



"Welcome to the first issue of 'Leaseholder news', a regular newsletter exclusively for leaseholders of The Gateshead Housing Company.

"In the past year, we have been listening to the views of our leaseholders, and as part of our commitment to providing them with useful and regular information we intend to produce this newsletter at least twice a year.

"In this first issue, you can find out more about our plans to hold fourteen forums across the borough, as well as the results of a recent survey, and the team that looks after leaseholders across the borough.

"We hope you find this regular newsletter useful, and we would appreciate your comments on it, including what issues you would like to see covered in the future."

*Bill Fullen*

Bill Fullen - Chief Executive, The Gateshead Housing Company

## BRIGHT IDEA

Any leaseholder who comes along to a local or main forum, will get a free pack of four energy efficient light bulbs, courtesy of British Gas and The Gateshead Housing Company. Offer limited to one pack per household.

**British Gas**  
Doing the right thing



## MEET THE TEAM

The Gateshead Housing Company has a dedicated team of employees who look after leaseholder homes across the borough.

The team are based at the company's Baltic Business Centre headquarters in East Gateshead, but will be regularly meeting up with leaseholders at the planned forums during the year ahead. Here's a brief guide to the three-strong team.



**Brett Nicholson is the team's Leasehold Services Manager, and has been with The Gateshead Housing Company since January 2004.**

His role is to manage the Leasehold Services team, and make sure that a good quality service is provided.

Prior to joining the company, he was a finance officer for Gateshead Council, managing 'Right to Buy' sales and leasehold services, and previously worked in a repairs environment for Gateshead Council.

T: 0191 433 5395 F: 0191 433 5354 E: [brettnicholson@gatesheadhousing.co.uk](mailto:brettnicholson@gatesheadhousing.co.uk)



**Janice Adams is the team's Leasehold Services officer, and has been with The Gateshead Housing Company since January 2004.**

Her role is to supervise and undertake work relating to the provision of good quality services to leaseholders.

Prior to joining the company she was an administrative assistant for Gateshead Council dealing with 'Right to Buy' sales and leasehold services, and previously worked for London Borough of Merton, Westminster City Council and North Tyneside Council. She also holds the Certificate of Leasehold Management from the Institute of Housing.

T: 0191 433 5396 F: 0191 433 5354 E: [janiceadams@gatesheadhousing.co.uk](mailto:janiceadams@gatesheadhousing.co.uk)



**Helen McDermott is the team's Clerical Assistant, and has been with The Gateshead Housing Company since July 2004.**

Her role is to provide clerical and administrative support to the leasehold team and service. Prior to joining the company she was an administrator for Living Spaces Estate Agents and previously worked for Bradwells Ice Cream.

She is currently obtaining the Advanced Modern Apprenticeship in Business Administration.

T: 0191 433 5397 F: 0191 433 5354 E: [helenmcdermott@gatesheadhousing.co.uk](mailto:helenmcdermott@gatesheadhousing.co.uk)

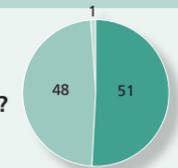
## Leaseholders' survey

Leaseholders across Gateshead recently took part in a postal survey to get their views on the services they receive.

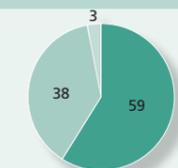
Here are the main findings of the survey, which will be used, along with the major tenant and leaseholders' survey (see right), to improve the services you receive.



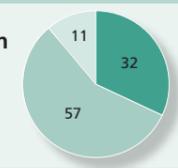
**Were you originally given enough information about service charges and implications of becoming a leaseholder?**  
Yes - 51% No - 48% No answer - 1%



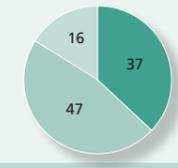
**Do you find information you receive with your service charge account is satisfactory?**  
Yes - 59% No - 38% No answer - 3%



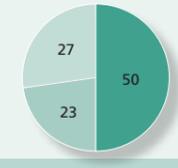
**Were you satisfied with the information given to you before repair work was carried out?**  
Yes - 32% No - 57% No answer - 11%



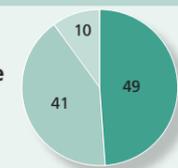
**Were you satisfied with the standard of repairs carried out?**  
Yes - 37% No - 47% No answer - 16%



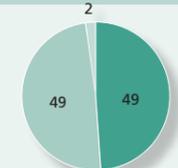
**Were you satisfied with the attitudes of the workers who did the repair?**  
Yes - 50% No - 23% No answer - 27%



**Do you think there is enough opportunity for leaseholders to become involved in improving the service?**  
Yes - 49% No - 41% No answer - 10%



**Overall, are you happy with the service provided?**  
Yes - 49% No - 49% No answer - 2%



If you would like the full survey results, please contact the Leasehold Services Team on page 2.

