

Nottingham Council Housing News

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Welcome to the latest edition of Nottingham Council Housing News

This edition is packed full of stories and information just for you.

On **pages four and five**, we've got information about Universal Credit migration and what you need to do if you get a letter letting you know the date by which you'll need to start claiming Universal Credit.

As winter starts to bite – we've got useful tips on how to avoid frozen or burst pipes and what you can do to reduce condensation from building in your home. **See pages six and seven.**

In the lead up to Christmas and with the cost of living, we know it can be really tough for many of us. We've got some great ideas on **pages 14 and 15** on ways you can save money at Christmas – and on **pages 16 and 17**, we've got advice on what you can do to make sure you have a happy and safe Christmas.

And we've got details of our services over the festive period on the back page.

This edition also includes a special eight page report on what you've told us from the first two Tenant Satisfaction Measures surveys and what we're doing to improve. And lots, lots more!



New website address!

Time to update your bookmarks – our website address has changed.

If you want to find us, www.ncchousing.org.uk is the address you'll need. There's no change to the content and it's still the very best place to go for all the information you need about our services.



We hope you enjoy reading this edition and on behalf of everybody at Nottingham City Council Housing Services, we wish you a happy Christmas and a peaceful new year!

Universal Credit migration

Since September, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has started managed migration to Universal Credit and are writing to people whose tax credits or benefits are ending.

If you're of working age and currently receive any of these six benefits and tax credits, if you haven't already, you'll soon receive a Migration Notice letter:

- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA).

The letter will tell you the deadline date you have to claim Universal Credit. **If you don't apply by the deadline, the DWP will be able to stop your existing claim.**

Guidance on what you need to do when you receive this letter can be found on the Government's website, www.gov.uk/welfare/universal-credit – click on the 'Universal Credit if you receive a Migration Notice letter' link.



Help to Claim at Citizens Advice

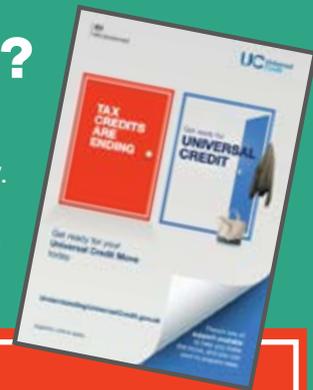
If you get a Migration Notice letter, we advise that you call the Help to Claim team at Citizens Advice as soon as you can for help to make the claim and to find out when would be the best date to claim. You can call an advisor for FREE by calling **0800 144 8444** between 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday.

Our Tenancy Sustainment Team can also offer you advice if you've had your Notice but have not yet made a claim. You can contact them by calling **0115 915 4920**, emailing moneymatters@nottinghamcity.gov.uk or texting the word DOSH to **80800** for free, followed by your name and message, and we'll call you back.

Had a leaflet, but no letter?

If you receive a leaflet without a Migration Notice letter, you **do not** have to claim Universal Credit straight away.

Please speak to the Citizens Advice Help to Claim team for more advice.



Struggling?

Please also get in touch using the details above if you're struggling with paying your rent or with your finances in general. We know this time of year can put extra financial pressures on all of us. We're here to help.

Beating condensation and mould

It's the time of year where we close the windows and put the heating on – and this can lead to condensation, which in turn can mean that homes can feel damp and, in worst case scenarios, develop mould.

If you've spotted mould in your home, finding out what's causing it can allow you to take steps to stop it happening again. Condensation is one of the biggest mould-causing culprits, and something you can control easily.

It happens when moisture in the air hits cold windows and turns to water, usually because a lack of ventilation. It can happen on interior walls and other surfaces too, but it's more noticeable on windows. The main steps to take to stop condensation are ventilating your home and reducing moisture.

Ventilation

Opening a window and airing a room for 10 to 15 minutes a day will make a massive difference to the build-up of moisture – and the amount of condensation you get at this time of year. The window doesn't have to be opened wide, just putting it on the latch will work just fine.

Reducing moisture

There are things you can do to reduce the amount of moisture in your home:

- Put lids on pans and use the extractor fan while cooking.
- If you have a vented tumble dryer, make sure it's vented to the outdoors – and if you're drying clothes on radiators, make sure that all the moisture they give off as they dry can escape through an open window.
- You can get moisture collectors and absorbers at supermarkets or online – they're small plastic boxes containing (usually refillable) gel or crystals which absorb moisture when put near a window.

