

Welcome to our latest Newsletter. We hope you find the contents interesting and useful. If you have any comments on the content or feel that you would like to contribute to our next edition, please contact us at our Belfast office. We look forward to hearing from you.

PREMIER SERVICE MEMBERSHIP REACHES 155



John Gartland, Chief Executive of Ulidia Housing Association, Brian Rowntree, Chairman of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Liz Millen, Chairperson, of Ulidia Housing Association

The Association launched the Premier Service at an event in the Stormont Hotel on Friday 11 November 2005. We were delighted that both Brian Rowntree, the Chairman of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and Alan Shannon, the Permanent Secretary of the Department for Social Development spoke at the event. Other guest speakers included Andrew Gray, Director of RDHS Housing Consultancy in Liverpool; Kenny Stocks, Director of Ardenglen Housing Association in Glasgow; Alasdair McKee, Chief Executive of Glen Oaks Housing Association in Glasgow; and Angela Gascoigne, Director of Housing Services, Knightstone Housing Association in Bristol.

There were over 130 guests at the event, including Marion Orr, the Association's longest residing tenant and one of the first members of the Premier Service. A presentation was made to Marian by Professor Bert Rima, a founding member of the Association.

Membership of Premier Service is free to all Ulidia tenants who meet the eligibility criteria. As a Premier Service member you

are entitled to receive the range of benefits listed below:

- **Bonusbonds**

As a member you may receive Bonusbond gift vouchers worth up to a value of £48.00 per year. These can be used at over 40 retail outlets across N. Ireland.

- **Faster Repair Service**

As a member you will benefit from urgent repairs being carried out within 2 days and routine repairs within 10 days.

- **Members Competition**

As a member you will be eligible to take part in competitions and special offers.

The eligibility criteria for membership of Premier Service is:

- You have been a Ulidia tenant for at least two months.
- You have had a clear rent account for a minimum period of six weeks.
- If in rent arrears, you have maintained a Repayment Agreement for a minimum period of twelve weeks. However, if your arrears are as a result of a delay in Housing Benefit payments, you have maintained a Repayment Agreement for a minimum of six weeks.
- You have not been subject to any notice of anti-social behaviour, notice of noise disturbance or any other breach of tenancy.
- You do not owe an amount for rechargeable repairs to the Association.

The Association currently has a total of 155 Premier Service members, all of who can avail of the benefits listed above. We hope you decide to become a Premier Service member and take advantage of the range of benefits to which membership entitles you. However, should you have any queries regarding Premier Service, please do not hesitate to contact the Association.



Tenant Services



If you live in: Ballymena, Belfast, Derry, Poleglass, Twinbrook, or Strabane and wish to discuss a housing management issue, please contact Michelle at our office.

Michelle White
Housing Assistant



If you live in: Annalong, Bangor, Craigavon, Downpatrick, Enniskillen, Hilltown, Lisburn, Newry, Newtownbutler or Warrenpoint and wish to discuss a housing management issue, please contact Claire at our office.

Claire Foley
Housing Assistant



Should you wish to discuss Premier Service membership contact Lorna at our office. She is also responsible for liaising with our Joint Management Partners in relation to all issues concerning the Joint Management Arrangements.

Lorna Brown
Housing Assistant



Jo is responsible for our responsive, planned and cyclical maintenance programmes. If you wish to report a repair, please contact Jo at our office.

Jo Toland
Property Services Officer

Tenant Satisfaction

The Association has revised our Tenant Satisfaction Survey forms which will help us generate a more in-depth analysis of how tenants view different aspects of our service. We aim to survey all our tenants over the following months. To date the feedback we have received regarding the quality of our service and accommodation has been very positive.

Tenant Involvement

We value the views and opinions of our tenants and believe it is essential to involve tenants in decisions that are made regarding the service we provide. In order to do this we have formed a number of Resident Groups at different locations. The Association aims to develop a Tenants Forum made up from representatives from the Resident Groups, the Chairperson of which will be co-opted onto the Association's Board of Management. To date this year, Resident Group meetings have been held in Enniskillen, Downpatrick, Twinbrook, and Strabane.

Equality Scheme

The Association's Equality Scheme was approved by the Equality Commission in September 2005. During the year we have consulted a wide and diverse range of

organisations and groups in relation to various stages within the action plan of the Scheme. If you wish to be added to the Association's consultation list please do not hesitate to contact us.

Response Maintenance

It is important that all reported repairs are dealt with in as prompt and efficient manner as possible. We aim to meet the following targets: Emergency Repairs completed within 24 hours, Urgent Repairs completed within 4 working days, and Routine Repairs completed within 20 working days. Details of our performance in relation to these target times can be found on the back page of this Newsletter.

Planned & Cyclical Maintenance

The Association continues to carry out improvement works to our properties on a planned basis. These works include the installation of kitchens, the modernisation and conversion of heating systems, replacement of windows, and redecoration of communal areas. We are also in the process of organising Stock Condition Surveys of our properties before finalising our planned maintenance programme.