## Stormy weather

The recent bad weather thankfully didn't cause as much damage in the borough, as it did to other parts of the country. But if your property does receive damage due to the weather, here is some useful advice.

**What should I do if a repair is needed to the building where damage is caused by high winds?**

You should report the repair to The Gateshead Housing Company's Repair Reporting Service on 0191 433 7777, and ask that it be noted that the damage was caused by a storm.

You will not be charged for the repair if this is done.

**What if a charge for the repair still shows up on my repair statement?**

You should contact Kevin Hunter on 0191 433 3714 or Marie Murphy on 0191 433 3715 at Gateshead Council, to arrange for an insurance claim form to be sent to yourself.

You should then make a claim for your share of the cost of the repair.

The charge can then be paid using the monies received if the claim is settled.

The Gateshead Housing Company's Repair Reporting Service is open till 8pm from Monday to Friday; till noon on Saturdays; and 24 hours a day for genuine emergencies.

You can also e-mail [repairs@gatesheadhousing.co.uk](mailto:repairs@gatesheadhousing.co.uk)

## Gas servicing great offer - great for safety



Finding a reputable, CORGI-registered company to service your gas appliances can be difficult.

But did you know that leaseholders of The Gateshead Housing Company can take advantage of a special offer from the company?

For around £40\* The Gateshead Housing Company can carry out this work, giving you peace of mind for the rest of the year. It is important for your own safety that you should have your gas appliances serviced every year.

To find out more contact the Leasehold Services Team on page 2.

\* Prices may vary, depending on the number of appliances to be serviced.

## We want you!

### Leaseholders to play major part in contract agreements

The Gateshead Housing Company is tendering for contractors to provide repairs and improvement works to homes across the borough.

The company is looking for leaseholders to be involved in the selection of contractors, by sitting on an evaluation panel with tenants, directors and officers of the company. Advice and guidance will be given throughout the process, with travel and childcare costs also paid, if required.

If you would like to represent leaseholders on the panel, call Brett Nicholson at The Gateshead Housing Company, on 0191 433 5395 or e-mail [brettnicholson@gatesheadhousing.co.uk](mailto:brettnicholson@gatesheadhousing.co.uk)

### New guide is useful for leaseholders

The Gateshead Housing Company has produced an updated guide for leaseholders across the borough.

A free copy of the guide to, 'Service Charges on Leasehold Flats' is included with this newsletter, with further copies available at local offices or at [www.gatesheadhousing.co.uk](http://www.gatesheadhousing.co.uk)

The guide explains how the company works out the Service Charges that leaseholders pay.

The guide also has useful information on gas servicing and Gateshead Council's home contents insurance scheme.



## USEFUL NUMBERS

### Service Charge queries, general advice and ideas or comments for this newsletter

\* Brett Nicholson on 0191 433 5395, or [brettnicholson@gatesheadhousing.co.uk](mailto:brettnicholson@gatesheadhousing.co.uk)

\* Janice Adams on 0191 433 5396, or [janiceadams@gatesheadhousing.co.uk](mailto:janiceadams@gatesheadhousing.co.uk)

\* Helen McDermott on 0191 433 5397, or [helenmcdermott@gatesheadhousing.co.uk](mailto:helenmcdermott@gatesheadhousing.co.uk)

### Reporting of repairs & maintenance

\* The Gateshead Housing Company Repair Reporting Service on 0191 433 7777

Open till 8pm Monday to Friday; till noon on Saturdays; and for emergencies 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

### Major Works

\* Nick Huston on 0191 433 5327, or [nickhuston@gatesheadhousing.co.uk](mailto:nickhuston@gatesheadhousing.co.uk)

