

# YOUR VOICE

Issue 30 | Spring 2025

HOUSING NEWS FOR  
TENANTS & LEASEHOLDERS



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE  
PARTNERSHIP HOMES



## Meet with us! Drop-in sessions across Northampton

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# Welcome

to the latest edition of Your Voice magazine.

Welcome to your new issue of Your Voice magazine, we hope you enjoy reading all the resident news and useful information.

We regularly review the services we provide. We've created a new programme of drop-in sessions to make it easier for you to meet with us face to face - we've carefully chosen where they are held to make them as accessible as possible. Talk to us about anything at these sessions (see page 8).

In this issue you can learn more about the NPH Board and how we are governed. The Board Members do an important job so you can meet them and read about the essential role they play (see page 10).

I'm proud of our support team who have just been re-accredited by erosh which is a real achievement. Erosch were so impressed with the services they are providing that we've been asked to present our best practice to other



housing providers. A big well done to the team (see page 11).

Everything we do is for our residents. You can meet some residents in this issue (see page 12) and read about how we are improving our core services (see page 18).

Enjoy this spring issue of Your Voice.

Regards,

**Steve Feast**  
**Chief Executive**



**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE  
PARTNERSHIP HOMES**

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## 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

## GOODBYE TO THE NPH BUS, HELLO TO DROP-IN SESSIONS

For the last few years, the focal point for our community engagement has been the NPH Community Bus but we are keen to make it easier for you to meet with us face to face in a more accessible way. We've launched a programme of drop-in sessions around Northampton and carefully chosen venues where lots of residents already are. You don't need to make an appointment to attend and can ask us about anything. We'll also continue to hold our Engagement Café events once a quarter.

So, while the NPH bus has made its last stop, there will still be plenty of ways to engage with us where you live. **Full list of drop-in sessions on page 9.**

## FEATURE IN THIS MAGAZINE

If you have a story to tell or some community news to share we'd love to hear from you! Email us at [voiceditor@nph.org.uk](mailto:voiceditor@nph.org.uk)

**Follow us on Facebook for the latest news.**  
Search for **@NPHConnect**

## Engagement café

**A date for your diary! Our next engagement café will be held at The Gathering Space in the Grosvenor Centre on Thursday 22nd May 2025 between 12noon and 2pm.**

NPH staff will be there to discuss: repairs, mutual exchange, rent, financial support, housing issues and how you can get involved. Everyone is welcome to attend!



## Procurement portal for local contractors

To help us maintain, repair and invest in NPH homes we use specialist contractors as well as our own staff. We encourage local businesses, large or small, to apply to work with us as a contractor. To do this, we have introduced a new web-based procurement portal.

Any specialist contractor can register their details on the portal so they can access and review current procurement opportunities. Registered businesses will also receive automatic tender notifications of upcoming opportunities, so they don't miss out on newly listed contracts.

**<https://nph.delta-esourcing.com/>**

# Accessing NPH services

## How to contact us

### Call us

The Contact Centre can help with all queries and can also put you in touch with your Housing Officer or Rent Income Officer, call us on **0300 330 7003**, 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

You can also call the Contact Centre outside of normal hours to report an emergency repair.



### Go online

Report a repair, pay your rent and manage your tenancy online through the tenant portal 'Your NPH'. You can register for this on our website.

The NPH website [www.nph.org.uk](http://www.nph.org.uk) has lots of information - you can apply to keep pets, apply to make changes to your home, apply for a garage, report a repair and much more besides.



### Come and see us in person

You can visit us at the Guildhall - One Stop Shop, The Guildhall, St Giles Square, Northampton, NN1 1DE between 10am and 4pm Monday to Friday.



Or you can attend a drop-in session, see page 9 for the list of sessions.

## How to access our services

### Questions about your home or tenancy

Your Housing Officer can help you with questions about your home and your tenancy. If you aren't sure who your Housing Officer is you can call the Contact Centre to ask or check our website here: [www.nph.org.uk/your-home/your-housing-officer/](http://www.nph.org.uk/your-home/your-housing-officer/) To talk to your Housing Officer please call us or visit us and we'll put you in touch.



### Supporting you

We offer a support service that can help you with budgeting, claiming benefits, settling you into your new home, signposting to other services and all manner of support to help you maintain your tenancy.

You can self-refer to this service by calling us, visiting us in person or by completing the form on our website here: [www.nph.org.uk/supporting-you/housing-support-services/](http://www.nph.org.uk/supporting-you/housing-support-services/)



### Paying your rent and financial support

You can pay your rent via Direct Debit, on our website, tenant portal or by calling the Contact Centre.

If you have any queries or need any financial support you can contact your Rent Income Officer by calling us or visiting us in person. To find out who your Rent Income Officer is you can check the list on the website here: [www.nph.org.uk/your-home/pay-your-rent](http://www.nph.org.uk/your-home/pay-your-rent) or the Contact Centre can help you get in touch.



