

Housing news for
tenants & leaseholders



NORTHAMPTON
PARTNERSHIP HOMES

voice

ISSUE 13: SPRING 2019



**Check out
the new
homes at
Lakeview on
page 7 & 8**

Also...

IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD 4 HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICE 12 YOUR COMMUNITY HEROES 14

Welcome

Welcome to the Spring issue of Voice!

In this issue read about Lakeview's new over 55's apartments and NPH's Community Heroes voted for by you! The garden competition is also back for another year. Turn to the back cover to read how to enter your garden this year.

Are you creative, enjoy writing and have an eye for detail?

We need you! NPH's Voice Editors are looking for residents who would like to get involved in producing NPH Voice. The opportunity would suit someone who has an interest in editing, writing stories and is proud of their local community. For more information, contact the NPH Voice Editor.



NORTHAMPTON PARTNERSHIP HOMES

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02

NPH Voice Issue 13 Spring 2019

At a glance...

In your Neighbourhood

4

We hear from the Lindsays in Ryehill and how you can be a 'Hero at Zer0'.

The Big Interview

6

Meet Cam Whyld, the person behind 'Happy to Help' CiC.

New homes at Lakeview

7

45 new homes at Lakeview are officially open.

NPH's Accredited Housing Service

12

The Housing Support Service has been rated 'outstanding'.

Watch this space

13

A new feature sharing what we have coming up.

NPH's Garden Competition 2019

16

Get your gloves ready, the Garden Competition is back for its 3rd year.

Large print?

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

0300 330 7003



Reader Friendly

Notice board

Is data your thing?

You can view how NPH is performing each month at:
www.nph.org.uk/nph-performance

More home choice

We are working in partnership with Councils across the county to offer homes in rural locations to applicants on the Northampton housing register. We have already allocated homes in Overstone, Buckton Fields, Towcester, Denton and Boughton.

Did you know? 2019 marks a 100 years of Council housing.

The end of the World War I in 1918 created a huge demand for housing throughout the UK. In 1919, Parliament passed the first Housing Act written by Dr Christopher Addison, then Minister of Health. It made housing a national responsibility. Local Councils were given the task of developing new housing and rented accommodation for working people.

213,000 homes were built under the Act. The homes were termed "Homes fit for Heroes" a reference to the thousands of soldiers returning home from War.

BOILER ALERT: Fault code F22 on your boiler means low pressure

If your boiler stops you may find it has low pressure.

It's simple to sort yourself!

To help you stay calm under (low) pressure, try these tips:

1. Look at your water pressure gauge on the digital screen. If it's low, it will be below 1 bar.
2. Look underneath the appliance. There are two valves.
3. The two valves will be in a closed position. Turn the right valve slowly while looking at the digital screen. Then turn the left gauge slowly.
4. When the pressure gauge on the digital screen gets as high as 1 to 1.2 bar, reverse the order. Turn the left valve off and then the right valve off. Always make sure they are in the closed position.

For more information you can watch this Youtube video from the boiler manufacturer Vaillant:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRW-BQ_ZhNg.

WE'RE HIRING!

Your NPH Board is recruiting for new tenants to join up and help shape the future of NPH.

We will give you all of the best training and support that you need to become a valued member of our Board. As a tenant, your views will influence the decisions we make.

Our most recent tenant board member Godfrey Kanengoni wants others to join him and help voice their opinions:

"Why wouldn't you get involved? As tenants we need to have a voice in what NPH are doing and I hope others will take advantage of this opportunity."

APPLY HERE: governance@nph.org.uk /
01604 837503

In your Neighbourhood

Be a hero at Zer0

Fruitful Abundance, who run Elsie's Café as part of national food rescue organisation The Real Junk Food Project, has started a new venture in St James. Fruitful Abundance aims to make Northamptonshire a zero food waste county, so it's no surprise they have called their new 'shop' Zer0.

Supermarkets donate their surplus food with the proviso that it cannot be sold, so all stock at Zer0 is offered for a donation. Zer0 is calling out for volunteers to stock the shelves, collect donations, and run the shop. Volunteering at Zer0 is great fun – you get to help the local community

and protect the environment. All donations go back into paying the running costs of Zer0, which are way above zero!

