

GROVE HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

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NEWSLETTER JUNE 2015

GROVE CHAIRPERSON CHANGES

Alderman David Browne and Philip Oliver swapped roles in May. Alderman Browne had served for many years as the Association's chairperson and is now vice-chair while Philip Oliver is now chairperson.

In the past year we have also welcomed two experienced new board members, John Mohan and Ian Hackney.

REGULATOR FINDS GROVE "SATISFACTORY"

All housing associations receive regular inspections from the Department for Social Development. The result from Grove's recent inspection is a "Satisfactory Assurance" rating in the 4 areas of Governance, Finance, Property Management and Property Development, providing an overall Satisfactory rating. This is the next to highest rating.

TENANCY FRAUD

Tenancy fraud refers to a situation where a person has obtained a social housing tenancy using false statements or as a tenant he or she has breached certain terms of their Tenancy Agreement. The result is that people on the waiting list are denied access to properties that should be available.

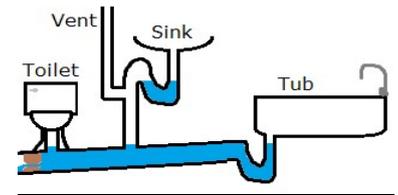
Breaching Tenancy Agreement terms includes things like: Not actually living in the house, letting a family member or other person have the house without Grove's permission, or when the tenant dies trying to succeed to the tenancy when not eligible for it. Our Regulators now require housing associations to report any tenancy fraud to them.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS

The Association has some funding promised and is seeking further funding to turn the poor quality open space between Ritchie St, Ivan St and the railway wall into a community garden. Please come to the office if you want to see the draft plan. It is hoped that a contractor will be on site before the end of the year.

Grove's board is keen to be involved in projects that benefit the community in relation to the environment of the area and with education and job creation. If anyone has suggestions about how we may be able to help, please contact us.

BLOCKED DRAINS & BABY WIPES



We had to remove a golf club once that was blocking a sewer, but a much more common cause is baby wipes, nappies and items like them. Please do not flush these down toilets as they do not disintegrate like toilet tissue and can cause blockages in yours or other peoples' drains.

MAKING SIGNIFICANT HOME ALTERATIONS

If you want to make major alterations to your home such as to remove walls or fit new kitchens, doors or bathroom suites, please ask Grove first. We can hopefully agree, but we just need to check that the work will not cause any difficulties to you, Grove or future tenants.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

We have had reports of children and young people throwing stones against houses and cars and scraping cars. If you see such things, please stop the children if you can or report them to their parents, the PSNI or us. We appreciate that most children and parents are careful.

IF YOUR CENTRAL HEATING SYSTEM STOPS WORKING

- Check there is gas in the meter or oil in the tank.
- Check the thermostat (usually on the hall wall). If the dwelling temperature is above the thermostat setting the heating will not come on.
- Check the time clock to be sure it shows the heating is set to come on.
- Check if the normal lights on the boiler are on.
- If the heating still does not work, please call Grove.

RENT

If you are having difficulty paying your normal rent regularly or keeping to an agreement to pay off arrears, please contact the office immediately so we can work something out together before matters get worse.

If in receipt of Housing Benefit, all changes of circumstances, such as people moving into or out of your home, need to be reported to the Housing Executive. Grove has an obligation to report changes if you do not. Please also be aware that our board has asked that arrears over £1,000 which are not being cleared are taken to court.



IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS

Grove out of hours repairs (Fold Telecare): 0800 731 3081

Gas emergency service	0800 002 001
Electricity supply faults	0845 7643 643
Police Service of N Ireland – emergency:	999
Police Service of N Ireland – non-emergency:	0845 600 8000
Crimestoppers	0800 555111
Water Service – emergency/flooding	0845 744 0088
Roads Service – flooding incident line	0300 2000 100
Citizen’s Advice NI	028 9064 1120
Housing Rights Service	028 9024 5460
Women’s Aid Helpline	0800 917 1414
City Council Noise Hotline	028 9037 3006
Reporting dog fouling	028 9027 0431

OFFICE HOURS

Doors are open Monday to Thursday from 9.30 to 1.00 and 1.45 to 4.30. On Fridays doors are open from 9.30 to 1.00.

Phones will be answered 9.00 to 1.00 and 1.45 to 5.00 (4.30 on Fridays). You can leave a message on the answering phone outside these hours.

If you would like this Newsletter in a different format such as larger print, please let us know.

Reminders:

Bogus callers

Most people who call at your home will be genuine. Some however may want to trick their way in. PSNI advise:

- Lock your back door before answering the front.
- Use a door chain if you have one.

- Ask for and take a note of their identification. Get the person to wait outside and close the door. Phone “Quick Check” at 0800 013 2290. They will check the person is genuine with the company they claim to be from.

- If in doubt, keep them out!

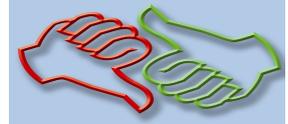
Contents insurance

Grove insures the building structure, but not what you own. There are different levels of contents insurance, with quite low premiums for limited amounts of cover. We recommend that you take out contents insurance cover if you do not already have it.

Fire escape windows

You will have one or more upstairs windows big enough to escape through in emergency. Please check they open and close properly and tell us if there are any problems. Also, do not block access to them with anything.

COMPLAINTS
COMMENTS
COMPLIMENTS



If you have complaints, comments or compliments about Grove, please let us know about them in person or by phone, letter or email so we know where to improve.