Adaptations

The Association continues to carry out adaptations on our properties to meet the needs of tenants with physical disabilities. The work is carried out on receipt of a written recommendation from an Occupational Therapist. Between April 2005 and March 2006 the Association completed adaptation works to 9 properties. If you require any further information about this service please contact Jo Toland at our office.

Killyeagh bathroom & shower adaptation



Energy Efficiency

Taking steps to improve the energy efficiency in your home will help to alleviate fuel poverty, reduce pollution, reduce fuel costs and save money. There are lots of different ways you can reduce your energy use and save as much as £250 each year on your energy bills.

Below are some simple measures you can put in place today:

- 1) Turning your thermostat down by 1 degree could cut your heating bills by up to 10% and save you around £30 per year.
- 2) Ensure your water is not too hot - your cylinder thermostat shouldn't need to be set higher than 60 degrees or 140F.
- 3) Close your curtains at dusk to stop heat escaping through windows.
- 4) Always turn off lights when leaving a room.
- 5) Don't leave appliances on standby and remember not to leave appliances on charge unnecessarily.

- 6) If you're not filling up the washing machine, tumble dryer or dishwasher, use the half-load or economy programme.
- 7) Only boil as much water as you need (but remember to cover elements if you're using an electric kettle).
- 8) In just one day, a dripping hot water tap wastes enough water to fill a bath. Make sure they're turned off.
- 9) Replace your light bulbs with energy saving recommended ones: just one can reduce your lighting costs by up to £78 over the lifetime of the bulb - and they last up to 12 times longer than ordinary light bulbs.
- 10) Do a home energy check: @ www.est.org.uk or alternatively call Freephone 0800 512 012 for free impartial advice on how to save energy.

If you are shopping for new appliances, choose ones with the energy saving trust logo. It's your guarantee that the product will save you energy, cost less to run and help the environment.



Our Performance to Date

(All figures shown are at 31 March 2006)

Rent, Rates, Service Charge

Rent Receivable	£ 1,330,407
Total Arrears	£ 52,285
Technical Arrears	£ 26,122
Arrears (after technical arrears)	£ 26,163
Arrears as a % of rent receivable	1.97%
Rent Loss as % due to voids	1.13%

Average Rent Levels

<i>Dwelling Size</i>	<i>Average Rent</i>
Bedsit	£38.07
1 Bed	£38.75
2 Bed	£41.35
3 Bed	£52.48
4 or more Beds	£58.12

(Please note that the above are average rents and your actual rent may differ depending on whether your property is newly-built or refurbished, or your rent is decontrolled or controlled.)

Allocations

Number of Re-lets	32
Number of New lets	40
Total Number of Allocations	72
Average Number of weeks for each Allocation	3 wks

Complaints & Neighbour Disputes

Number of Complaints	1
Number of Complaints Resolved Satisfactorily	1
Number of Neighbour Disputes	16
Number of Disputes Resolved Satisfactorily	13
Number of Neighbour Disputes On-going	3

Repairs Service (Apr 05 ~ March 06)

	No Reported	Completed on Target
Repairs Ordered	949	96%
Emergency (24hrs)	191	100%
Urgent (4 days)	306	98%
Routine (28 days)	452	91%

Cost of Response Repairs to Date	£ 152,894
Cost of Cyclical, Planned and Major Repairs to Date	£184,077

Future Developments

During 2006 the Association will be allocating 136 units of accommodation in the following areas:

Donegall Road	20 units
Drumclay, Enniskillen	20 units
Devonshire, Belfast	16 units
Ganna Way, Warrenpoint	30 units
Ballymacoss, Lisburn	50 units

Charter Mark



The Association was awarded the Charter Mark for excellence in the provision of public service for the second time in March 2005. We were especially delighted that our community consultation work was noted as good practice. We understand from the Assessors that Ulidia is one of the first organisations to be awarded this special recognition.

Awarded for excellence

Investors In People



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

In December 2005 the Association was awarded Investors In People status for the third consecutive time

Contact Details

WE WELCOME YOUR IDEAS, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS on our Newsletter and all aspects of our service, including the setting of our standards.

You can contact members of staff via

Post 20 Derryvolgie Avenue
Belfast, BT9 6FN

E-mail info@ulidiahousing.org

Telephone 028 9038 2288

Fax 028 9038 2738

Web www.ulidiahousing.org

Office Hours Monday-Thursday
9am - 1pm / 2pm - 5.30pm
Friday
9 am - 1pm / 2pm - 5pm

Out-of-Hours Repair Service

Should you require an emergency repair to be carried out outside office hours, please contact FOLD TELECARE HELP LINE:

FREEPHONE 0800 7313081

Ulidia Housing Association is a charity recognised by the Inland Revenue, Reference No. XN45647

PROVIDING QUALITY, AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND SUPPORT SERVICES TO PEOPLE IN NEED