### Keeping your home safe and well maintained

If you need to report a repair you can call us, visit us in person or register the repair yourself on our tenant portal or website here: [www.nph.org.uk/your-home/report-a-repair](http://www.nph.org.uk/your-home/report-a-repair)

Periodically to keep your home safe we will need to visit you for a safety check. We'll always write to you about this well in advance and you are welcome to contact us if the appointment does not suit you.

As your home gets older, we may need to replace or improve things such as bathrooms, kitchens, heating systems, windows and doors to make sure we meet the Decent Homes Standard. This is part of our planned programme of investment and again, we'll write to you about this well in advance.



### Give us your feedback

It's important to us that you can let us know when something has gone right but also when something has gone wrong. You can give us feedback on our website here: [www.nph.org.uk/about/give-us-feedback](http://www.nph.org.uk/about/give-us-feedback), call us or visit us in person.



### Get involved

There are lots of ways that residents can get involved. You can find out more about volunteering on our website here: [www.nph.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer-with-us/](http://www.nph.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer-with-us/)





# Investing in your neighbourhoods

## Improving Ecton Lane Travellers site

Residents at NPH managed Ecton Lane Travellers site have recently received improvement works to their facilities as part of our ongoing commitment to provide all NPH customers with a safe environment to live.

It is NPH's responsibility to maintain the site which is host to several plots for residents to pitch their own mobile home. In return for their pitch and service fees, residents can expect NPH to:

- **maintain the base on which mobile homes are stationed**
- **provide and maintain electricity and water supplies**
- **repair and maintain any utility blocks**
- **repair and maintain access roads and pathways to the site**

As part of our ongoing investment programme, last year the utility blocks were identified as being due for improvement. Following a survey of the site, the main improvements carried out were:

- **each plot received the option for new kitchen and shower facilities**
- **upgraded electrics in the utility rooms**

- **a new safer entrance to the communal electric cupboard**

Rebecca is the NPH Officer who manages the site and says the improvements have been well received. She told us "The small Traveller community has lived here peacefully for many years and are largely self-sufficient. However, the provision of essential amenities such as electricity and clean water means they don't have to worry. Overall, residents are pleased with the improvements and have peace of mind that the site is maintained to a good standard."

As part of our commitment to meet the Decent Homes Standard, we deliver a rolling programme of planned investment to our homes and neighbourhoods across Northampton. This includes refurbishing and modernising existing homes. Tenants don't need to do anything to become eligible for works. When your home is eligible, we will write to you to let you know what work we are planning to do in your home.

For more information about NPH's planned investment programme, visit [www.nph.org.uk/about/neighbourhood-investment](http://www.nph.org.uk/about/neighbourhood-investment)

**A kitchen facility after improvement**



# Cladding update

**NPH's cladding project remains on schedule and the current phase to remove the remaining cladding is in full swing.**



Last year, changes to legislation meant that some types of cladding commonly used across the UK no longer met government safety standards. So urgent plans had to be put in place for the cladding to be removed at the earliest opportunity. We responded immediately and arranged for surveys to happen that would tell us what type of cladding was on our mid-rise and high-rise blocks.

Whilst we waited for the results of the surveys, to ensure the safety and peace of mind for our tenants, we decided to go ahead and remove cladding from the walkways of all the affected blocks. In Autumn 2023 the walkways of nine blocks were cleared of cladding. Walkways were treated as a priority, to ensure the safety of all tenants in the event of a fire emergency.

Since the removal of the cladding from walkways in phase one the affected blocks have been safe to live in (according to the strict fire safety guidelines set out by the Government and the Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service). There are no safety concerns about the blocks of flats affected by cladding works since the completion of phase one.

Phase two of the works, which involves the removal of the remaining cladding on the blocks, commenced late last year. By the summer of this year, all the cladding will have been removed from seven of the nine blocks.

The remaining two blocks are our two tallest blocks - they are registered with the Building Safety Regulator (BSR) and to carry out the removal of the cladding we need approval to be granted by them. This system is known as the Gateway Process which means a gateway application needs to be submitted to the BSR before any works can commence. We will update residents living in those blocks when the BSR have given us approval to go ahead.

As soon as the plans have been approved the second phase will begin. NPH are currently working with West Northamptonshire Council to plan for the final phase of the project, which will consider what should happen once all the cladding has been removed. When these plans are confirmed we look forward to sharing them with our residents.

If you have any concerns around cladding, please don't hesitate to contact us on **0300 330 7003**.



