



# Link

The NCHA Residents Newsletter

Autumn 2008

## Leaseholders Survey Result

The overall result of our leaseholder survey shows that **75%** of our leaseholders are satisfied with the overall service they receive from NCHA.

We have been looking at the results that indicate why the remaining 25% are not satisfied with the service and have come up with the following action plans to improve our service to you.

### Your home and your neighbourhood

We are looking to develop and consult on Defects Liability Period Service Standards for purchasers. Our aim is that the service standards will be understood and acceptable to our leaseholders.

We are looking to carry out post-sale satisfaction surveys. We have now set up a text messaging survey and text all new leaseholders for their views on the sales service to help us to increase the level of satisfaction with the accommodation.

The survey suggested that some leaseholders were dissatisfied with the neighbourhood in which they live. We are looking to

expand our programme of estate inspections and implement them on all schemes. We also are looking at ways to reduce litter. We aim to raise awareness of the estate inspections and publish the inspection programme on our website.

### Communication with your landlord

We are reviewing the leaseholder content on our website and in our Homeowners Handbook to increase the level of satisfaction with being kept informed. We also produce this leaseholder newsletter twice a year to give updates on our service.

We have introduced the new home ownership telephone number to make getting hold of the right person easier. This number is 0845 6501204.

All staff receive customer care training to increase the level of satisfaction with their help and courtesy.

### Improving Services

We want to increase our customers' satisfaction that their views are being taken in to account and the opportunity of involvement. We are running an article in this edition of Leaseholder's Link on resident involvement through the means of Customer Advisory Panels/Tenant and Resident Consortium (CAP/TRC) groups. We will compile an email user group to enable us to consult leaseholders on draft policies, service standards, etc. We also regularly request feedback so that we may take account of your views and endeavour to act upon them.

### Survey Prize Winners

Congratulations to Ms A from Delapre, Mr T from Northampton and Mr L from Deeping St James, who took part in our Leaseholder Survey. They are the lucky winners of the prize of an iPod Nano.



# Health and safety in your home

Leaseholders who live in flats or apartments should be aware that the communal areas leading to your front doors should be kept clear at all times. These areas are for access only and should not be used as extra storage space.

Due to new health and safety policies, nothing is to be left in the communal areas, stairwells or corridors. This includes bicycles, pushchairs, door mats etc. as they could cause a serious obstruction, may inhibit cleaning of the areas and make blocks look untidy. No rubbish should be left outside flat doors, even temporarily, as this is also a tripping hazard and could attract vermin.

If items are left in these areas and have to be removed by the Association, this will incur extra costs to the service charge.

Often, more bulky items such as fridge/freezers or furniture can be removed by your local council, either free or for a small charge. Information on this service can be found by telephoning your local council or logging on to their website and searching for "household waste".

## Useful contact details:

**Leicester City Council:**  
[www.leicester.gov.uk](http://www.leicester.gov.uk) for online form or tel: 0116 2527002

**Charnwood Borough Council:**  
[www.charnwood.gov.uk](http://www.charnwood.gov.uk) for online form or tel: 01509 634563

## South Kesteven District Council:

[www.southkesteven.gov.uk](http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk) for online form or tel: 01476 406279

## Northampton District Council:

[www.northampton.gov.uk](http://www.northampton.gov.uk) for online form or tel: 01604 837837

## Blaby District Council:

[www.blaby.gov.uk](http://www.blaby.gov.uk)  
Tel: 0116 2750555  
to arrange collection.

If your local council is not listed above and you cannot find their contact details, please contact Leasehold Services on 0845 650 1204 and we will be happy to help to find the information that you require.

## Buildings Insurance

If NCHA is responsible for arranging the buildings insurance cover for your home, from March 2008 the insurer changed from Royal & Sun Alliance to Zurich Municipal. If you need to make a claim you should contact Zurich Municipal direct, quoting policy number **JHA-22S473-0013**.

