

Housing news for
tenants & leaseholders



NORTHAMPTON
PARTNERSHIP HOMES

voice

ISSUE 11: AUTUMN 2018



CHECK OUT
OUR NEW
TRAINING
PROGRAMME
INSIDE



Also...

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Welcome

Welcome to the autumn edition of the Voice.

In this issue:

- NPH's annual garden competition
- What you need to know about Universal Credit
- Work experience opportunities

And more!

As always, I would like to thank all who have contributed and welcome your articles for future issues which could include:

- Events for charity
- Personal stories

As Tenants or Leaseholders would you like to learn more about involvement in the Housing Service

managed by Northampton Partnership Homes? To find out more, email participation@northamptonpartnershiphomes.org.uk or call 01604 837836 and speak to the engagement team.

Thanks, Keith

Keith Bennett – Tenant Chair
Service Improvement Panel (SIP)
– Communications



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Find out what's been going on in your neighbourhood.

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NPH have signed the pledge to support people affected by Domestic Abuse.

Large print?

If you would like a version of this magazine in large print, or another language, please call

0300 330 7003



Reader Friendly



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PARTNERSHIP HOMES**

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NPH Voice Issue 11 Autumn 2018

Emma wins £10K to set up Community Café in Kings Heath



Emma got to meet George Clarke, celebrity architect, at a glitzy awards event.

Tenant Emma is part of Right Resolution CIC, a social enterprise supporting care leavers across Northamptonshire. They recently came 2nd in a UK competition run by Jewsons. The prize was £10,000 to help them set up a community café in Kings Heath. The café will serve the local community and support care leavers with social skills and opportunities into work.

Raising awareness of Diabetes



James in Great Billing is trying to raise awareness of Diabetes. James has Diabetes Type 1 and is campaigning with Diabetes UK for a new blood testing device to help make blood testing easier.

James volunteers for Diabetes UK and was recently shortlisted for a Diabetes Inspiration award! He has also been featured on Sky News and several national Newspapers raising awareness of his condition.

Find out more on Diabetes and how to reduce your risk of being diagnosed.

www.diabetes.org.uk

Joanne abseils the Northampton Lift Tower

Joanne, who is part of NPH's Tenants' Panel, recently abseiled Northampton Lift Tower. Joanne was raising money for Cynthia Spencer Hospice.

The Northampton Lift Tower is 418ft tall, over 100ft taller than Big Ben.

“ I did it for my friend Karen, for my family and for young people to inspire others to raise money for charities ”



Flytippers look out!

When it's dumped by your home, it's a nuisance and makes the area look unclean. Help NPH catch the culprits.

Report flytipping on your estate to NPH's estate services team:

- Phone: **01604 838320**
- Email: **flytipping@northamptonpartnershiphomes.org.uk**

Snap a photo or take a video and send it to us. Let's catch the culprits doing the dumping!

Together we can make a difference.



Become a Block Champion and help us look after the estate

If you want to make a difference in your estate, come and join us as a Block Champion.

We want to hear from people who care about their estate and want to stop people flytipping.

For more info contact Phillip on 01604 838320.

My name's Louise I'm a Customer Information Officer at the contact centre

So how did you come to work in the contact centre?

I have worked just over 20 years in Customer Service, so I have been doing it a long time! But I first started working in the Northampton Borough Council Customer Information Centre a few years ago.

I really enjoy my job as it means I get to help all different types of people. It's great knowing that I have made someone's day just by taking the time to listen to them.



Did you know that the best time to call is between 2pm-4pm?

What do you like about working with NPH tenants?

Everyone is different, every query is different and I love meeting new people. Everyone in the contact centre is there to help NPH tenants, so whether they are asking about;

- Repairs and maintenance;
- Getting in touch with their Housing, ASB or Rent Income Officer;
- Moving or exchanging their home, or;
- Something else, we are always there to help.

I love helping solve a customer's question. So when they aren't sure who to speak to, or need some support, it is a great feeling when we are able to help over the phone.



What do you enjoy outside of work?

I love taking my dog Lucy out for walks, especially after a long day at work. She is always so excited to see me, but that might be because I have her treats!

Skills for Work



Check out these new job and training opportunities with NPH and ENGIE (NPH's Major Works partner).



Work Placements

Work on-site or in the office with ENGIE.

ENGIE have exciting work placements in Construction on offer. If you want to learn a trade or learn skills to help you gain experience and knowledge with a job, this is for you!

Learn then Earn

Study with ENGIE for a nationally recognised qualification in Construction. You'll gain a CSCS card so you can work on any building site.

This is a 6 day course.

The course runs from;

19th November – 30th November, 9am – 3pm.

If you're interested in work placements or a qualification in construction, contact **ENGIE** now on: **07971 609426** or send a copy of your CV to dale.powell@engie.com

Get digital with your job search

Join ENGIE and NPH in September for a **2 week beginners course** learning about how to use computers.

The course will help with:

- Building your CV
- Writing a cover letter
- Interview skills
- Managing time
- Searching online for jobs
- Making an application for a job
- Being safe and secure online

Each learner will start with a laptop that they will be able to take home if the course is successfully completed!