\* Simon Chrisp on 0191 433 5326, or [simonchrisp@gatesheadhousing.co.uk](mailto:simonchrisp@gatesheadhousing.co.uk)

### Insurance claims and cover

\* Kevin Hunter on 0191 433 3714, or [kevinhunter@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:kevinhunter@gateshead.gov.uk)

\* Marie Murphy on 0191 433 3715, or [mariemurphy@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:mariemurphy@gateshead.gov.uk)

### Payment enquiries

\* Vikki Appleby on 0191 433 3646, or [vikkiappleby@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:vikkiappleby@gateshead.gov.uk)

\* Lynne Oates on 0191 433 3866, or [lynneoates@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:lynneoates@gateshead.gov.uk)

And you can also get lots of useful information online at [www.gatesheadhousing.co.uk](http://www.gatesheadhousing.co.uk)

## What's on?

During the year leaseholders will be receiving lots of useful information from the company.

Here are a few of the planned events and opportunities to get involved.

### February/March

- Local forums (see page 1)
- Service standard and compact session
- Contractor selection interviews
- Estimated service charges issued

### April

- Main forums (see page 1)
- Contractor selection site visits
- Preferred contractors announced to leaseholders
- The Gateshead Housing Company News posted

### May

- Quarterly repair statement

### June

- Yearly questionnaire and survey

### July

- The Gateshead Housing Company News posted

### August

- Quarterly repair statement
- Actual service charges issued

### September

- Local forums (see page 1)

### October

- Main forums (see page 1)
- The Gateshead Housing Company News posted

### November

- Quarterly repair statement

### January 2006

- The Gateshead Housing Company News posted

Information on chargeable repairs will also be sent as needed.

To find out more about any of the events and opportunities to get involved please contact the Leasehold Services Team on page 2.

# Leaseholder news

FEBRUARY 2005

## Your home, Your voice Your Forum



## Your home, Your voice Your Forum

To find out more about the meetings, contact Brett Nicholson at The Gateshead Housing Company on 0191 433 5395, by fax on 0191 433 5354, or e-mail [brettnicholson@gatesheadhousing.co.uk](mailto:brettnicholson@gatesheadhousing.co.uk)

## Your home, Your voice Your Forum



The Gateshead Housing Company has organised a series of forums to get the views of leaseholders. This year, as well as four main forums, there are also ten local forums you can attend. Why not come along and give us your views on the services you want in the future?

Don't forget to fill out the enclosed postcard – you can help set the agenda for the forums and meetings during the year.

### Local Forums

<b>Fri 25 Feb</b>	10am	East Lea Sheltered Housing Scheme, Winlaton
<b>Tue 1 Mar</b>	7pm	St James Village Hall (next to Tennyson Court), Sunderland Road, Felling
<b>Thu 3 Mar</b>	2pm	Redheugh Court Communal Lounge, Teams
<b>Tue 8 Mar</b>	7pm	Malton Green Village Hall (opposite Farm House), Harlow Green
<b>Tue 15 Mar</b>	3.30pm	Leam Lane Community Centre, Colegate, Leam Lane Estate

### Main Forums

<b>Tue 12 Apr</b>	2pm	Gateshead Civic Centre, the Lamesley Room Regent Street, Gateshead Town Centre
<b>Thu 14 Apr</b>	7pm	Redheugh Court Communal Lounge, Teams

### Local Forums

<b>Tue 6 Sept</b>	5pm	Gateshead Council @ Birtley (the community room), 16 Durham Road, Birtley
<b>Thu 8 Sept</b>	2pm	West Park Sheltered Housing Scheme, Dunston
<b>Fri 9 Sept</b>	3pm	Joseph Hopper Memorial Homes, Windy Nook
<b>Mon 12 Sept</b>	11am	Felling Community Centre, Crowhall Towers, Crowhall Lane, Felling
<b>Tue 13 Sept</b>	2pm	43 Greenfields Bungalows, Ryton

### Main Forum

<b>Tue 25 Oct</b>	7pm	Wrekenton Community Centre, High Street, Wrekenton
<b>Wed 26 Oct</b>	2pm	Gateshead Civic Centre, the Lamesley Room Regent Street, Gateshead Town Centre