- Try and keep your home at a steady temperature. Condensation can be made worse by sudden rises and drops in temperature.
- Move furniture away from walls so that warm air can circulate.
- Don't use paraffin or bottled gas heaters.
- Put cold water in the bath before the hot water to reduce steam.
- Open the kitchen and bathroom windows when cooking or washing, so that steam can escape.
- Don't cover over any air vents, and make sure the ventilation slots at the top of your windows are clear and working.

Treating mould yourself

Mould is easy to treat, but you need to keep on top of it. As soon as you see mould in your home, start wiping down affected areas every day – you can get anti-mould spray from supermarkets and discount stores, and they really work.

Still got problems?

We want to work with you to safeguard your home against persistent damp and mould, to keep you and your family safe. We always take reports of damp and mould seriously, and we always act quickly to resolve the issue for you.

If you've tried treating mould yourself but it persists, please call us on **0115 915 2222**.

AVOID FROZEN OR BURST WATER PIPES THIS WINTER...

In the winter months, the chances of frozen and burst water pipes can increase.

Pipes or taps that might be exposed to freezing temperatures (garages, outside walls, gardens, sheds and lofts for example) are particularly at risk.

When it's cold, wrapping these pipes in lagging, cloths or towels can help to protect them. This also includes the white plastic pipe that runs from the boiler to the drain.

Leaving your heating on at a low setting will dramatically reduce this risk. If you're going out or away for a period of time, keep your heating on low and set your thermostat to 10 degrees.

It's also really important to know where your stop tap is (usually under your kitchen sink or in an airing cupboard) and to check that it's working, as you'll need to turn this off if you think you have a frozen pipe.

Call us on **0115 915 2222** if you're unsure.

What to do if you think a pipe has frozen

Turn the mains water supply off by turning off your stop tap. Then turn on any nearby cold taps to relieve the pressure on the frozen pipe.

Let the pipes thaw out naturally. DO NOT use direct heat, such as a flame. This can damage your pipes and is a fire risk. If the worst happens and your pipe does burst, call us immediately on **0115 915 2222**.

There's lots more information on our website at www.ncchousing.org.uk/frozen-water-pipes.

#liveandlearn at the Tenant Academy

One of the great things about being a Nottingham City Council tenant or leaseholder is that you can access our Tenant Academy for **FREE** training, qualifications or skills development that can help build your confidence or help you if you're looking for a job.

There really is something for everyone at the Tenant Academy. To find out the ways we can support you, email involved@nottinghamcity.gov.uk or call us on **0115 746 9100**. Here are just a few things coming up over the next few months that you can get involved in...

Beginners course to mindfulness

This two and a half hour beginner's course to mindfulness techniques will show you ways of reducing stress, managing anxiety and improving your own wellbeing. Email involved@nottinghamcity.gov.uk to find out more and to book on an upcoming course.



Dressmaking workshop

Run by Skilled Hands CIC – learn how to use a sewing machine, make simple straight stitches, finish seams and learn how to draft and model a garment professionally. Email involved@nottinghamcity.gov.uk to find out more.



Introduction to safeguarding adults

Thursday 11 January, from 10am to 12.30pm – online

Run by Nottingham CVS, this online course will give you an understanding of roles and responsibilities in the safeguarding of adults and how to respond to any safeguarding concerns you might have. Email involved@nottinghamcity.gov.uk to register.



Nottingham Works 4 You

If you or somebody you know are aged between 16 and 24 and are looking for extra help and support to find the right job or training, **Nottingham Works 4 You (NW4Y)** could be just the thing!

NW4Y is all about nurturing and developing your skills to open up doors to new opportunities, with help including:

- job searching
- writing a CV
- completing job applications
- preparing for interviews
- apprenticeships and training
- overcoming personal barriers.

To refer someone to NW4Y, or to find out more, email housingemployability@nottinghamcity.gov.uk or call **0115 746 9100** and ask to speak to a member of the Housing Employability team.

The Nottingham Works 4 You project is part funded by the European Social Fund.



Supporting Paula's independence



All of our independent living communities have an Activity Co-ordinator, who's role it is to support and encourage residents to take part in and organise activities.