The first course is running from;

17th September to 28th September 9am – 3pm.

Further courses to follow.

Location: Castle Hill United Reformed Church, Doddridge Street, Northampton, NN1 2RN.

To book on this course log into:

www.jobskilla.co.uk/course/2367 or contact **Tracey Thomson** in NPH on **01604 837360** or email tthomson@northamptonpartnershiphomes.org.uk.

Your Garden Competition Winners 2018

NPH's Annual Garden Competition winners announced

31 tenants across Northampton entered this year's garden competition with NPH. The winning gardens were announced at an Awards event on Monday 13th August.

Congratulations to all of our deserving winners!

And thanks to our amazing judges.

Judges Sarah Passam (Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire) and Alan Greenwood (Continental Landscapes) were so impressed with everyone's gardens:

“ Seeing how much care and time everyone put into the garden is amazing. It makes judging the gardens very hard! Each garden is a real asset to the community. ”

The judges spent two days in June visiting all gardens and meeting everyone who entered. We'd like to say thank you to everyone for opening your gardens up. What a community of green fingered gardeners we have!

Look out for details on how to enter again in spring 2019

This year's winners:

BEST GARDEN



Paula Somers



Liz Bowering



Debbie Dean

BEST SMALL GARDEN



Jennifer &
Neil Moore



Denise Temple



George &
Nicola Whitson



BEST COMMUNITY GARDEN



Blackthorn
Wellbeing &
Friendship Club



Spring Boroughs
Communal Garden



Barbara McLeod
and Ronny Smith



MOST SUSTAINABLE GARDEN



Jean Pratt



Richard Gore and
Stuart Hayward



Brian Burrowes



UNDER 16S GARDENER



Bellinge Community
House Youth Group





Reviewing Lock Up Garages

NPH manage **3122** lock-up garages in Northampton on behalf of Northampton Borough Council.

Around half of the garages are unoccupied. This is due to a number of reasons – they're in an undesirable location, the garage is in need of repair, or the garage just isn't big enough to fit a modern vehicle.

Reviewing Garages

NPH are reviewing garage sites across the town.

- Garages are being refurbished so they can be re-let to NPH residents.
- Other garages are being replaced with more suitable car parking options.
- Around **1000** garages are proposed to be demolished and replaced with new Council homes.

Each garage site is being reviewed one neighbourhood at a time. Depending on the condition of the garage we may choose to refurbish or replace it, but we're also looking at the number of people living in the area before building more homes.

Building new homes

There are around 2500 households currently waiting for Council housing in Northampton. This includes families with disabilities that need specially modified homes. We hope to help these people with finding the right home.

NPH Chief Executive Mike Kay:

“Some of the garage sites are only suitable to put one or two properties on. We have an opportunity to build some homes to meet very specific needs of residents with disabilities and that's exactly what we're doing.”

NPH is already building homes on former garage sites. In Spring Boroughs, there are now 3 and 4 bed family homes on Scarletwell Court and Althorp Street, created on the site of former garages.



We've been talking about Universal Credit for quite some time now and we're sure you've heard lots about it in the media. But what does it really mean for you?

At NPH, our main priority is to keep tenants in their homes, which is why we want to keep you up to date with any benefit changes that could affect you being able to pay your rent.

You may be reading this and thinking that because you don't claim benefits it doesn't affect you, but have you ever thought about how you would pay your rent if you had a major change in your life, like losing your job or becoming ill?

From November, anyone in Northampton that makes a new benefit claim will be applying for Universal Credit. This is the benefit that has replaced Jobseekers Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance, Tax Credits and Housing Benefit.

Rent first

Universal Credit is a monthly payment to cover all expenses including rent. So, it's really important that you contact us if you are struggling to pay your rent. We have a friendly team to support you. They can introduce you to money advisors who can help with budgeting and debts so it really does make sense to make contact as soon as you think you may not be able to pay your full rent.

We will do whatever we can to help you manage your money, but it is important to understand that if you don't get on track with rent arrears, you could lose your home.

TOP TIPS

- **Claims are all made online.** If you do not have internet access or need help making a claim you can contact NPH on 0300 330 7003.
- **You will need a bank account to get your payments.** If you don't have a bank account you can contact Harvest Money (Northants Credit Union) on 01604 250016 or check out the Money Advice Service's information on fee-free banking www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/articles/basic-bank-accounts
- **Claims are paid in arrears, so it is a good idea to save whatever you can.** If you do not have savings, you can apply for an advance payment before you receive your first claim, however you will need to pay this back. More information on advance payments can be found www.gov.uk/guidance/universal-credit-advances

Looking for a move?



New apartments in Lakeview will be ready in the New Year. Would you like to move in?

- 45 modern apartments
- Communal garden
- Communal lounge
- Mobility scooter storage

We're looking for applicants now!

You need to be

- aged over 55;
- living in housing that is no longer suitable for you.
- On the housing register and actively looking...

Get in contact today!

Contact Emily on 01604 837217 or email esawford@northamptonpartnershiphomes.org.uk

Singles and couples both welcome.