# Goodbye to the NPH community bus, hello to drop-in sessions

For the last few years, the focal point for our community engagement has been the NPH Community Bus. It's been popular with a small number of people who really look forward to its regular stops. However, we're keen to make our engagement as accessible as we can. So, we've shifted our focus to engaging where our residents already are and have launched a wide range of face-to-face drop-in sessions to replace the bus service.

So, while the NPH bus has made its last stop, there will still be plenty of ways to engage with us where you live. Our resident drop-in sessions are free to all NPH residents, you don't need to make an appointment and we can help you with advice and practical support about:

- **Budgeting**
- **Claiming benefits**
- **Settling you into a new home**
- **Signposting you to other specialist services and support providers**
- **Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)**
- **Rent advice**
- **Reporting a repair**
- **Mutual exchange**
- **And much more besides**





### **Bellinge Community House**

**When** - on the last Thursday of each month

**Time** - 12pm to 2pm

**Address** - Bellinge Community House, Billingmead Square, Northampton, NN3 9AQ

### **Blackthorn Community Centre**

**When** - on the first Thursday of each month

**Time** - 10am to 12pm

**Address** - Blackthorn Community Centre, Longmead Court, Northampton, NN3 8QD

### **Briar Hill Community Centre**

**When** - every other Wednesday

**Time** - 12pm to 2pm

**Address** - Briar Hill Community Centre, 4 The Springs Walk, Northampton, NN4 8SX

### **Dallington, Cardigan Close Community Hub**

**When** - on the third Thursday of each month

**Time** - 10am to 12pm

**Address** - Cardigan Close Community Hub, Cardigan Close, Northampton, NN5 7DH

### **Duston Community Centre**

**When** - on the third Monday of each month

**Time** - 10am to 12pm

**Address** - Duston Community Centre, Pendle Road, Northampton, NN5 6DT

### **Far Cotton, St Mary's Church**

**When** - on the second Thursday of each month

**Time** - 12:30pm to 2:30pm

**Address** - St Mary's Church, Towcester Road, Far Cotton, Northampton, NN4 8EZ

### **Kings Heath, The Paint Shop**

**When** - on the second Monday of each month

**Time** - 10am to 12pm

**Address** - The Paint Shop, 12 Park Square, Kings Heath, Northampton, NN5 7LQ

### **Kingsthorpe, Liburd Room**

**When** - on the last Monday of each month

**Time** - 10am to 12pm

**Address** - Liburd Community Hub, Wilton Road, Northampton, NN2 7SB

### **Spring Boroughs Community Hub**

**When** - on the first Tuesday of each month

**Time** - 1pm to 3pm

**Address** - Spring Boroughs Community Hub, St Peters House, Bath Street, Northampton, NN1 2SH

### **St James Community Centre**

**When** - on the first Monday of each month

**Time** - 10am to 12pm

**Address** - St James Community Centre, 144 St James' Road, Northampton, NN5 5LQ

### **Thorplands Community Hub**

**When** - on the third Thursday of each month

**Time** - 10am to 12pm

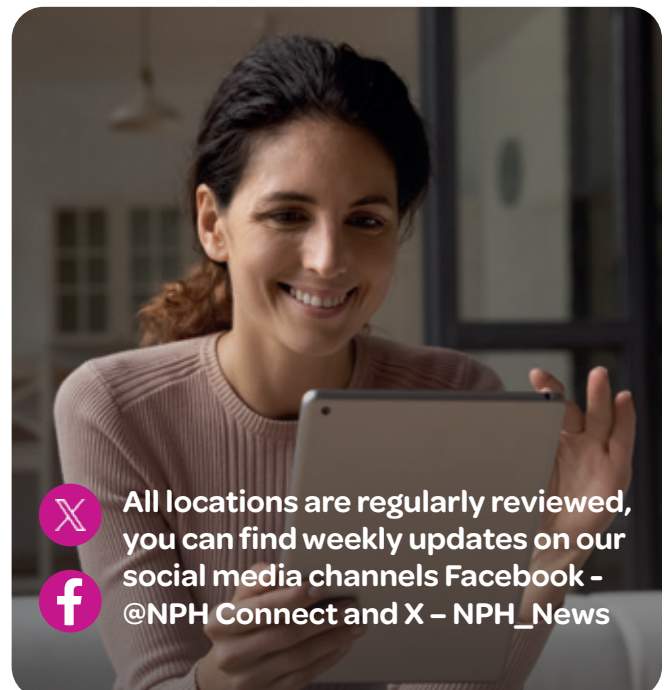
**Address** - Thorplands Community Hub, Farm Field Court, Northampton, NN3 8AQ

### **Town Centre, Bridge**

**When** - every other Wednesday

**Time** - 1pm to 3pm

**Address** - Bridge Substance Misuse Centre, 63c Gold St, Northampton NN1 1RA



All locations are regularly reviewed, you can find weekly updates on our social media channels Facebook - @NPH Connect and X - NPH\_News

Our quarterly engagement cafés are also a great opportunity to meet with us. See page 3 for details of the next one on Thursday 22nd May.