Kim is the Activity Co-ordinator working at our Winwood Heights community in Sherwood and has been supporting Paula's independence, using technology to help.



Paula is 69 years old and has cerebral palsy, a condition that affects movement, co-ordination and can make speech difficult. As Paula has got older, she's been unable to get out often and has found it a struggle to communicate effectively with her fellow residents.

Kim was determined to do all she could to help her. Knowing how digital inclusion can help to open up a whole world of independence, Kim brought in an iPad for Paula to use. Kim says, *"As an Activity Co-ordinator, it's my job to encourage and facilitate a range of activities for our residents to enjoy. I really wanted to include Paula, and I thought that being able to use apps on the iPad could help."*

"I started by showing her some games, we then moved on to using Google Maps, which Paula has really enjoyed as it means she can see places she hasn't been able to visit for a long time. She's also started using the Microsoft Word app, so if people are finding it difficult to understand what she's saying, she can type it out."

Paula says, *"When Kim first showed me the iPad, I wasn't keen on using it. But thanks to Kim and the time that she's spent showing me different things I can do on it, it's opened up a whole new world for me."*

"Some people think that because I have cerebral palsy, my mental capacity might also be affected. But that's not true. I'm as bright as a button and having the ability to type out what I want to say is helping me communicate with fellow residents."

We're really proud of you Paula and huge thanks to Kim for supporting Paula to improve her quality of life through technology.

If you're interested in finding out more about Independent Living, email lettingsteam@nottinghamcity.gov.uk or go to www.ncchousing.org.uk/independent-living.



Introducing Tenant Satisfaction Measures

Since the council took over direct management of housing services in April, we have been evaluating the services we provide to you.

One of the ways we've been doing this is through the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) regime. What you are telling us at the moment is that some of our services are not delivering what they should. Going forward, we want you to **talk and work with us** as we seek to improve services at all levels.

A new approach

To help us improve and to provide the best services to you, it is important that we know how you feel about how we are performing, so we can learn from your experiences.

We have always surveyed our tenants regularly, but these new Tenant Satisfaction Measures surveys are different to what has been done before.

In the past, we surveyed a small sample of individuals. However, from this year, all social landlords (councils and housing associations) now record something called Tenant Satisfaction Measures. As part of this, all landlords ask a significant number of tenants (at least two thousand a year) about how satisfied they are with the same 22 areas of activity. In this way, all landlords are being consistent and we can compare how we're performing against others.

In April, we started working with a specialist social housing company called Acuity to carry out telephone surveys to get your views on how we are performing, and where we need to do better. They are doing this four times over a year, calling 550 tenants each time.

That means that by the end of next March, we will have surveyed about **2,200** of you. We're making sure that the people we survey are a representative sample of all our tenants in terms of the type of home you live in, where you live, how long you've been a tenant, and your age, ethnicity and gender.

The surveys are designed to let us know how you feel about things like repairs, safety and complaints, your neighbourhood, getting in touch with us, and ways you can get involved.

When we've completed all four of the surveys, we'll publish a full year of results, and along with all other social housing landlords, will send them to the Regulator for Social Housing. The Regulator oversees the performance of all social landlords and your satisfaction results will provide them with valuable information about our performance.

In the meantime, we wanted to tell you about the results from the first two surveys that we have carried out this year. This isn't something that we have to do, but we want to be open and honest, to show that what you tell us matters and is making a difference.

This report outlines what you've told us about how satisfied you are with our services, where you're least satisfied and what we're doing to improve.

"Thank you to everybody who has taken the time to give us your views so far. Everything you're telling us is helping us to improve."

"We know that there's a lot to do to get our housing services where we want them to be, and we're working hard to make improvements to the way we deliver them."

Councillor Jay Hayes, Portfolio Holder for Housing




66% of you are satisfied overall with the services we provide. This isn't the level of satisfaction that we want to see. There are areas where satisfaction is high, but there are also areas where we have work to do to improve.