Moving is such a hassle right? Wrong!

Jackie and Les, recent residents of Eleonore House in Eastfield:

“We've lived at Eleonore House for 5 months. We had a 3 bed house for 30 years with the kids. They've all grown up now and the house was too big”

What made you want to move?

Les: “Jackie's friends had left the area.”

Jackie: “I was finding it hard to get up and down the stairs.”



Jackie and Les:

“We kept thinking and thinking about it. Emily in NPH said to go along and visit Eleonore House. We did and loved it. We said to Emily, ‘Can we move that day?’”

How was the move?

“NPH, friends and family all helped. It was easy. The move has given us a new life. We've met lovely people and go to all the social events held.”

“It was so hard to make the decision to move after so many years but we have our own little family here. **We love it!**”

The signs of Domestic Abuse

Statistically **1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men** will experience domestic abuse at some point in their adult life. Domestic abuse can be emotional as well as physical, which can make the signs of damaging behaviour more difficult to spot.

The Chartered Institute of Housing have launched a national campaign to encourage housing providers to do more to support people experiencing domestic abuse.

It was an easy decision for us to join in because we already meet the commitments of the pledge, and we are always looking for ways we can do more.

If you are worried about your relationship or someone you know, the following information may help.

- Has your partner tried to keep you from seeing your friends or family?
- Has your partner prevented you or made it hard for you to continue or start studying, or from going to work?
- Does your partner constantly check up on you or follow you?
- Does your partner unjustly accuse you of flirting or of having affairs with others?
- Does your partner constantly belittle or humiliate you, or regularly criticise or insult you?
- Are you ever afraid of your partner?
- Have you ever changed your behaviour because you are afraid of what your partner might do or say to you?
- Has your partner ever destroyed any of your possessions deliberately?
- Has your partner ever hurt or threatened you or your children?
- Has your partner ever kept you short of money so you are unable to buy food and other necessary items for yourself and your children or made you take out loans?
- Has your partner ever forced you to do something that you really did not want to do?
- Has your partner ever tried to prevent you from taking necessary medication, or seeking medical help when you felt you needed it?
- Has your partner ever threatened to take your children away, or said they would refuse to let you take them with you, or see them, if you left them?
- Has your partner ever forced or harassed you to have sex with them or with other people? Has your partner made you participate in sexual activities that you were uncomfortable with?
- Has your partner ever tried to prevent you leaving the house?

If you answered yes to one or more of the above questions, this indicates that you may be experiencing domestic abuse.

There are lots of ways to seek help. We have specially trained staff to help you, or you can go directly to a number of support services in the local area.

Full details can be found on our website www.northamptonpartnershiphomes.org.uk

Fire Doors and why we have them

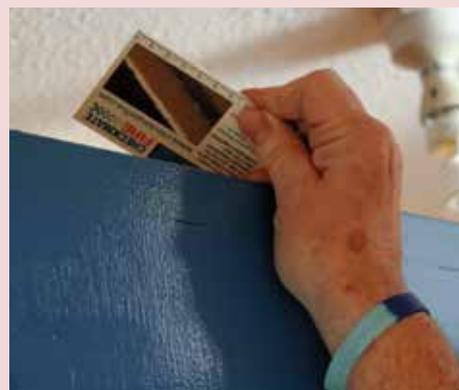
Since 2012, Northampton Borough Council and Northampton Partnership Homes have been upgrading all fire doors in blocks of flats.



The new fire doors, known as FD30s, have a 30 minute fire resistance time. They also include smoke seals. The doors prevent fire breaching outside the flat, and fire breaking through into the flat.

FACT: In London alone, 3 people have died and 36 people have been injured in fires over the last 3 years. Each case as a result of fire doors not fire rated, not fitted properly or left open. Fire doors have a self-closing mechanism so they close automatically. If the door doesn't close properly, something is wrong.

If your door doesn't close properly or the common area doors are damaged, please contact NPH so they can be repaired or replaced.



You wouldn't remove seatbelts from your car, so why remove the fire door from your home?

"People ask me why my front door needs to be a fire door?"

NPH Fire Safety Officer Malcolm:

"The simple answer is fire doors are required by law to keep you safe. You can never predict when or how a fire may start."

IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMERTIME

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- CANDY FLOSS
- DONKEY RIDES
- OCEAN
- PADDLING POOL
- PARASOL
- POSTCARDS
- SAND CASTLE
- SOUVENIRS
- SUITCASE
- SUMMERTIME
- SUNSHINE
- TOFFEE APPLES
- TRAVEL
- VACATION
- VOYAGE

For your chance to win **£20s in Love 2 Shop Vouchers**, can you find all the summer holiday related words?

Best of luck with this summer wordsearch put together by NPH Tenant Oscar Woodcock. And congratulations to the Spring wordsearch winner, Mr Russell!



*To be in with a chance of winning, send your completed wordsearch to NPH by Monday 24th September. You can post your wordsearch to our address, email a photo of your wordsearch to the Voice Editors, or drop the wordsearch off when you next visit the Guildhall One Stop Shop.