# How we are governed

**NPH is a private limited company which is wholly owned by West Northamptonshire Council (WNC). NPH manages over 11,000 social houses across Northampton on behalf of WNC. There is a management agreement in place which details the services that NPH provide, and we are given a management fee by WNC to pay for those services. NPH has its own board which is there to manage company strategy, to scrutinise performance and risk management, and constructively challenge what we do.**

The NPH Board comprises of 4 independent Board Members, 4 tenant Board Members and 4 council nominated Board Members. This split ensures that different stakeholder viewpoints are heard; board decisions are always decided by a majority vote to ensure fairness. NPH complies with the National Federation of Housing code of governance as this is considered to be best practice.

The Board Members have the strategic overview of NPH, whilst the operational management (how we are run every day) sits with the Executive Management Team (EMT).

Board Members serve for a 3-year term, up to a maximum of 6 years and this rotation means that the board stays fresh with current skillsets and

knowledge within the board. When vacancies arise for independent and tenant Board Members a full recruitment process is carried out to get the right levels of skills to provide the scrutiny, challenge and support needed for the role.

You can find out more about the NPH Board and the NPH Executive Management Team on our website here: [www.nph.org.uk/about/meet-the-team/](http://www.nph.org.uk/about/meet-the-team/)

Board meeting minutes are always published on our website for full transparency, you are welcome to look through them, you'll find them in the Publications Scheme on our website.

NPH is excited to be launching a new tenant led committee in 2025 called the Service Quality Committee. The new committee will comprise of 8 tenants and 2 tenant Board Members and will be chaired by a tenant Board Member.

The committee will have a central role in reviewing what NPH does, scrutinising the way we do things and directly helping us to improve and re-design services where improvement is needed. The work of the committee will feed into the board ensuring that the customer voice is central to the work that we do. Please see our website for details about the new committee at [www.nph.org.uk/sqc](http://www.nph.org.uk/sqc).

## Who's on the board



**Andrew Woods**  
Chair of the Board



**David Godfrey**  
Board Member Tenant



**Xanthia Ncube**  
Board Member Tenant



**Suzanne Williamson**  
Board Member  
Independent



**Clive Williams**  
Board Member  
Independent



**Rakesh Thakarar**  
Board Member  
Independent  
Vice Chair



**Rebecca Purnell**  
Board Member  
Council Nominee



**Jon Sawyer**  
Board Member  
Council Nominee



**Simon Lewis**  
Board Member  
Council Nominee



**Connor Salter**  
Board Member  
Tenant

**\*2 positions to be filled:** Board Member Council Nominee & Board Member Tenant



# NPH accredited for excellent support services

**NPH's Housing Tenancy Support Team have recently gained reaccreditation from erosh (Emerging Role of Sheltered Housing). This is a great result for the team.**



Erosh is an industry recognised accreditation and NPH took part in a rigorous assessment process to be reaccredited. The Erosh Independent Living Standards accreditation enables housing providers to demonstrate the quality of their independent living accommodation and services against nationally recognised standards so it's a real accomplishment to gain reaccreditation.

The assessor was so impressed with the breadth and standard of our services that we have been asked to present some best practice workshops with other organisations in May this year - a real testament to the quality of the service being provided by our colleagues.

In the report, erosh wrote "The levels of support provided within the different teams is significant and many examples of good practice that would be of interest to the sector and it would be hoped erosh could work with NPH to promote the work that is being done, through case studies and an online good practice event."

The assessment involved a more in-depth look at our customer journey which makes the result even more impressive. Director of Customers, Nicky McKenzie explained why this result is so important for our residents, she told us: "We are proud to have been recognised in such

a positive way. The erosh accreditation demonstrates the emphasis NPH puts on providing a high standard support service for residents. Hopefully this reassures our residents and gives them confidence in the services we provide as some of the best in the country."

Previously our erosh accreditation was achieved for the support and welfare team but this time around we submitted an application which covered the wider tenancy support team including rehousing, lettings, support, intervention and welfare services.

Kelly Fitzgerald, Head of Tenancy Support said: ***"A huge thank you to the team for all their hard work and support in helping us achieve the reaccreditation. The erosh accreditor noted lots of best practice in the services we offer and the way that we work together, it's a real credit to us that he has asked us to share what we are doing with other organisations. I'm really happy that we are all being recognised for the hard work that we do for our customers."***

**Find out more about erosh on their website here: [www.erosh.co.uk](http://www.erosh.co.uk)**

# Meet the residents

## Meet Lewis

**Lewis lives at one of our older persons accommodation schemes. These schemes are self-contained flats designed for independent living and there is also a communal residents lounge. Your Voice met Lewis to find out more about him and how he is involved with his community.**

Lewis enjoys living at Eleonore House in Weston Favell and has been there for the last 14 years. Some residents at Eleonore House like to socialise and others don't. Lewis likes a get together and volunteers his time getting entertainment booked in at the communal lounge every few months. He particularly enjoys booking live singers to entertain the residents. Residents have a coffee morning every week in the residents lounge and enjoy a bit of a party at Easter and Christmas.