Zer0 is looking for volunteers for other roles too:

- collecting food from supermarkets (you'll be reimbursed for the cost of petrol);
- weighing and recording the donations;
- keeping the shop clean and tidy;
- fundraising;
- and attending events such as fairs and festivals with the travelling food boutique.



And remember, if you are a keen cook the team at Elsie's would love to see you cooking up a treat in Market Street Community Room.

If you'd like to be a hero at Zer0, call in at the shop, or visit Zer0's Facebook page www.facebook.com/Zer0Northampton/

Zer0
134 St James Road
NN5 5LQ

Open: Monday – Friday
11:30-1:30pm

Elsie's Café

We know Market Street is a community hub, but did you know it is an environmental hub too?



Amongst the groups based at Market Street hub there is Fruitful Abundance, a non-profit Community Interest Company whose mission is to stop food waste and encourage people to grow their own fruit and veg.

You might have heard of Elsie's Café, Fruitful Abundance's most high-profile project, but there are others too.

Seedy Saturday – an annual gardening and growing event.

The Flower and Produce Show – anyone can enter their home-grown produce at the Umbrella Fair.

Head to www.fruitfulabundance.org or follow on Facebook for more details.

In short, Fruitful Abundance strives to change the food system in Northamptonshire, and you can help. Every day, a team of volunteers save good, edible food from going into landfill.

Over Christmas alone, 8.2 tons of food was collected and fed lots of hungry customers. Help us spread the word and let people know that they can get a tasty, fresh lunch for a donation at Elsie's Café.

www.facebook.com/TRJFPnorthampton/

Elsie's Café
Exeter Place
NN1 4BG

Tues-Thurs 10:30-1:45pm
Fri 9:30-11am on the last
Friday of the month
Sat 10-11am for boxes
and food sales only



Meet the Lindsays – Ryehill Youth Club

The Ryehill Youth Club, 'a chance for the children to let their imagination run wild!'

Since 2015, Anne Lindsay has put all her efforts into supporting the children and parents of Ryehill.

The RYC has over 20 young people on its register, a number which has been growing from the day it began.

"I love what I do, it is so great knowing the young people in the area have a fun and safe place to go to."

Like any youth club, there are great activities going on all the time:

- Knitting;
- Film nights;
- Pyjama night;
- Tuck Shop;
- Craft making;
- and cake decorating.

And one of Anne's main aims is to take the children to the seaside!

"Many children in the area have never had the chance to walk along the beach, so to give them that would mean the world to me."

The group is always looking for new volunteers, so if you live in the area and want to help out, please get in touch on 01604 837836.

Mowing season is upon us!

Mowers are ready for NPH's Grounds Maintenance contractor, Continental Landscapes, who are grass cutting on NPH Blocks and Estates.

This year's grass cutting started week commencing 18th March in Briar Hill, Camp Hill, Spring Boroughs and Vernon Walk among other areas!

The three grass cutting teams are split by North, West and East and are working their way across Northampton.

If you've seen them once, they'll be back again after they've completed all cuts the first time round. This could be up to 3 weeks later. Regular cuts will then happen every 2 weeks throughout spring and summer.

If you're yet to see them, keep a look out. They'll be visiting your area very soon!



NORTHAMPTON
PARTNERSHIP HOMES



CONTINENTAL LANDSCAPES LTD



Look out for the Continental Landscapes' and NPH's logo on their vans and the operatives' uniforms

Tel: 0300 330 7003 Email: voiceditor@nph.org.uk

THE BIG INTERVIEW



Happy to Help – with Cam Whyld

Tell us a little bit about yourself?

Well I've worked in Housing since 2004, in a variety of different roles, ranging from housing officer, homelessness and housing options officer, and resident involvement manager. Now I head up customer engagement for NPH and lead on the development of 'Happy to Help' CIC.

Outside of work, I have three young children, so I don't have time for much else!

So, what is Happy to Help?

Happy to Help is a social enterprise set up by NPH. We have a small Board made up mainly of NPH tenants.

Happy to Help CIC offers a number of services, which are already in place, or will be in the next few months:

- **The Kings Heath paint shop**
Find out more in our next NPH Voice issue.

