

**NomadE5**

Quality homes,  
thriving communities

**@home**

autumn 2008 issue 5



**Adapting** to your needs

**Concerned** about Anti social  
behaviour?

**Down** your way

**You review** our services



**Welcome** to the autumn edition of @home. So much has happened over the summer that it has been a challenge to fit in all of the news!

I must start by **thanking** you for your patience at the beginning of September

when the exceptional weather caused flooding both to homes and the NomadE5 office. Services were affected for a week while we supported our residents and colleagues in Morpeth and relocated our computer and telephone services. It will take many months to deal with the devastation caused, but the good news is that we now know our disaster recovery plan is reliable.

Big news for NomadE5 – we will be inspected by the Audit Commission in February 09. Residents who have worked closely with us through the forum and themed groups know that we have been waiting for this news for some time.

We are looking forward to having an **independent assessment** of how NomadE5 is doing. The inspectors will focus on how we deliver services and want to hear what you have to say. If anyone would like to be involved in the inspection, please get in touch with the resident involvement team. We also want residents to take part in setting up a customer review team, take a look at **you review our services**, on the back page, for more details.

Over the summer we carried out a **survey of residents** to find out which of our services are most important to you and how well you think we deliver them. The results will help us to focus on 'doing best what matters most' and will be ready by November. We will share them with you in the next edition of @home. Many thanks to everyone who completed the survey.

A major piece of work is starting in November to get up to date information about the condition of NomadE5 homes to help us plan future maintenance programmes. Surveyors will be knocking on 1000 doors to carry out the **stock condition survey** and we will write to you if a surveyor needs access to your home.

One of our commitments is to look for ways to improve our services. A new email address has been set up for staff and residents to let us know about examples of good practice that they see or experience. Please send examples to **greatservice@nomade5.co.uk**.

Finally, I am pleased to tell you that we had a fantastic response to our advert for a tenant to join NomadE5's board. After a rigorous selection process Paul Fleck, from Newcastle, has been invited to join us. Paul will join Maureen Green and Stephan Ochalek in ensuring that the resident's perspective is always at the heart of board decisions.

**Alison Stanners**, managing director



## Notice board

### Important leaseholder news!

We are keen to ensure that a consistent, high level of service is provided to all leaseholders throughout the Isos group. Therefore, from October 2008, the leasehold management team at NomadE5 will become responsible for the management of the leasehold stock of Castle Morpeth and Milecastle Housing, as well as that of NomadE5.

NomadE5's leasehold management team - Jean Mitchell, Margaret Helmrich and Duncan Bird - can be contacted at our head office and will be happy to discuss any queries you may have.

### Caller verification

Data validation is important to ensure that staff, who speak with residents, applicants or external customers over the phone, make sure that the caller is who they say they are, to avoid information falling into the wrong hands.

This involves us asking you specific questions if we are required to provide any personal information, such as rent account or family details.

Residents will be asked what their tenancy reference number is, which can be found on their Allpay card or rent statement. Applicants will be asked for their waiting list reference number, which can be found on their application acceptance letter.

In addition, everyone will be asked additional questions, such as their full name, address or date of birth. We take the security of resident and applicant details very seriously.

### A bright approach to energy efficiency

As part of a national scheme to reduce carbon emissions across the housing sector, we've teamed up with the Housing Corporation, EDF Energy and eaga to provide all of our residents with a set of energy efficient light bulbs.

Each household will receive four special light bulbs, which use 80% less energy than a standard bulb and last ten times longer! In total, the initiative aims to save 1.14 million tonnes of carbon dioxide over a ten year period, which is equivalent to over 230,000 Olympic size swimming pools. Keep an eye out for your light bulbs which will be with you soon.

### Good neighbours and great friends!

In the last issue of @home we launched our good neighbour award and were overwhelmed with the amount of nominations. After a difficult judging process, we are delighted to announce Mr and Mrs Purvis, of Turnstone gardens in Embleton, as our winners.