Lewis is Northampton born and bred and before moving to Eleonore House had lived in the same house since he was a small child – the tenancy passing from his Mum and Dad to him. Unfortunately, Lewis suffered from ill health and that meant the move to Eleonore House 14 years ago, but he doesn't regret the move.

Lewis has suffered various health setbacks over the years but remains resolutely positive and determined to get the best out of life. Lewis is one of the oldest surviving heart transplant patients - he received a heart transplant 34 years ago and is still going strong! His surgeon was the famous pioneer of cardiothoracic surgery, Professor Sir Magdi Yacoub at Harefield Hospital. Lewis was invited to a Pride of Britain Awards to help present the award to Professor Yacoub, who has conducted over 2,000 heart transplants. At the awards ceremony Lewis even got to sit next to Princess Diana!

The heart transplant for Lewis was life changing and to give back to Harefield Hospital he became the Chairperson of the Harefield Transplant Club, a registered charity that supports people at Harefield Hospital who have had, or are waiting



for, heart or lung transplants; the charity also supports patients' families. Lewis was the Chairperson for 7 years and enjoyed it very much, he also was on the Board of Governors at Harefield Hospital for 4 years.

His work with the Transplant Club means that Lewis has an extensive network of other transplant survivors and stays connected with many to this day, it's an exceptional group of people.

Since his heart transplant Lewis has had a kidney transplant and stomach cancer but neither has knocked him down for long. He likes to keep busy and make the most of his time, Lewis said ***"I have a positive mental attitude, I just get on with it! I appreciate the health I have and always make the best of it."***

Lewis is an inspiration and reminds us to make the best of our health. He is so grateful for the organ donations that have saved his life and was keen to use this article to remind everyone to speak to their relatives about how they feel about organ donation, and to register to the donor transplant list. As Lewis says – ***"Don't take your organs to heaven, heaven knows they are needed here!"***

**You can find out more about organ donation at this website here: [www.organdonation.nhs.uk](http://www.organdonation.nhs.uk)**



## Meet Jack

**Jack is one of our volunteers at The Paint Shop, he is 21 years old and lives in Bellingham in an NPH home with his parents and siblings. Your Voice spoke to Jack to find out more about him and his story.**

When Jack was at secondary school, he became unhappy and started missing more and more school - as a result he didn't sit his GCSEs and he ended up with no qualifications. Missing so much school really affected Jack's confidence and during this time he entered the mentoring programme at Free2Talk in Kings Heath. Free2Talk is a community interest group that provides youth services including mentoring, youth groups, creative workshops, online courses and much more. Jack gained useful skills from the mentoring he received and as a natural next step Free2Talk suggested that Jack consider volunteering at The Paint Shop to help build his confidence.

When he was 18 years old Jack started (reluctantly at first!) volunteering at The Paint Shop. Initially his mentor from Free2Talk came with him and Jack was, for the first week at least, too shy to talk to customers. But slowly his confidence started to grow, and he was able to start helping customers without his Free2Talk mentor. Jack's been volunteering at The Paint Shop for three years now and has no plans to leave. In 2024 NPH awarded Jack an 'Unsung Hero' award for his volunteering services as he is now such a helpful, valued and integral part of the team. Being at The Paint Shop has been transformative for Jack and has really given him the skills and confidence to consider additional opportunities.

Having renewed confidence has meant that in the last few years Jack has enrolled at Northampton College and has now passed his Maths GCSE and is currently studying for his English GCSE.

After benefiting so much from his mentoring experience at Free2Talk Jack has a real passion for helping young people and it was this that encouraged him to get involved with the Young Ambassadors project. The project was led by Free2Talk with the support of Young Northants and The National Youth Agency and involved Jack attending youth projects across the county to talk to the young people attending about their experiences and recommend real changes to



youth services in the county. It was an important project and served to encourage Jack to seek a job in youth work.

Jack has now got a paid job at Free2Talk and runs several different clubs with young people which he really enjoys. The activities carried out at the clubs are varied but include homework club, arts and crafts, outside play, games and recently podcasting. Jack said ***"It's important that young people aren't forgotten about and that services are put in place for them, if we don't give young people anything to do that is when they get into trouble. I really enjoy doing youth work and having used the services myself really helps me relate to the young people who come along."***

Jack has ambitions to continue with youth work, he feels like he has found his niche. Jack will also keep volunteering at The Paint Shop as long as he can. It was great to talk to Jack about all the great work he is doing with young people in Northamptonshire.