- **The move-in service**
Help for NPH tenants in urgent need of basic things such as carpets, white goods, removals and furniture.
- **Boxes of help**
These packages containing basic sanitary and household items will be given to residents in need.
- **The community ideas fund**
This fund provides small grants for community groups to help create positive change.

It's easy to apply for the community ideas fund, just get in touch!

Phone: 01604 837836

Email: happytohelp@nph.org.uk

Visit: www.nph.org.uk/happy-help-cic

Why did NPH want a CIC?

It really comes down to just wanting to do more for our tenants. Having a separate organisation means that

we have more opportunities for tenants to get involved in their local community. It also gives us access to grant funds that NPH would not be eligible to apply for.

By creating Happy to Help CIC, we can support people and groups that are making a difference in our neighbourhoods. We have already been able to help a number of tenants in crisis with furniture and white goods to get them settled in their new home.

Here are some of the things we have helped fund through our community ideas fund:

- Elsie's 'Shop Zero' sign for their new store;
- Hanging baskets for Colwyn Road residents association;
- Ryehill youth group – ten pin bowling trip;
- Community fun day event for Right Resolution CIC;
- And a lawnmower to help Billing Brook School students with their community volunteering work.

Welcome to Lakeview!



45 new homes for older people are now open in Lakeview

Lakeview, off Churchill Avenue in Eastfield is a new development of 45 Council homes for older people.

The homes at Lakeview are designed for local people to settle down in as they get older. Each apartment is self-contained. As you step through the door, you'll see that the door frames are slightly wider and the rooms are more open. Each apartment is accessible and wheelchair friendly!

Apartments also include a wet room with level access shower and a communal alarm system (only required for emergencies). On the ground floor, there are communal facilities by way of a lounge and a mobility scooter store. Stairs and a lift are on each floor. On the outside there is a communal garden.

The homes were officially opened on Friday 1st March by Michael Ellis MP and residents in Lakeview.

We'd like to say a big welcome to all moving in!

"I think it's absolutely brilliant. I'm so pleased. It's lovely, the whole complex. I'm moving from a bungalow but I won't be far from my friends. I have Eastfield Park where I used to do some litter picking. It's very nice!"

Pauline Riley



"These flats look so nice and I can see myself settling down here!"

Kevin McKeown



Kelly's Project diary

Lakeview is built on the former site of Lakeview Care Home. The land was bought in 2016 by Northampton Borough Council. The care home had been empty for many years before and was demolished to make way for new homes for older people.

by Kelly Nicholls, Project Coordinator.



Kelly Nicholls, NPH Asset Management Team

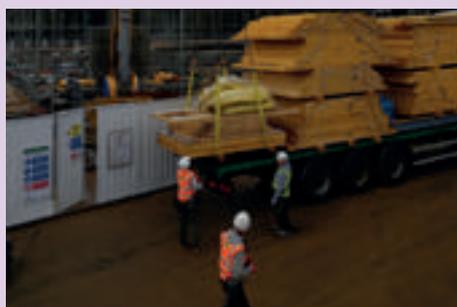


"I came in to oversee the construction of Lakeview with ENGIE Regeneration in September 2017. The first job was to prepare the groundwork for the building's main timber frame.



I started snagging the flats in November 2018. Snagging is a term used in construction where you make a list of faults. If I didn't like something, the contractor was to put it right. When snagging you need to have it in your head 'would you be happy if this was your home?'

Fast forward to 2019 and here we have Lakeview! The building has been completed and residents are moving in".



The main frame for the building is made out of specialist timber. It was created inside the Stuart Milne factory in Oxfordshire.

At this time it was a hive of activity. Every day saw new developments. In April 2018 the timber frame was transported from Oxfordshire to Northampton where it was erected on site. It took 2 months to get the whole frame in place.

In July 2018 we began the external brickwork. The building was now water tight, meaning we could also start on the internal works – plastering, kitchen fittings, electrics and decorating!



Bin and Gone

New bin project keeping rubbish off the street!

For many years Arbour View and South Holme Court in Thorplands has been a hotspot for flytipping and rubbish. With a trial of new waste bins, residents are now getting rubbish off the street and into the dustbin lorry!