The couple have provided invaluable support to their neighbour, Mrs Aschough, throughout a difficult period - with Mr Purvis even offering a helping hand with driving lessons! Well done to Mr and Mrs Purvis and thank you to everyone who entered.

# Adapting to your needs

We aim to ensure that the housing needs of all of our residents are met, especially those with disabilities. We also want to help our residents to enjoy and continue to live in their own homes.

If you or a member of your family has difficulty in using the home, perhaps due to a long term illness or disability, you can request an adaptation.

An adaptation is a special fixture or fitting which is designed to improve access to your home, improve your mobility and help you with day to day living. These can be minor changes, such as banister rails and raised sockets, or major changes, like a wheelchair ramp or shower.

Resident Victoria Anne Cansdale-Thompson, from Wallsend, uses a wheelchair and found getting in and out of the bath very difficult. She recently had a new shower fitted and is thrilled with the result. Victoria (pictured here) said:

**“My new shower is brilliant; it makes things so much easier. The workmen were very helpful when the shower was being installed and the process was quick.”**

You can apply for an adaptation by contacting us at head office or speaking to your housing officer.



## Concerned about anti social behaviour?

By signing a tenancy agreement, you have a responsibility to be a good neighbour and respect others. You are also responsible for the behaviour of everyone living at your property and your visitors. This means being considerate of others to avoid causing nuisance or annoyance to neighbours, such as playing loud music, letting your children cause a nuisance or, more seriously, taking part in criminal activity.

If you are concerned about anti social behaviour in your community, there are a number of things we can do to help. If the subject of the complaint is also a NomadE5 resident, we will make them aware of the issue and will work with both parties to try to find a satisfactory solution. However, if the person is not a NomadE5 resident, we may still be able to help by signposting you to an appropriate agency, such as the police or the local authority who will advise what they can do to help.

Housing manager, Susan Howes, says:

**“We encourage residents to contact us if they are experiencing any anti social behaviour, so that we can monitor and take appropriate action to resolve a problem before it becomes more serious. You should speak to your housing officer in the first instance with any concerns.”**

## Important benefit changes



Currently the housing and council tax benefit rules for people of working age state that a claim can be backdated for up to 12 months, if there is good cause for not claiming earlier, such as ill health.

From 6th October a claim can only be backdated for a maximum of six months, which may change to three months in the future.

Please contact Elaine Floyd, welfare rights advisor, with any queries on **(0191) 292 263** or email: **elaine.floyd@nomade5.co.uk**

Useful contacts: Job Centre Plus - **www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk**

The Pension Service - **0845 60 60 265**  
**www.thepensionservice.gov.uk**

# NomadE5 on the road!

As part of a drive to get your views on our services, our resident involvement team has been hitting the roads of the North East.

At our first road show in August, the team, along with a local housing officer and five resident volunteers, set up a special consultation booth in Alnwick market to get to know our most northerly residents and find out what matters to them.

As well as exploring what they think of our services, we wanted to know how we can improve the way we work and better communicate with our residents.

Feedback from the day included positive comments such as *"I find the customer service assistants very helpful"*, with residents also suggesting areas for improvement, for example - *"providing more convenient times for contractors to call."*

We will shortly be sending full feedback from the day to all of our residents in the Alnwick area.

The event was planned by members of our *Engaging Everyone* resident group, who provided useful ideas and suggestions of how the event should be run. This will form the basis of our future road shows, which may be visiting you soon!

Part of the planning process also involved volunteers and staff taking part in PEANuT (Participatory Evaluation Appraisal in Newcastle upon Tyne) training. Through the course the group learned the theory behind good consultation and gained practical advice on various techniques.

Thanks to everyone who attended and to our expert volunteers for giving up their time.

*Article written by resident Penny Cookson*



# Down your way... Mandale Park



This time, we're taking a trip to Teesside as we visit the residents of Mandale Park in Thornaby.