To find out more about the services Free2Talk provide for young people visit their website here: [www.free2talkcic.org](http://www.free2talkcic.org)

The Paint Shop, in Kings Heath, is run by NPH's community interest company Happy to Help. It is run by volunteers; it rescues left over paint and anyone is welcome to shop there at low prices. To find out more about The Paint Shop and see their opening hours visit: [www.nph.org.uk/get-involved/the-paint-shop](http://www.nph.org.uk/get-involved/the-paint-shop)

To find out more about how to volunteer at The Paint Shop visit [www.nph.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer-with-us](http://www.nph.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer-with-us)

# Resident evicted because of anti-social behaviour

Every resident deserves to feel safe and happy in their home. NPH will not tolerate anti-social behaviour (ASB) and, in partnership with other agencies, we will investigate all forms of ASB.

We have recently obtained an anti-social behaviour injunction against a tenant from Beaumont House. The tenant in question was responsible for serious and ongoing anti-social behaviour in and around the building. The many ASB reports we received from other residents living in the building involved allegations of drug dealing and drug taking in the property and shouting, screaming and intimidation towards other residents from visitors to the property. During several serious incidents, the Police became involved and had to visit the property.

Beaumont House has over sixty residents and many of them were impacted severely by the behaviour of the tenant in question. Residents told us that due to the anti-social behaviour they were sometimes scared to leave their properties, and it was affecting them negatively in their own homes.

The eviction took place on Friday 24th January 2025 and was conducted by court bailiffs.

Due to the serious nature of the injunction if the tenant or their visitors return to the property or act in a threatening manner they will be arrested.

We know that the vast majority of our residents live peacefully with their neighbours, and we want everyone to feel safe in their home, which is why we will not hesitate to act against any tenant who is proved to be acting in an anti-social way. NPH tenants are responsible for the behaviour of all their household members, guests, and visitors – so even if a tenant is not involved in anti-social behaviour themselves, they are still ultimately responsible and could face serious consequences for any anti-social behaviour associated with their property.

Since the eviction took place residents have confirmed there has been an improvement in the block. NPH recognises the helpful evidence from residents and support from partner agencies helped to achieve this result, proving that supporting and working together can make a difference.

**To find out more about how to report ASB please visit our website or call our Contact Centre on 0300 330 7003.**





# Livingwell community groups

**Our popular community hubs continue to offer wellbeing activities and social opportunities throughout the year. We recently caught up with Dawn Travill, co-founding Director of Living Well Occupational Therapy (Living Well OT), who holds different sessions at four of our community hubs.**

In February Dawn invited us to the 'Cognition Café' that takes place at our Parsons Meade Community Hub in West Hunsbury. All are welcome to attend and people from all over Northampton come along and spend time in the company of others and challenge themselves with a puzzle or crossword together.



The Cognition Café is a group for anyone wanting to take part in activities to engage their mind. Dawn told us how ***"it's so important for our mental wellbeing and brain dexterity to exercise the mind"***.

The primary focus of all Living Well OT's groups is support for individuals living with chronic or long-term conditions. They offer guidance and practical support to enable those affected to 'live well' with their condition. The support they offer aims to deal with all the different ways life can be impacted because of a chronic health condition, such as social wellbeing finances and relationships.

We met Rick at the Cognition Café who was attending for the first time with his wife Monica, who is supporting him after suffering a stroke last year. Rick said ***"it is too easy to get into a rut with just watching the TV and sitting on the sofa but I am very glad I came."*** He said everyone has been very welcoming and he is looking forward to visiting again soon. We also spoke to Brian who has been a regular member

from the very beginning, he told us he comes for the "company and the crossword puzzles". He highly recommends the group for anyone who needs friendly support and some motivation to get out of the house.

We also visited Livingwell OT's 'Get Up & Go' class at Arlbury Road Community Hub. It's a low-intensity exercise class for those who want to improve their mobility and strengthen muscles. Dawn explained "these classes are a lifeline for some of the participants. Low to no cost activities such as these are rare and the support we get from NPH is invaluable. Without the use of their hubs, we wouldn't be able to run as many classes or we would have to consider raising the fees."



It's clear from speaking to the participants how valued Dawn's support is, everyone leaves uplifted and smiling. If you would like to find out more about what Living Well OT has to offer, you can visit their website at **[www.livingwelloccupationaltherapy.co.uk](http://www.livingwelloccupationaltherapy.co.uk)** or contact them directly by email: **[enquiries@livingwellot.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@livingwellot.co.uk)** or telephone **07512 187404**.