The results of the surveys we've done so far show that:

-  **75%** of you feel safe in your home.
-  **73%** of you are satisfied that we treat you fairly and with respect.
-  **71%** of you are satisfied that we keep you informed.
-  **66%** of you are satisfied with repairs you've had done in the last 12 months.
-  **66%** of you feel that we make a positive contribution to your neighbourhood.
-  **65%** of you feel that you have a well-maintained home.
-  **65%** of you are satisfied with the way we deal with anti-social behaviour.
-  **61%** of you say that communal areas in your block are kept clean and well-maintained.
-  **59%** of you are satisfied with the time we took to carry out your last repair.
-  **54%** of you are satisfied that we listen to you and act upon what you say.
-  **29%** of you are satisfied with the way we handle complaints.

Where we're doing better

75% of you feel safe in your home.

Your safety is our number one priority, and we work hard to make sure you feel safe in your home. We have a **100% gas safety record** for testing all homes every year, and we carry out electrical testing every five years.



We've enhanced safety measures in high-rise blocks by installing new sprinkler systems and upgrading intercoms and door entry systems.

We also have a Building Safety Residents' Forum, made up of around 35 tenants who live in high-rises across the city. They're working with us to make sure any issues or concerns in high-rise blocks are dealt with straight away.

73% of you are satisfied that we treat you fairly and with respect.

We believe that treating you fairly and with respect helps us develop positive relationships with you. Three out of four people think we achieve that – although there is still room for improvement.

71% of you are satisfied that we keep you informed.

We think it's important to keep you up to date with information that's relevant and that matters to you. We keep you informed through this newsletter, that we send out four times a year, as well as on our website and Facebook page. You can like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NCCHousing.

Where we need to improve

29% of you are satisfied with the way we handle complaints.

When we don't get things right, we want to be able to fix them for you so you don't need to go down the formal complaints route. This result shows that when you raise an issue with us, you feel that we're not dealing with it the way you'd like us to.

What we're doing to improve

As an immediate response to what you've told us in the survey, we're looking into and following up on what you've told us (where you've given us permission to do so).

When you make a complaint to us, we'll keep you regularly informed about the status of your complaint and the actions being taken to resolve it. And we're making sure that when we say that we're doing something in relation to your complaint, that we do it – and in the time we said we would.



We believe that complaints are something we're all responsible for. We're empowering colleagues to take ownership of any complaints they receive so they can be sorted as quickly as possible and at the first point of contact.

Our formal complaints procedure is outlined in full on our website, www.ncchousing.org.uk/complaints, and we'll support and help you through the process – including your right to take your complaint to The Housing Ombudsman if at the end of the complaints process, you don't feel your complaint has been resolved.

54% of you are satisfied that we listen to you and act upon what you say.

We want to make sure that you're at the heart of everything we do, and we aim to shape our services around your priorities. You've told us that you think we could show more care, empathy and support, and listen to your concerns more carefully.

When you talk to us, we want you to feel that you have been heard, even if the outcome may not always be what you'd hoped.



What we're doing to improve

We're making sure we have the most up-to-date information about you when you contact us. That way, we can make sure we're responding to you in the most suitable way and are fully aware of your circumstances and any specific needs or requirements you have when you get in touch.

You can help us by letting us know of any changes in your circumstances as soon as you can. The best way to do that is by using Housing Online. Just go to our website and click on the Housing Online button to create an account.

66% of you are satisfied with repairs you've had done in the last 12 months.

and

59% of you are satisfied with the time we took to carry out your last repair.

Our repairs team aims to understand what your issue is and fix it as quickly as possible. We know that you're waiting too long for non-urgent repairs, and that having to chase up outstanding repairs is frustrating.

In particular, you'd like us to look at:

- Being able offer an appointment when you first contact us.
- Being able to resolve an issue in a single visit without needing to come back.
- Not having to change appointments dates and times.
- How we keep you informed about how long you can expect to wait for works to be done.



We know we need to do more to make sure that when we come to your home we have the right tools, materials, skills and time to do the repair.

What we're doing to improve

We're introducing a new repairs management system to help us improve processes and speed up appointments. It should solve the issue of missed appointments, and it should help us bring the right tools for the job when we come to do your repair.

When extra work is needed for a repair that can't be done on the first visit, the new system has an auto rescheduling facility so that an appointment can be generated more quickly so you are not having to wait as long for the next appointment.

As part of the new system you'll also soon be able to access an online portal that will let you view the progress of a repair, report a new repair, and make and change repairs appointments without having to call us.