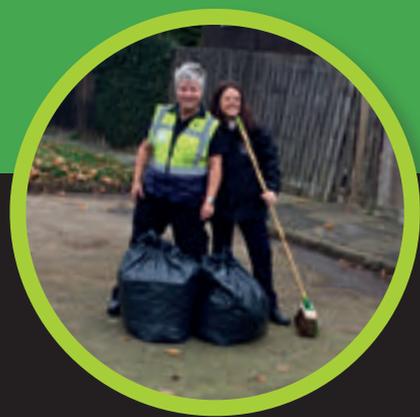
Flat blocks in Arbour View and South Holme Court have had an issue with flytipping and waste disposal. Wheelie bins for the flats were overflowing with rubbish. Bin bags were building up around the bins on the street.

In November 2017, Regeneration folk from NPH's Asset Management Team asked residents in the area what NPH can do to help make waste disposal in these two streets easier. The general consensus was: the rubbish was ugly and flytipping needed to stop!

Earlier this year the Asset team organised for communal bins to be piloted in the area. The results have been great, as you can see from the pictures! Both streets are clean and tidy and receiving regular collections.

“Bin stores have made the area much tidier. They look amazing!”

– Thorplands Residents Association.



Housing Officer Alexis Newlin, Neighbourhood Wardens Ash Harris and Caroline Poynter and Community Regeneration Officer Tracey Thomson have been organising regular litter picks in Thorplands. They are being helped by the sixth formers of Billing Brook School. Want to join their next litter pick? Contact Tracey on 01604 837360.

Thorplands is NPH's current area of Major Planned Investment. Homes are receiving new cladding, windows and doors, and new rooflines (guttering, fascia and soffits). Communal gardens are being developed and we are improving the waste management options for flat blocks in the area.

NPH will be asking more residents of flat blocks across Northampton about their current waste disposal options when we come to do Planned Investment work in your area. Next stop in 2019 is Blackthorn, Lings, Lumbertubs and Lakeview!

Recycling Top Tips

What can you recycle?

To make life easier, we have a single bin for the following materials.



Paper and card

- ✓ Cardboard packaging and flattened boxes
- ✓ Any paper
- ✓ Newspapers and magazines



Plastics

- ✓ All plastic bottles, trays, pots and tubs
- ✓ Fruit punnets



Tins and cans

- ✓ Food and drink cans and tins
- ✓ All empty aerosols
- ✓ Kitchen foils



Glass

- ✓ All glass bottles and jars

No thanks

- ✗ Other metals
- ✗ Paint cans
- ✗ Plastic wrapping or plastic bags
- ✗ Drinking glasses
- ✗ Plates
- ✗ Light bulbs
- ✗ Polystyrene





Talk to us about apprenticeships

Become a Trade Apprentice or Administration Apprentice with ENGIE Regeneration.

ENGIE Regeneration, NPH's Major Works Contractor, have a number of opportunities in construction if you or someone you know is looking for an opportunity into work!

Each apprenticeship involves four days a week at work, learning with a specialist mentor and one day a week at college studying towards a fully funded professional qualification!

Administration Apprentice is level 3 with an immediate start

You should have qualifications in Business Administration, ideally to level 2.

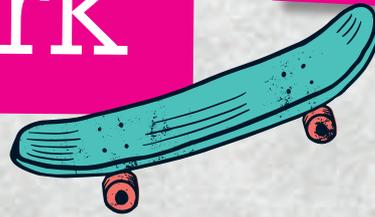
Trade Apprentices are wanted to start in August 2019!

School or college leaver? Or just ready for a career change?

For more information please contact ENGIE Regeneration on 07971 609426 or email your CV to dale.powell@engie.com.



Kingsheath skatepark



That's how we roll!

Get your skates on, and get down to the new Kings Heath Skate Park!

On March 29th, we officially opened the new Skate Park, and welcomed local residents from all over Kings Heath.

The Park was joint funded by Sport England and the Mick George community fund. Canvas Spaces then delivered the project after hearing views from local residents and young people in the area.

County Councillor for Dallington Spencer Ward, Gareth Eales was there on the day to unveil the new park and welcome the budding skaters!





NPH's Housing Support service rated outstanding!