An ambitious regeneration scheme which is helping to transform the area, Mandale Park features a mix of house styles from a range of developers, including NomadE5.

Still under development, the scheme will feature around 800 new build homes upon completion, of which 250 will belong to NomadE5. Many residents have already moved in and are enjoying the site's attractions, which include football pitches and a linear park with cycle ways and art features.

Resident Janice MacDonald, who is originally from the area, has lived in her new home for six months with her two children. She said: "I was keen to stay in the area and when the properties became available I jumped at the chance.

**"The house is great - with double glazing and plenty of space for all of us. A major plus, is having both a front and a back garden. I didn't do any gardening before but now I've become quite green fingered and have big plans for next summer."**

# Rising to the flood challenge

The traumatic events of early September certainly tested the mettle of the Isos Group partners and hundreds of our residents who were caught up in the floods which swept through so much of the North East.

Particularly hard hit was Morpeth where 145 of Castle Morpeth Housing's properties were swamped with up to five feet of water. Seven NomadE5 properties were also affected.

And there were problems too at our offices at Gosforth, headquarters to NomadE5 and Isos, where the IT and phone systems were submerged in water.

One of the few positives to come from the first few hours after the deluge was the way in which the group members, communities and the support organisations pulled together to deal with the crisis.

Our first priorities - helping those forced to leave their homes to find alternative accommodation and getting electric and gas safety checks carried out in the properties by Milecastle Housing - were completed within the first few days.

We were also able to appoint a project manager, Faithful&Gould, to oversee the repair programme within 10 days.



The programme could take many months and even up to a year to complete. This is because work cannot be carried out successfully until properties have thoroughly dried out.

These will be testing times but what we can assure everyone caught up in the crisis is that our teams will do everything they can to support you and keep you informed of progress throughout the process.

Castle Morpeth Housing has established a flood response team which can be reached on 0845 117 0020, please speak to Kath Glen, Carole Moir, Lindsay Jones or Garry Scurfield.



# Residents' event 2008

## Thriving and healthy communities

The first ever group wide residents' event, which took place in September at the Lancastrian Suite in Gateshead, welcomed residents, young and old, who enjoyed a fun filled day of interactive workshops and informative sessions.

Under the theme of *thriving and healthy communities*, the day aimed to bring all residents together to experience what it means to be part of the Isos Group. The day's activities were based upon extensive feedback from last year's individual NomadE5, Castle Morpeth Housing and Milecastle Housing events.

## A new twist

We welcomed back local theatre company, the Twisting Ducks, which performed at last year's NomadE5 event. The performance, *Neighbours from Heaven*, illustrated how neighbours, without realising, can cause others to feel upset and how we can all try to understand each other better and get involved with local community activity.

The Real Food Works provided food for thought with a healthy cookery demonstration, using easily available produce. The workshop also included handy hints, cooking samples, leaflets and recipe ideas.





New additions included a first aid workshop, led by the St John Ambulance and *Isos, working together* – a unique question and answer session with managing directors Bill, Tina and Alison.

## Fun for the young

Children and young people were treated to two special workshops; circus skills and graffiti art. Youngsters tried their hand at a number of circus skills including juggling, the diabolo and magic tricks. The graffiti workshop produced several colourful boards, which will be used at NomadE5's World Mental Health Awareness activities in October.



## Residents at the helm!

Among the workshop leaders were some of our very own residents including Wyn Varity, who led a creative session on card making. Wyn is part of a group of Milecastle residents who meet weekly to practice card making, socialise and of course, have fun!

Ed Fisher inspired many others with his demonstrations and ideas on how to make your space green. From hanging baskets to pepper plants, composting to an enormous red cabbage, this session was colourful!

Twenty one-year-old NomadE5 resident, Jennifer Barnett, held a therapeutic workshop on feeling good on the inside and out with pamper treatments also on offer.



