

# CONNSWATER CHRONICLE

Tenants' Newsletter published by Connswater Homes

July 2008

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## Garden Competition

**Reminder:** The Association is running a garden competition during June, July and August and the winners will be invited to a presentation in September. The competition is open to all the Association's tenants. The judges will base their decisions on the best display (colour and design) and ability (resources, technique and effort). The competition categories are:

**Best House Garden    Best Container / Patio Garden  
Best Hanging Basket / Tub**

**£25 gift vouchers of your choice (Tesco, M&S or B&Q) for each category**



We offer Language Line services to people whose first language is not English.

This newsletter and other documents can be translated into different languages on request. Please contact us if you require any of these services.

The newsletter is also available electronically from our website.

Throughout the summer months housing staff will be carrying out estate inspections and shall look out for the best blooms in your area. Those that are identified in the above groups shall be noted and independent judging will take place at the end of the summer. So come on, join in by planting up your tubs, getting the grass cut and making your area blooming lovely!!

## July Bank Holidays

The office will be closed on Monday 14th and Tuesday 15th July and will re-open on Wednesday 16th July.

For emergencies during this period please use the Telecare number **0800 731 3081**

# New Schemes Update



Jacqueline Locke, Chief Executive & Cllr  
Margaret McKenzie, High Sherriff of  
Belfast cutting a sod at Harland Walk

The Association is pleased to inform tenants that 3 schemes are currently on-site and progressing well.

Harland Walk is a mixed development of 18 new homes of 9No 5 person / 3 bedroom houses; 8No 3 person / 2 bedroom houses and 1No 3 person / 2 bedroom wheel-chair bungalow and is progressing well, these have an estimated completion date of approximately September 2009.

Severn St is a small development of 6No 3 bedroom / 5 person houses and should be completed around September 2009.

Connswater 3 off Mersey Street is a large scheme and will provide a mixed development of 86 new homes, these will include 57No 5 person / 3 bedroom houses; 16No 3 person / 2 bedroom apartments; 6No 6 person / 4 bedroom houses and 7No 3 person / 2 bedroom wheel-chair bungalows

This scheme is progressing very well and will complete in phases with the actual completion date of the whole scheme targeted for approximately September 2010.



Margaret Ritchie, Minister for Social  
Development & Kevin Butler, Chairman  
at Connswater 3 sod cutting ceremony

## New Staff

Your new Housing Manager is Orla Cunning.

Orla joined us from Bristol where she was a senior housing officer for 4 years. She brings a wealth of experience to the role and we wish her all the best for her new job.

If you haven't met her already you will probably see her out and about over the summer months, stop and say hello.

## Neighbourhood Walkabouts

The Association will be starting to carry out neighbourhood walkabouts and would like tenants who are interested to join them in keeping a careful eye on their areas.

We will write to all tenants affected prior to the walkabouts taking place to inform them of the date and time.

**YOU** are invited to join in and if you are interested you should contact your housing officer at the office on 90656155 or [michael@connswater.org.uk](mailto:michael@connswater.org.uk).

The walkabouts will begin in early August.

## Boiler Servicing



As your landlord, we are responsible for getting the gas systems in your homes inspected every year.

***It is vitally important that you let our gas contractors into your home to carry out the annual safety check.***

We will write to you with an appointment date. It will only take an hour for them to service your gas boiler.

***It costs you nothing and it could save your life.***

If the time we give you is not convenient, just phone us to re-arrange it.

***Whatever you do, don't ignore it. Your family's lives could depend on it.***

There are always a few residents who refuse to allow us access to carry out this important service. Connswater can apply for a court injunction to gain access to those properties without a valid safety certificate, but we prefer not to – it just causes delays.

If you can't be certain that your appliances have had a safety check in the last year, please get in touch with us urgently. We'll check our records for you and if necessary make an appointment for a time that's convenient to you.

### Competition Winner

the winner of £50 of Tesco's vouchers from returning the survey at Easter was Mr Robert Morrow of McAllister Court—congratulations.

## Home Contents Insurance

Connswater Homes Ltd advises all tenants to take out Home Contents Insurance.

**YOU** are responsible for insuring the contents of your home.

**NOTE:** you should check with your insurance broker as to the level and type of cover provided before taking out a policy. We advise that you cover glazing.

If you do not have Home Contents Insurance, Royal Sun Alliance have a scheme designed specifically for social housing residents across Northern

Ireland, for more details contact **08456 718 172** (this is a Lo-call number charged at local rate)



**Debtline NI**  
CONSUMER CREDIT *Counselling Service*  
A Registered Charity

Are you worried about debt?

Concerned over credit card bills etc? Feeling anxious about what might happen or how you are going to cope?

There is help out there— Debtline NI

They are not a debt consolidation service, they are a charity—so you aren't charged for their services.

Everything is free and confidential, from budgeting advice to practical debt management plans.

No matter how serious your situation seems right now there is a way out of it.

Free helpline from 8.00am—8.00pm

Monday—Friday

**0800 027 4990**

## Access to your home

Access to your home will be essential to carry out repairs to the heating installations, to service pipes and electrical wiring and to service gas boilers where they are the responsibility of the Association.

It is often difficult for Connswater to be specific about when a contractor will call, therefore, the more flexible you can be about access times the more speedily we are likely to be able to have a repair carried out.

You should make arrangements with family members or friends to enable contractors to gain access to your home.

If a contractor calls and you are out, then they will leave a calling card for you to contact them.

All contractors carry official photographic identification.

Access may also be required by the Association's staff to inspect repair items in your home as highlighted in your tenancy agreement.

### Right to Repair Scheme

The Association operates a Right to Repair Scheme the object of which is to ensure that tenants have urgent, minor repairs which might affect their health, safety or security completed quickly by the Association's contractors at no cost to the tenant. You may be entitled to compensation if this work is not carried out within predetermined time periods.



**Reduce** the amount of the Earth's resources that we use.  
**Reuse** Don't just bin it, could someone else make use of it?  
**Recycle** Can the materials be made into something new?

#### Home Recycling Tips

- 1 recycled tin can would save enough energy to power a television for 3 hours
- 1 recycled glass bottle would save enough energy to power a computer for 25 minutes
- 1 recycled plastic bottle would save enough energy to power a 60watt light bulb for 3 hours
- Up to 605 of the rubbish that ends up in the dustbin could be recycled
- A newspaper could be recycled and back in your hands as another newspaper in just 7 days

Tenants are again reminded that the out-of-hours telephone number we have provided is to be used for **emergencies outside office hours only**

Any calls other than emergencies and/or that are not the Association's responsibility will be charged directly to the tenant. Please check your list of Repairs Rights and Responsibilities before making that call!



**TELECARE— 0800 731 3081**