We're working closely with tenants to understand what it is that you want from our repairs service. The focus is on making sure all of our homes meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard and that you can live healthily and safely in your home. What you tell us will form part of a new set of repairs service standards that will clearly outline what you can expect from us and that you can hold us to account on. If you'd also like to be involved in this, please let us know by emailing involved@nottinghamcity.gov.uk.

One of the other ways that's helping us with this is by making better use of what we already know about the type and condition of your home and what we know about you as a tenant to tailor our service based on this information. For example, we know that in many cases where homes are experiencing issues of damp and mould that this is often caused by high humidity levels in the home. By knowing the type of home you live in and who lives there, we can provide advice and support that is specific to you and your home.

When we do get things wrong, we want to put them right as quickly as possible and make sure it doesn't happen again. We hold a weekly complaints clinic with senior managers looking at all the repairs complaints we've had during that week to understand what is going wrong, how the complaint is being dealt with and what we can do to prevent it happening again.

And we're also training more of our tradespeople to become multi-skilled, and employing more of them, so we can offer more appointments and speed things up for everyone.

Help us to improve

Thank you to everybody who's taken part in the surveys so far. What you're telling us is really helping us to understand where we need to get better. We know that there's work to do to bring satisfaction with our services to the levels that you would expect and deserve, and we're committed to doing that.

To help us, it's so important that we build more opportunities for you to have a genuine and meaningful say in what we do, how we do it and how we measure if it's helping us to improve.

Since the council began direct management of housing services in April, one of the things that we're passionate about is actively encouraging you to talk directly to us about the issues that matter to you. You are, and always will be, at the heart of everything we do.

As part of that commitment, we want you to be involved in developing our services to meet your needs. We have ambitions to be the landlord you want us to be, which is why working with us now to help design new services with improved standards and great results for you and your neighbourhoods is a great opportunity.

We're currently reviewing and expanding all the ways you can get involved – if you'd like to contribute to this, or you have some ideas to share, or you'd just like to be more involved in future, please email involved@nottinghamcity.gov.uk or call **0115 746 9100**.

Find out more about TSMs on our website at www.ncchousing.org.uk/tsm.



Responsible Tenant Reward

A big thank you to all of you who have been managing your tenancies responsibly and have been successful in receiving this year's Responsible Tenant Reward, to the value of £28 per tenancy.



Letters letting you know if you have been successful are landing on doormats now and for most of you, the letter should give you all the information you need without the need to call.

Once you have received your confirmation letter, you can consider what to do with any credit remaining on your rent account. If you pay your rent by Direct Debit, you'll be refunded automatically. Otherwise, it's a good idea to keep the credit on your rent account to help you with any future changes in your circumstances.

Or, if you're absolutely sure you want a refund, you can complete a refund request form on our website at www.ncchousing.org.uk/rtrform.

Unsuccessful?

If you haven't been successful in receiving the reward, your letter will tell you why. If you disagree with the decision, you have the right to appeal the decision and you can do that online at www.ncchousing.org.uk/rtr-appeal. Please carefully consider if the reason(s) given for you not qualifying are not correct before appealing.

Any appeals must be made no later than **Sunday 31 December**.

Full terms and conditions about the reward are available on our website at www.ncchousing.org.uk/rtr.

BUILDING A BETTER

NOTTINGHAM



First residents move into their new homes in Bestwood



We're welcoming residents who have been moving into the new homes we've been building in Bestwood...

Thirty-six new homes on the Eastglade site in Top Valley will have been let by Christmas. And when the site is finished at the end of next year, it will have 23 one-bed flats, 63 two-bed houses and 20 three-bed homes.

At the end of September the first residents began moving into new homes at our Beckhampton site in Bestwood Park, which will eventually be home to 129 council homes made up of two and three-bed houses, bungalows and flats when completed by the end of next year.

One of the latest residents to move into the new Beckhampton development has been waiting for a new home since before her son was born.

"I joined the waiting list when I was pregnant with him", says Chloe, who along with her son has been living with family while waiting for a home to become available. "He's five now, and our new home is perfect for us.*

"It's modern and spacious, and the kitchen is really nice. I also love that it's new – no-one has lived here before us. And the garden is massive, which will be great for my little boy."

