

# NEWSLETTER

## USEFUL CONTACTS

### Wessex Property Care

01747 858067 (repairs)  
01747 852878 (Electrical)

### Wendage Pollution Control (Damerham, & Beaulieu)

01428 751296

### Citizens Advice Bureau

03444 111 444 or  
www.adviceguide.co.uk

### Housing Benefit

01590 646121 (NFDC)

### Recycling and Refuse Collections

02380 285000 (NFDC)

### Hampshire Police (Non Emergency)

101



## CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR ARRANGEMENTS

The NFVHA office will be closed from Wednesday 17 Dec and will re-open Mon 29 Dec and will close again Wed 31 Dec and re-open Thu 8 Jan 2015.

If you have an **emergency** maintenance or sewage issue over the festive period, don't panic, you can still contact Wessex Property care and Wendage Pollution Control on their usual numbers as detailed above.

## WELCOME

The Association would like to welcome Kay Forrest and Mark Böckle to the Association. Kay joined us in back in January as Manager/Secretary following Margaret Brooks' retirement. She works 22 hours per week and can be contacted by telephone on 01425 611855 or at [nfvillages@gmail.com](mailto:nfvillages@gmail.com)

Mark Joined the Association in April this year as a Board Member. He is one of 11 Board Members who work voluntarily to direct and control the Association. Mark lives in Brockenhurst, is a Parish Councillor and works as a Senior Engineering Manager.

The Board ensures delivery of the Association's objectives, sets its strategic direction and supports Kay in her work.



Picture - Left to Right ; Kay Forrest  
Manager & Secretary, Mark Böckle  
Board Member.

## WE NEED YOU!!

It is extremely important to NFVHA to ensure that tenants' views are taken in to consideration when making decisions. The Association currently has one Tenant Board Member, Russell Tucker from Brockenhurst.

We want to recruit more Board Members to join Russell. If you are interested or want to find out more, please contact Kay Forrest.

## HEATING INSTALLATIONS

In February this year, the Association upgraded the heating system at its homes in Damerham, swapping the older style storage heaters with new Dimplex Quantum heaters. There is no mains gas in Damerham, so the options were limited.

We researched the different types of heating available at great length prior to choosing the Quantum heaters, to ensure that residents would be able to get the best possible value for money and reduce their heating bills.

We are now gathering before and after data on tenants' energy consumption so we can confirm whether or not these heaters do what they promise. Research so far suggests that heating bills have been considerably reduced.

We hope to replace all older style storage heaters in the next few years.

## DISPOSING OF BULKY ITEMS

Do you have any old, disused or broken household items hanging around your home collecting dust?

Did you know that New Forest District Council provide a collection service for bulky household waste?

NFDC can arrange for the collection of items such as;

- Beds
- Mattresses
- Cookers
- Sofas
- Fridges and freezers
- Washing machines
- Carpet

The Council currently charges £17.00 for 1 item but only £5.00 for each additional item (up to 8 items). If you only have one or two items, and you are concerned about the cost, why not get together with your neighbour/s to collect up to 8 unused bulky items and spread the cost?

For further information, or to arrange a collection, please contact NFDC Customer Services on 02380 285000.

## DEVELOPMENT

The Association is committed to providing good quality affordable homes for people in housing need. We specialise in providing housing within village locations, specifically in the New Forest area.

At the end of last year, we completed a new development at Vixen Close in Ashurst, where we acquired two new 2 bedroom affordable homes for rent.

This year, we are looking in to several possibilities for new developments in the New forest area, and hope to be able to bring you news of these within the next news letter.

## DAMP AND MOULD

Most homes will experience damp or mould at some point , but this is most likely during the winter months. Here are a few tips to keep mould and damp at bay ;

- Use an extractor fan
- Ensure that you keep trickle vents open throughout your home
- Don't dry washing indoors
- Ensure non-condensing tumble driers are vented outdoors
- Keep your kitchen window open for about 10 minutes after cooking
- Keep your bathroom window open for about 10 minutes after bathing or showering
- Heat your home. Try to maintain a low background temperature
- Wipe moisture off windows every morning

## REFUSE & RATS

Did you know that rats can spread diseases and have the potential to cause structural problems your home?

To reduce your chances of experiencing a rat infestation, it is important to follow a few simple rules;

- Ensure food is kept in airtight containers and food waste is bagged and placed in a sealed bin/ container
- Do not put refuse out for collection until the night before collection at the earliest
- Keep your home and garden tidy to reduce hiding and nesting places

## TENANTS' MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR RESPONSIBILITIES

You are responsible for keeping your home in a reasonable condition, resolving minor problems and insuring the contents of your home. Your responsibilities include;

- Decorating your home, including repairing minor cracks in plaster
- Changing domestic fuses and light bulbs, replacing keys and locks when keys are lost and replacing toilet seats
- Maintaining the garden, making repairs caused by neglect, willful damage to the property, negligence and forced entry
- Taking precautions to prevent fire, frost, water and drain damage
- Maintaining any fittings, appliances or alterations made by you including TV aerials, plumbing in washing machines and dishwashers
- Replacing gas and meter box cupboard doors
- Sweeping chimneys



## MOVING HOME

There are many reasons people consider moving home, including overcrowding, ill health, family and work commitments and domestic violence. Particularly this year, there has been an increase in tenants of rental properties looking to downsize in order to avoid the recently implemented 'bedroom tax' which has affected many households financially.

If you are looking to move home, dependant on your circumstances, you may be eligible to join the 'New Forest Homesearch Waiting List' to help you find suitable alternative housing. The Homesearch waiting list is the allocations and waiting list system used for Council and Housing Association housing in the New Forest. Successful applications are placed in to relevant 'priority bands' on the list, according to an assessment of needs.

For further information, or to get hold of an application form, please contact New Forest district Council on 02380 28 5222 or visit their website at [www.newforest.co.uk](http://www.newforest.co.uk). You can also pick up an application form from one of their local offices. Please note that the Council are no longer able to send out application forms in the post.

Mutual exchange is a great alternative to joining the Homesearch waiting list. This is a process whereby a Council or Housing Association tenant swaps their home with another Council or Housing Association tenant. Swaps do not have to be confined to the Association you are already signed up with. You could potentially move anywhere in the country to any Council or Housing Association property.

If you are interested in the mutual exchange process, and you would like to search for a property, Joining Home Swapper at [www.homeswapper.co.uk](http://www.homeswapper.co.uk) would be a great start. Alternatively, if you have already been successful in finding a suitable exchange, please contact Kay Forrest on 01425 611855 to discuss the next steps.

It is important to be aware that most Councils and Associations will ask for references and may refuse applications if the applicant is found to have breached their tenancy . This includes breaches relating to rent arrears, anti-social behaviour and property condition.

