to your Scheme Supervisor.



**Belfast
City Council**

RENT ARREARS

You should inform Woodvale & Shankill Community Housing Association immediately if you are having problems paying rent.

If your rent falls into arrears you should contact Lynn McCullough as soon as possible for advice and assistance. There are several ways we can help:

We can arrange a plan for you to pay your rent arrears by regular instalments

If you are in receipt in UC, JSA, ESA or Pension Credit we can arrange for deductions to be made from your benefits to repay any arrears owing.

We can help you check you are receiving all welfare benefits you are entitled to.

If your account does fall into arrears you will receive the following letters before legal action is taken.

A letter advising you have missed a payment

A Preliminary Warning Letter (will be sent 4 days after arrears letter if no response)

A Serious Arrears Listing (will be sent 4 days after preliminary warning letter if no response)

A Stage 1 Warning Letter (will be sent 4 days after Serious Arrears Listing if no response)

A Stage 2 Warning Letter (will be sent 4 days after Stage 1 Letter if no response)

A Final Warning Letter and Statutory Notice. (will be sent 4 days after Stage 2 Letter if no response)

If no response or resolution in place legal action will be taken 28 days later to recover the debt plus possible possession of the property, we will also seek all costs incurred by Woodvale & Shankill Community Housing Association.

Woodvale & Shankill Community Housing Association do not take the decision lightly to proceed with legal action but unfortunately in some cases we have no other options available.

NEVER IGNORE LETTERS SENT TO YOU REGARDING ANY ARREARS OWING ON YOUR RENT ACCOUNT.

PLEASE CONTACT LYNN McCULLOUGH ON 028 90 741 618 TO DISCUSS YOUR RENT ACCOUNT.

AVAILABLE ACCOMODATION

Vacancies available at

McCallum Court, Cambrai Court and Mount Eden Court

Sheltered Accommodation

Would you be interested in living in this specially designed accommodation available to anyone over the age of 55 and is registered disabled, or anyone over the age of 65.

This Scheme provides the following features

- Self-contained flat with bathroom and newly refurbished kitchen
- Laundry Room facility
- Communal lounge for a variety of social activities
- Guest room
- Security and safety features
- Access to a day time Scheme Co-ordinator
- 24 hour emergency assistance through connection to helpline

If you are interested, please contact Woodvale & Shankill Community Housing Association Ltd
Call into the office at

91-95 Woodvale Road Belfast BT13 3BP

Tel 02890 741618

Email: info@wscha.org



Emergency Repairs

Over the past number of months our contractors have been receiving 'out of hours' emergency calls for repairs that do not require 'immediate' attention.

What is deemed an immediate repair? An immediate repair is work that needs attention within 4-6 hours due to Health and Safety concerns

– for example:

Burst pipes – flooding

Total loss of electric or unsafe power

Smell of Gas

Carbon Monoxide alarm

Total loss of heating over a weekend or extremely cold weather.

This list is not exhaustive, however, if you do phone the out of hours emergency repairs line our qualified contractors will advise if your repair requires immediate attention.

EASTER OPENING HOURS

The opening hours for the office during the Easter holidays will be as follows:

Closed Friday 15th April 2022–
Wednesday 20th April 2022.

Please note that if you have an EMERGENCY REPAIR the contact numbers for our contractors will be on the voicemail message 02890741618.

Please ensure that if you do require an emergency repair that it complies with our emergency policy.

Changes in circumstances

All tenants should ensure that should their circumstances change in any way e.g.

- birth of baby
- older child leaving property
- Increase or decrease of work hours
- Starting or leaving work
- death of any member of the household

(these are just examples there may be other changes that should be advised)

It is the tenants responsibility to inform the benefits agency, NIHE if you are in receipt of housing benefit and Woodvale and Shankill housing association.

If the relevant parties aren't informed you may incur an overpayment of benefit that you will have to repay.

COMMUNITY FUNDING

The Association has set up a yearly charity fund which offers financial assistance to deserving groups and clubs. If you know of any such clubs or charities please contact Catherine on 02890741618 or email:

Catherine@wscha.org for an application form.