Cllr Jay Hayes, Portfolio Holder for Housing, and Ward Councillor for Bestwood, said: *"We believe these homes, and the people moving into them will form the basis of new communities in Bestwood.*

"Building, warm, safe, and energy efficient new homes not only encourages investment and creates jobs, it also helps create thriving neighbourhoods for Nottingham families to enjoy."

*name has been changed

Have a great Christmas – but don't suffer a January debt hangover!

You don't need to spend a fortune to enjoy the festive period. There's a sackful of things you can do to have a great Christmas and avoid the January debt hangover.

The best Christmas present you can give is keeping the roof over your head and paying your rent. Please talk to us if you're struggling.

Call **0115 915 4920** or email moneymatters@nottinghamcity.gov.uk and we'll always do our best to help.



Here's just a few of our top Christmas money saving tips:

Work out what you can afford

Christmas is just one day – don't ruin the rest of the year worrying about how you're going to pay what you've spent. Be honest with yourself and what you can afford. Make a budget and stick to it.

Avoid unnecessary presents

It's easy for gift giving to get out of control. And if you get a gift from a friend, you can feel you have to give one back. Why not agree with some of your friends not to give each other presents? Or could you do a Secret Santa instead – and set a £5 or £10 limit?

Create priceless Christmas memories

The chances are that the best Christmases aren't the ones where you've spent the most money, they're the ones where you've spent quality time with friends and family.

Don't be afraid to go cold-turkey

If you can't afford Christmas, don't be afraid to go cold-turkey. See family, friends, watch TV. Christmas is one day a year.

Make a list – and check it twice

Christmas shopping on impulse is dangerous. Making an old-fashioned shopping list and sticking to it will really help.

Try not to borrow for Christmas

It's far better to budget than borrow at Christmas if at all possible. If you really need to borrow, never use loan sharks. If your income is low, there are reputable lenders like Notts and Lincs Credit Union that promote affordable lending – and you can borrow from as little as £100. www.nottsandlincscu.co.uk/loans.

Start planning for next Christmas

Once Christmas is over, if you can afford to start saving a little ready for next Christmas, that might really help. And don't forget that things like decorations, cards, wrapping paper costs gets slashed by retailers straight after Christmas – so there's a chance to get some real bargains that will save you for next year.

Struggling with the cost of living?

There's lots of help on our website – www.ncchousing.org.uk/cost-of-living.

Staying safe at Christmas

With the festive season almost upon us, we want everyone to enjoy a happy and safe Christmas. We've listed some tips to help you do that...

Check your decorations

When you get your Christmas decorations out of storage, do a visual check to make sure there's no damage to electrical wires, or the sockets you're plugging them in to.

Take care not to overload sockets or trail wires unsafely, and if you're going out or going to bed, switch everything off at the socket.

If you're using Christmas lights – LED lights are safer than the old-style Christmas lights. They use much less energy as well – so they're cheaper for you to run.

Keep clear

When you're choosing where to put your trimmings, leave space around heaters for air to circulate – and never cover or put decorations on top of heaters.

If you're using candles, make sure they're in a proper holder and keep them well away from anything that might catch fire – such as curtains and blankets.

Don't leave them unattended and make sure they're fully put out when you've finished.

If you live in one of our blocks of flats, it's really important to keep corridors clear of items to prevent the risk of fire and so emergency routes are kept clear.

Please don't put up decorations in corridor areas and don't leave empty boxes, wrapping paper or other items in communal areas.

Gifts

Be cautious when buying gifts, especially electrical items. While cheap alternatives might be tempting, they might not have been made to the same safety standards so it's always best to buy from a reputable seller.

Look out for the British Standard Kitemark, which is a sign that what you're buying is reliable and safe.



Electric blankets and portable heaters

If you're using an electric blanket or portable heater to keep warm, please use them safely.

Store electric blankets flat, rolled up or loosely folded to prevent damage to the wiring. Unplug before you get into bed, unless it has a thermostat control for safe all-night use. Don't place heavy items on the blanket when storing, and let it fully cool down before packing away.

If you use a portable heater – **always turn it off before going out or to bed**. Make sure it's clean and well maintained. Use them in a safe place and don't place them too close to furniture, bedding or curtains – and don't use them to dry washing.

Don't leave them unattended with young children or animals and don't have them too close to anybody who can't easily move away if it gets too hot – babies and the elderly, for example.