Did you know our community hubs are free to hire for residents and local groups offering free or low cost activities to the community? Visit our website for more information **[www.nph.org.uk/get-involved/community-hubs](http://www.nph.org.uk/get-involved/community-hubs)**

# Maintaining communal spaces all year round

The NPH grounds maintenance team works hard all year round to keep your communal green spaces clear and tidy. NPH only maintains communal green spaces, residents are responsible for looking after their own gardens.

Grounds maintenance follows the seasons and at certain times of year the team will concentrate on different aspects. Below is a schedule showing what the team will concentrate on in each month on communal areas we manage.

As we are now in Spring grass cutting will start again and knotweed control will start. It's always a balance for us between managing the grounds we are responsible for and the budget available. We look at Housemark standards (which is national guidance about what standards we should meet) and we use that as our rule of thumb for the services we can provide within budget.

## Who manages the land outside my home?

We know that sometimes it isn't clear if your communal space is maintained by us or by West Northamptonshire Council (WNC). As a rough rule of

thumb if the grounds are next to an NPH maintained block of flats it's likely to be maintained by NPH, if the communal space is outside a house, it may be managed by WNC.

You can get more information about how WNC maintain grounds and report any grounds maintenance issues to them on their website here: [www.westnorthants.gov.uk](http://www.westnorthants.gov.uk). To report a grounds maintenance issue to us at NPH you can email: [groundsmaintenance@nph.org.uk](mailto:groundsmaintenance@nph.org.uk)

## Subsidised gardening service

If your land isn't a communal space that NPH manages you can pay our subsidised NPH gardener to come and help you manage your garden. Find out more details by emailing: [happytohelp@nph.org.uk](mailto:happytohelp@nph.org.uk)

## Grounds Maintenance Schedule

	Grass Cutting	Pruning	Hedge Cutting	Weed Control	Leaf Clearing	Litter Picking	Knotweed Control	Tree Surgery
January			✓	✓		✓		✓
February			✓	✓		✓		✓
March	✓			✓		✓		✓
April	✓			✓		✓		
May	✓		Shaping	✓		✓	✓	
June	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	
July	✓	✓	Shaping	✓		✓	✓	
August	✓			✓		✓	✓	
September	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	
October	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
November			✓	✓	✓	✓		
December			✓	✓	✓	✓		



# Keeping homes safe



**We want you to feel comfortable in your home and understand that you deserve your privacy. This is balanced with our responsibility as your social housing management company to keep your home safe and in good condition. There are certain times when you do need to allow us into your home to carry out essential checks and visits.**

Essential visits cover a wide remit but include:

- **Essential compliance checks as per the schedule recently posted to you and on our website**
- **Inspecting the condition of your home (including carrying out a stock condition survey)**
- **Carrying out repairs**
- **Dealing with infestation**
- **Planned improvement work to your home**
- **Alterations or other works to your home or an adjoining property**
- **For emergencies**
- **To deal with any suspected health and safety risks**

We'll work with you and try to arrange a mutually convenient time where possible for these visits and for non-emergency visits we'll always give you at least three working days written notice.

We so appreciate that the majority of our residents do allow us access for these essential visits but sometimes we meet residents who don't want to allow us into their home.

This is a difficult situation because we are legally responsible, and these checks and visits are essential to keep you safe.

There are various reasons why some residents may be anxious about allowing access into their homes- here are some of the reasons that residents might be reluctant and how we can help:

- **Rent arrears**  
If you have fallen behind with your rent please don't be embarrassed. Our financial inclusion team can support you with debt issues and provide guidance on benefit processes
- **Hoarding or a messy home**  
NPH staff and those working on our behalf are professionals. It is not our role to judge or criticise your home or lifestyle and we've seen all sorts before
- **You'd like someone else there with you**  
If you would like a family member to be present for a visit or inspection, please just let us know
- **Flexible appointment times**  
We always give at least 3 working days written notice before an inspection
- **Health issues**  
If you have health equipment in your home or concerns about protecting your health, let us know so we can make reasonable adjustments before a visit
- **Language barrier**  
If English is not your first language, let us know and we can arrange a telephone translator in your preferred language

In the very rare instance where a resident will not allow us access to their property and will not work with us to find a solution, we do have the power to take court action to get an injunction to enter. In a recent case where a resident hadn't allowed us access to carry out an essential check the Judge ruled that the resident would need to pay £1200 costs to NPH so the penalties can be severe.

To avoid such action please work with us to arrange access at a mutually convenient time and please don't ignore our letters if we have asked you to make an appointment. If you have special circumstances or are worried about the visit and if we can make it easier for you in some way, please do contact us to discuss it on 0300 330 7003 and we'll work with you to find a solution.

# Improving our services



## Repairs service update

We appreciate that the repairs service we offer is very important to you and that when something needs a repair you just want it fixed as quickly as possible. Because the service is so important we have really focused on improving it in the last year.