Property Claims Unit,  
PO Box 108,  
Farnborough,  
Hants. GU14 0ZQ

**Tel:** 0870 241 8050

**Fax:** 0845 600 0083

**Out of hours:** 0800 028 0336

**Email:** [zmpropertyclaims@uk.zurich.com](mailto:zmpropertyclaims@uk.zurich.com)



# Repairs and Alterations

## Your lease explains the responsibilities of the landlord and leaseholder for repairs to your property.

If you live in a house, you will be responsible for all repairs and maintenance costs. If you live in a flat, you will usually be responsible for repairs inside your home and NCHA will carry out repairs to the structure of the building and any communal areas. These repairs will be paid for out of the service charge.

The only exception to this is for repairs which may be covered under a Defects Liability Period (DLP). The defects liability period relates to newly-built homes and usually covers the first 6 months following completion of the building work.

After the Defects Liability Period is over we advise that you contact a local approved tradesperson so that

mileage/travel costs are not incurred.

We do **not** hold a list of local or recommended companies so NCHA maintenance department will be unable to help with your repair issues after the DLP has expired.

If any major issues arise (for example, faults with the structure of the building) after the end of the DLP, you should contact our Leasehold Services Department for advice about any ongoing cover through the National House-Builders Council (NHBC) or similar.

If after moving in, you wish to make any alterations or improvements to your home, you will need NCHA's permission in writing **before** work starts. Agreement will

not be unreasonably withheld, however there may be certain restrictions which may apply to the whole scheme.



## Do you have arrears on your account?

From 1st April 2009, you will be charged interest on any arrears on your rent or service charge account. If you are having difficulty in paying your rent, please contact our office immediately to discuss your situation. We will do what we can to advise you and set up repayment agreements where possible.

We can also help to advise you on who you should contact if you find yourself in debt.

**Your home is at risk if you do not keep up repayments on your mortgage.** Failure to maintain your rent and service charge payments to the Association may result in the loss of your home by forfeiture.

If you would like more information about NCHA please visit our website  
[www.ncha.org.uk](http://www.ncha.org.uk)

# How you can get involved

**NCHA aims to keep residents informed about what we do and consult with them on the delivery of services and how we can improve them. There are lots of ways that you can get involved. Some require more time than others.**

## Customer Panel

This is a great way to be involved if you are not sure how much time that you can commit. You will be consulted by letter or email about new policies and proposed service improvements. You may sign up to join this panel on our website.

## Customer Advisory Panels (CAPs)

You can join an advisory group of residents and work with NCHA to make suggestions about developing policies and improving service delivery. This requires a commitment to attend meetings, read relevant papers and discuss issues. You can also be a "virtual" member and give us feedback on issues by email, letter or phone.

This can be very rewarding when you see changes happen as a result of the CAP's input and the decisions that it makes.

Regional CAPs look at issues such as anti-social behaviour and estate management. We currently have regional CAPs in Nottingham, Ollerton, Leicester, Northampton and South Lincolnshire. The

Technical Services CAP looks at maintenance and design issues. The Communications CAP provides feedback to residents through a wide range of information. It assists NCHA's Communications team in delivering effective communications to our residents. They are consulted on policies and procedures and the development of the corporate website.

## Estate Contacts

This is generally for residents who receive communal services, such as cleaning and gardening. You will be asked to give feedback to NCHA on the standard of estate services.

## Focus Groups

When we want to introduce new initiatives we often hold focus groups to find out our residents views. Focus groups have up to 10 people who are invited to express their opinions on particular issues at a one-off meeting.

## Resident Associations

This is a good way of getting together to campaign on local issues. You can also help to develop the community by organising events and activities. If there is not a

residents' association in your area you could help set one up. Support & funding is available from NCHA.

## Tenants and Residents Consortium (TRC)

The TRC is an independent group of residents that works in partnership with NCHA and meets once a month to help shape policies and improve services.

## Service Inspection Team

Service Inspectors look at specific services in more detail by checking how services perform against set standards, identifying gaps in those services and making recommendations for improvement.

## For information please contact

If you are interested in any of the above and would like to know more please contact one of our Resident Involvement Officers.

Heather Cooke for Nottingham & Ollerton areas or Jacqui Kissai for Leicester & Northampton areas on:

0800 013 8555 or go to our website [www.ncha.org.uk](http://www.ncha.org.uk).