Prizewinning mural unveiled at new Clifton apartments

A mural designed by local schoolchildren was unveiled in October at the Kieron Hill Court apartments in Clifton.

The mural, which runs along the rear of the apartment block, was designed by students from the Farnborough Academy as part of a competition we ran to come up with a design that reflected the local area.

The winning design was chosen by Academy students and local community groups and was then developed for use by Nottingham-based artist Nathan Bainbridge, also known as Small Kid.

Kieron Hill Court, built as part of our Building a Better Nottingham programme, opened in December last year and was named after a popular soldier who fell in the line of duty 14 years ago.

Kieron was aged just 20 when he died following an explosion in Afghanistan in May 2009. Originally from Clifton, he had served in the Armed Forces since he was 16 and was well-loved in his local community.

Councillor Jay Hayes, Portfolio Holder for Housing at Nottingham City Council, said, *"When a community comes together to create something like this, it unites everyone in that community and leaves a lasting legacy. It's a true demonstration of people power, and I'd like to thank everyone who has worked so hard to make it happen."*

Graeme Smith, Executive Principal of the Farnborough Spencer Academy, said, *"Our art students have thoroughly enjoyed working alongside a professional artist – Small Kid has encapsulated all the students' designs into this mural, which is a welcome addition to the community in Clifton."*

"The mural brings a colourful and meaningful representation of what it is to be a part of the Clifton community – the students have chosen activities and areas of Clifton that are personal to them."

"Every student involved in this project can be proud that they have participated in the creation of the mural, and I'd like to thank the council for lending us the opportunity to take part in its creation."



Best Garden Competition update

A big thank you to everyone who entered this year's Best Garden Competition.

We've had some brilliant entries across all of our categories – the hard work of all entrants has been clear to see. To help us with the judging, we've recruited an expert judging panel that includes some of the leading horticulturists from Nottingham's community gardens as well as our new lead judge, Paula Routledge, Chelsea flower show medallist and NAFAS North Midlands Demonstrator.

We'll be presenting all the awards and revealing this year's winners in March. This is to give our judging panel the time to properly judge all the amazing entries and to present the awards as we move into spring.

For more information about the Garden Competition and all the ways you can get involved, call us on **0115 746 9100** or email involved@nottinghamcity.gov.uk.



How to contact us over Christmas*

* Information correct at time of print. Please also check our website and our Facebook page for all the latest information.

Repairs

Non-emergency repairs can be reported online 24 hours a day throughout Christmas at www.ncchousing.org.uk/repairs. They can also be reported **up until 5pm on Friday 22 December** by calling **0115 915 2222**.

Saturday 23 to Tuesday 26 December – 24 hours emergency repairs service only by calling **0115 915 2222**.

Wednesday 27 December to Friday 29 December – during this time, we'll make safe any emergency repairs that you report. We'll also attend some other priority repairs – although waiting times may be slightly longer due to reduced staffing over the Christmas period.

Saturday 30 December to Monday 1 January – 24 hours emergency repairs service only by calling **0115 915 2222**.

Tuesday 2 January – our normal repairs service will begin at 8.30am.

Paying your rent

You can pay your rent **24 hours a day** online at www.ncchousing.org.uk/pay-your-rent or by calling the 24 hour automated payment line on **0800 052 0173**.

For rent enquiries over Christmas, we'll be available to help **up until 5pm on Friday 22 December** and then on **Wednesday 27 to Friday 29 December** between 8.30am and 5pm by calling **0115 915 4920**. Our normal rent service will begin again from **8.30am on Tuesday 2 January**.

Housing Services

We'll be available to help **until 5pm on Friday 22 December** and then on **Wednesday 27 to Friday 29 December** between 8.30am and 5pm by calling **0115 746 9555**. Our normal housing service will begin again from **8.30am on Tuesday 2 January**.

Independent Living

If you're an Independent Living tenant, there will be a reduced service from **5pm on Friday 22 December through to 9am on Tuesday 2 January**. Independent Living staff will be available to respond to any emergencies between **Wednesday 27 to Friday 29 December** and welfare calls will be made to some tenants as agreed in advance.

Nottingham on Call

Our Nottingham on Call service will be available **24 hours a day, every day**, as always.