Improvements have included: better quality data, operational dashboards and a higher level of scrutiny so we can manage the service more effectively. We are investing in the team to recruit more skilled tradespersons so we can get to you more quickly. In addition, NPH is contract managing its contractors in a more robust, collaborative way to ensure a better customer experience.

### So how are we doing?

- We've hugely reduced appointment waiting times for repairs – as an example of our progress in May 2024 it took approximately **90 days** for an appointment for a repair. In January 2025 it took approximately, on average, **45 days** for an electrical repairs appointment, **18 days** for a carpentry repairs appointment and **9 days** for a plumbing repairs appointment. We will continue focusing on this to give you the best possible standard of repairs service and get to you as quickly as we can
- The vast majority of emergency repairs appointments are carried out within 24 hours
- We check national benchmarking figures (showing repairs performance for social housing providers across the UK) to check how we are doing. Our repairs performance against national benchmarking is good which is encouraging
- In January 2025, **95.89%** of repairs were completed within target timescales, which puts us amongst the top performers

- And **97.65%** of appointments were made and kept
- In January 2025, **99.75%** of emergency repairs were completed within target
- In January 2025, **91%** of repairs completed in first visit

And we know that with many residents the repairs service improvement has not gone unnoticed. Here are some tenant satisfaction measures from customers showing how satisfied they are with our repairs service:

- In April 2024 satisfaction with repairs was **62%**, which has increased to **72%** in January 2025
- And satisfaction with the time taken for the repair was **55%** in April and increased to **64%** in January 2025

We also ask 100 tenants who have had a repair completed each month how they feel about the service received. Since April 2024, 1,000 tenants have been surveyed and the results were:

- **87%** overall satisfaction
- **86%** were satisfied with ease of reporting
- **86%** said we were easy to deal with
- **94%** were satisfied with the attitude, treatment and tidying up of the trade person
- **91%** satisfied with the quality of the work, and
- **89%** were satisfied with being kept informed

We thank all those that have taken part in these calls and given up your time to provide us with your feedback, it is really helping us to inform and shape our repairs improvement journey.





# Mayors Fund deliveries for residents

**The Mayors Fund has been in existence since 1907 – in that first year 140 gifts were given to residents of Northampton who were bedridden.**

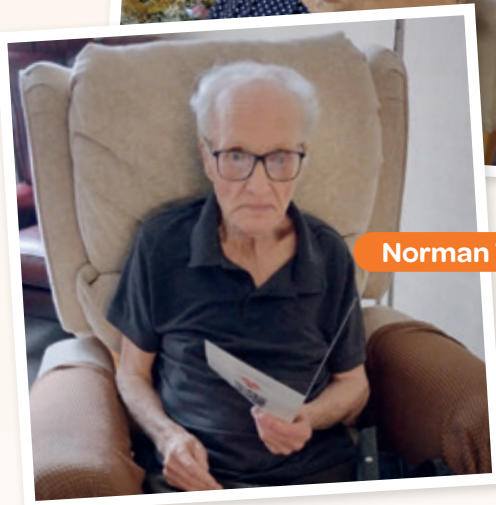
The fund raises money each year to share gifts among bedridden, housebound or severely isolated residents of Northampton. Donors to the fund include the Rotary Club of Northampton. Residents in the county are identified by organisations like NPH and Age UK, then nominated to receive a gift.

The gift consists of a card from the town Mayor and a £30 cash payment, which the receiver can spend as they wish. Here are some photos of residents Jackie and Norman receiving their cards late last year.

Jackie Jones



Norman Wheeler



# The power of food waste recycling: a greener future starts in your kitchen

Did you know that the simple act of recycling your food waste can help the environment and your community? It's true! By committing to this easy habit, you're not just clearing out your kitchen scraps – you're reducing your carbon footprint and paving the way for a greener, more sustainable future for Northampton.



## Why Recycle Food Waste?

- It is collected every week, free of charge
- It reduces the smelly waste filling up your rubbish bin
- It is easy and hygienic to do
- The food waste is turned into green energy and compost, so it is very good for the environment



## 3 Simple Steps to Start Recycling Your Food Waste

1. Order a free kitchen caddy and outdoor food bin from WNC if you don't have one from: [www.westnorthants.gov.uk/newbin](http://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/newbin)
2. If you wish to line your caddy, any bag will do, including plastic. WNC sell rolls of 30 caddy liners in our libraries for £1.
3. Check what food waste can be recycled and fill your kitchen caddy. Once full, tie the liner and place in the outdoor food bin for collection on your normal collection day.

Food recycling is currently available for all residents who live in houses and will be coming soon for those who live in flats with communal bins.

So, next time you peel an apple or brew a cup of tea remember: your food waste has power—recycle it!