## A day to remember

The event came to a close with an interactive voting session – in the style of *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?* – where residents were able to prioritise issues and ideas in order of importance to them. The results of this will shape how we operate and make sure that your needs and priorities are being met.

Thanks to everyone who came along and to those who gave up their time to help, especially our residents. We look forward to seeing you all for another successful event next year!

# You review our services

We are inviting residents from Milecastle Housing, Castle Morpeth Housing and NomadE5 to play their part in shaping the company's future, with the creation of a customer review team.

Designed to give you the opportunity to review our work, the team will allow residents to shape our services and identify areas for improvement.

We hope to recruit up to 12 residents from across the group. Once we have gathered the team we would provide training, from internal and external facilitators, delivered over two to three half days.

It is expected the group would meet approximately four or five times a year to conduct the reviews, which would look at a

specific aspect of the company's work, including checking our reception areas to ensure good access, some mystery shopping and perhaps assessing the standard of the homes we let.

Details are at an early stage as we believe the customer review team should identify the areas of our work and services that they want to assess.

We will be holding taster sessions to give a flavour of the benefits and responsibilities of being part of the team (all reasonable expenses will be paid).

If you are interested and want to find out more, please contact your resident involvement officer:

**Milecastle - John Temple - 01434 611 400**

**Castle Morpeth - Angeline Rochford - 0845 1170020**

**NomadE5 - Cora Cloughley - 0191 292 2617**

## Translations

يمكن توفير هذه النشرة الإخبارية في لغات أخرى، طباعة كبيرة وصغيرة معبرة عند الطلب.

این اطلاعیه را می توان به زبان های دیگر، به صورت بزرگ و کوچک درج شده، در صورت درخواست، در اختیار شما قرار داد.

Ce bulletin d'information est disponible en d'autres langues, en gros caractères d'imprimerie et au format audio, à la demande.

ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਪੱਤਰ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ, ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਕਰਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਤੇ ਆਡੀਓ ਫਾਰਮੈਟ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ।

Bu bilgilendirme talimatı farklı dillerde, büyük puntolarla ve işitsel formda edinelebilmektedir.

備有北肯諾的其他語言版本，大字體的印刷版式和錄音版式，以供索取。

ਬੇਸ਼ਕ ਅਸਰ ਤੇ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ-ਪੱਤਰ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ੀਆਂ, ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਕਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਢਾਂਚਾ ਅਤੇ ਆਡੀਓ ਫਿਰਮੈਟ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਿਲ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।

Na życzenie dostarczymy tę broszurę w innych językach, napisaną większym drukiem lub w formacie audio.

ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਪੱਤਰ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ੀਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ, ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਕਰਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਤੇ ਆਡੀਓ ਫਾਰਮੈਟ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ।

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## Alternative formats

If you would prefer to receive an emailed version of NomadE5@home in future, please email [cora.cloughley@nomade5.co.uk](mailto:cora.cloughley@nomade5.co.uk).

We can also make the newsletter available in large print, braille and audio format. To request any of these contact Cora Cloughley on **0191 292 2617** or email [cora.cloughley@nomade5.co.uk](mailto:cora.cloughley@nomade5.co.uk).

## Contact information

Our offices are open Monday to Thursday between 9am and 5pm and on Friday from 9am till 4.30pm.

Christmas opening hours: We will close at 12 noon on Wednesday 24th December and re-open at 9am on Monday 5th January 2009.

The numbers for our customer services and repairs line are **0191 268 4800** or **0845 017 8686** (charged at the local rate).

Out of hours service (emergency repairs only), please call 0191 268 4800.

The resident involvement team is Cora Cloughley, Bob Porteous and Denise Carr.

We can also be contacted by email at [info@nomade5.co.uk](mailto:info@nomade5.co.uk) and our web site is at [www.nomade5.co.uk](http://www.nomade5.co.uk)

The head office address is Number Five, Gosforth Business Park, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE12 8EG.

**Please note:** head office will be closed from 3pm on the last Wednesday of every month due to staff training.

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