NPH offers a housing support service to tenants having difficulty managing their tenancy. The team, made up of specialist Housing Support and Welfare Officers, also supports NPH's more elderly tenants.

Back in December 2018, The Centre for Housing Care and Support paid NPH a visit to see how our Housing Support service was performing. It turns out rather well!

After a thorough assessment, including testimonials from tenants receiving the service, the Housing Support Team was accredited as an outstanding provider!

Being accredited is important to us. It gives our tenants confidence that they can trust what we do. It shows

that we are getting things right and supporting people in the right way!

Over the last year, the Housing Support service has helped 723 tenants having difficulty managing their tenancy. This includes:

- Support with Mental Health;
- Drug and Alcohol support;
- Looking out for older people;
- Supporting people leaving care into homes;
- And supporting victims of domestic abuse.

The service also helps people claim benefits that they did not know they could claim! They have helped people claim a total of £155,376 in unclaimed benefits over the last year.



Joe is one of 723 tenants to benefit from the Housing Support service.

"I don't think I'd be in the position now if it wasn't for the help"

"I was always someone who thought I can deal with all the issues on my own. I realise now that it is important to talk about how you feel. It made me realise that I had to do something."

Supported tenants talk about Housing Support Service



A new group of tenants are now meeting up over a cuppa to talk about their experiences in Housing Support! If you'd like to be involved in the group, contact NPH's Housing Support service below.

How to ask for Housing Support

The Housing Support service can help you manage your finances, help you attend appointments, or if you're moving home... help you settle in okay!

Contact them on 01604 838462, email tenancysupport@nph.org.uk or go online: www.nph.org.uk/supporting-you

Watch this space...

NPH CHOIR

We are looking at starting a Choir for our residents and staff.

If you would be interested in joining this exciting new group, get in touch!

Call us on **01604 837068**.

Email us at participation@nph.org.uk



NPH BUS COMING SOON TO A NEIGHBOURHOOD NEAR YOU!



This summer, we will be bringing our housing services to your local area. Think of it as a housing office on wheels. You'll be able to meet NPH staff, learn how to use our online services, get advice, tell us what you think of NPH services and meet your neighbours at the same time.

We can't wait to see you on board!



FREE Training

We're working on an exciting partnership to bring you a new programme of free training. Look out for news on a range of brilliant courses designed to support your personal development and wellbeing.



ARE YOU READY?

As this page goes to print, we have tenants testing our new system for reporting repairs online. Soon you will be able to report your repair and confirm your appointment in one place.

Get ready for reporting a repair online. Sign up to our online portal "Your NPH" now!



**Check your
rent account**



**Pay the easy
way – set up a
Direct Debit**



**Report and
book repairs**

Head to www.nph.org.uk and click "Register" or follow us on Twitter @ **NPH_News** for more details soon.



Community Hero Awards 2019

Your heroes!

Over the past 3 months you have been nominating your Community Heroes, and here they are!

From community litter pickers and amazing volunteers to the best neighbours we could ask for, the shortlist is full of amazing people.

The winner will be revealed at our 2019 Tenants and Leaseholders Conference. We look forward to sharing this in our Autumn issue of NPH Voice.



Barbara Wilson
Great Neighbour



Anne Lindsay
Community Champion



Brian Stimson
Community Champion



Rose Agar
Community Champion



Sheila Thomas
Great Neighbour



Simon Burgess
Community Champion



Derek Connor
Community Champion



Jackie Streeton
Great Neighbour



Kevin Freshwater
Community Champion



John Howe
Great Neighbour



Jon Porter
Community Champion



Maggie Kirton
Great Neighbour



Sarah Balkham
Community Champion

V FOR...

V	O	C	H	E	R	V	E	L	T	L	A	L	O	V
I	U	R	V	U	N	Y	R	V	I	E	W	E	R	A
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A	T	I	L	N	G	C	T	C	G	C	R	E	V	V
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- VACATE
- VACCINATION
- VALLEY
- VANGUARD
- VAUNT
- VEGETARIAN
- VERNACULAR
- VIBRAPHONE
- VICUNA
- VIEWER
- VINDICTIVE
- VIOLENCE
- VOLATILE
- VOUCHER
- VULNERABLE

For your chance to win **£20 in Love 2 Shop Vouchers**, can you find all the words beginning with the letter V!

Best of luck with this spring wordsearch put together by NPH Tenant Oscar Woodcock.



And congratulations to the winter wordsearch winner, Jade Moses!

*To be in with a chance of winning, send your completed wordsearch to NPH by Friday 17th May 2019. 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.

Be safe, not sorry!

Flash flooding in Northampton in May last year caused many residents to lose possessions in their home. A freak storm dropped twice the normal monthly rain fall in just over an hour. It can be easy to forget, but buying contents insurance for your belongings can bring peace of mind and protection for when things do go wrong!

Home contents insurance covers damage to your belongings caused by fire, flooding, storms and theft. You don't need to take out contents insurance as part of your tenancy agreement, but it helps to protect your possessions.

Crystal Contents Insurance

When NPH signs over the keys to new tenants we offer a Home Contents Insurance scheme as part of our welcome pack. The scheme is from provider Crystal Insurance.

The Crystal Insurance Scheme is a product name arranged and administered by Thistle Tenant Risks a trading style of Thistle Insurance Services Limited. Thistle Insurance Services Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority FRN 310419. Lloyd's Broker. Registered in England under No. 00338645. Registered office: Rossington's Business Park, West Carr Road, Retford, Nottinghamshire, DN22 7SW.

They're a specialist insurance provider and work with social housing tenants up and down the country.

The benefits of Crystal's home contents insurance include:

No Excess: You don't have to pay the first part of the claim. Nearly all insurers make you pay a fee of some sort when you make a claim.

Flexible ways to pay: Cash, card, cheque, postal order... You can also pay fortnightly or monthly.

Loss of keys: If you ask NPH to do a job that is your responsibility to fix, then you will have to pay NPH for the work before we begin. One of these situations is lost keys which involves a locksmith. Choose to accept the payment for lost keys and you can make a claim later with Crystal Insurance to get the money back. As we said, there's no excess!

Crystal also offer free call backs, saving you the effort of waiting on the phone or using up the phone bill.

If you'd like to talk to Crystal Insurance about their scheme you can contact them on:

- 0345 450 7286;
- www.crystal-insurance.co.uk/contact.aspx.

You can also visit the Money Advice Service Website: www.moneyadvice.org.uk which explains in more detail how to get home contents insurance and what to look out for. Other agencies like Citizens Advice in Northampton are available to talk to about insurance on 01604 235080.



Kitchen fires are on the rise*!

Stay safe by following these practical tips:

1. When the hob or grill is on, don't leave it unattended! If you need to leave, turn the heat off.
2. Keep the oven, hob, cooker hood, extractor fan and grill nice and clean. Grease and fat can ignite fires.
3. Do a double check to make sure the cooker is turned off when finished.
4. Keep the toaster clean and away from objects that can catch fire.
5. Don't dry the tea towel in the microwave.
6. If you have a deep fat fryer, keep it in one place and make sure you have a wall mounted fire blanket or wet tea towel already wrung out.
7. Check your smoke alarm regularly and make sure it is not covered up.

Check out Northampton Fire and Rescue Service on Facebook for more useful information:

Facebook.com/Northantsfire

*Kitchen fires have risen nationally over the last 12 months. Around 60% of fires that occur in the home start in the kitchen.

NPH's Garden Competition 2019

**ENTRIES
NOW
OPEN**

Back for its third year, we'd love to hear from our budding gardeners and all those that love their plants and flowers!

Register for this year now:

-  Register online at www.nph.org.uk/garden-competition;
-  Call NPH's Customer Engagement Team on 01604 837836;
-  Pick up an entry form at the Guildhall One Stop Shop;
-  Or write to us at NPH's Garden Competition, Northampton Partnership Homes, Westbridge Depot, 9-13 St James Mill Road, Northampton, NN5 5JW.

You can also share a picture of your garden by email to voiceditor@nph.org.uk!

Categories for each garden will be chosen closer to the time, based on the types of gardens entered.

The competition is open to all NPH tenants, leaseholders and household members.

Deadline for entries is Friday 14th June. Each person who wins will receive a prize plus a little thank you for everyone who enters!

