



HOUSING NEWS

Lower Oldpark

November 2024. Lower Oldpark Community Association, 9-23 Avoca Street, Belfast BT14 6EN. Email: loweroldparkhousing@gmail.com

Lower Oldpark Housing Services Return

Housing services lost from Lower Oldpark at the end of May 2024 have been restored.

The NIHE withdrew funding for the delivery of the services by the Lower Oldpark Community Association (LOCA) Housing Project Worker at the end of March 2024.

However, LOCA worked hard to obtain alternative funding for a worker to deliver the lost services. These services include housing advice, reporting local environment problems, community consultation and housing regeneration.

Funding to recruit a Housing and Regeneration Worker for two years was secured from Clifton House Trust. LOCA very much appreciates this invaluable funding from a local charitable organization.

Gary Hughes was appointed as the new Housing and Regeneration Worker and started in the role on the 1st November 2024. Gary is very familiar with the work and with Lower Oldpark, having been employed as LOCA's Housing Project Worker between May 2017 and May 2024 and between 2010 and 2011.

Gary will be back delivering a housing

advice service from the LOCA Centre at 9-21 Avoca Street. It is a drop-in service as usual, but it will be more likely he can see you if you ring and make an appointment.

You will also see him around the estate checking on local environment problems such as rubbish dumping.

Over the coming months, Gary will also be carrying out a community consultation on regeneration of the vacant sites in Lower Oldpark.

Commenting on his return, Gary said, 'It's good to be back'.

Social Housing Scheme Update

The 12 social houses being built by Clanmil Housing at Alloa Street in Lower Oldpark are anticipated to be finished by the end of November 2024.

The development includes 7 three-bedroom houses and 1 three-bedroom bungalow, along with 3 two-bedroom houses and 1 two-bedroom bungalow.

As well as providing much needed new homes, the development represents important physical regeneration on one Lower Oldpark's remaining vacant

and undeveloped sites. The new housing is a mark of progress but much remains to be done.



Housing Advice

Help with housing problems is available from the LOCA Housing and Regeneration Worker, Gary Hughes.

Days: Monday to Friday.

Times: 8.30am-11.30am & 1.00pm - 3.30pm.

Phone: 028 96 92 8293. If no response, try the LOCA Centre number 028 90 35 1334 or 077 13990976.

Email:
loweroldparkhousing@gmail.com

Facebook Message:

@loweroldparkhousing

Help is available with a wide range of issues including, repairs, applying for social housing, rent issues, private landlord and owner occupation problems.

NIHE 'Make Your Money Work' Service

Who Can Use the Service?

NIHE tenants.

Help Available

Free benefits' checks, help with making a budget, and tips with making the most out of household income.

Contact Details

To speak to a Financial Inclusion Officer, call 03448 920 900 or make an appointment through the NIHE Lower Oldpark Patch Manager. For more information search online - NIHE Making Your Money Work.

Home Disability Adaptations For NIHE Tenants

If you are a Housing Executive (NIHE) tenant, you may be able to benefit from minor disability adaptations in your home without the involvement of an occupational therapist.

Types of Adaptations

External

- Provide a handrail to the front or back entrance of the house.
- Provide a whirly clothes line or path leading to a clothes line.
- Widen paths around the property.

Housing Associations Contact Details

There are four social housing landlords providing housing in Lower Oldpark.

- NIHE.
- Radius Housing.
- Choice Housing.
- Clanmil Housing.

Below are contact details for each organisation's local housing officer.

NIHE

Patch Manager: Martin Coney

Phone: 028 95982748 or 079 20450918.

Radius Housing

Housing Officer: Josephine McGovern

Phone: 0330 123 0888 (Choose Housing option).

Choice Housing

Housing Officer: Caoimhe McCollam

Phone: 03001112211.

Clanmil Housing

Housing Officer: Adele Bruce

Phone: 028 90876000 (Choose Housing option)

-Define steps for people with visual impairments.

-Re-site coal bunkers.

-Add outdoor lighting.

General Internal Adaptations

-Add an additional stair rail.

-Change door knobs to lever handles.

-Lower Yale locks.

-Lowering electrical sockets to an accessible level.

-Add power points.

-Add rocker light switches.

-Change lighting or add lighting.

-Relocate clothes hanging rails.

-Provide accessible window openings.

-Add letter cages or delivery shelves in entrance hall.

Kitchens and Bathrooms

-Lower or replace high wall cupboards.

-Additional storage space in kitchen.

-Lowering the cooker mains switch.

-Install an extractor fan with accessible controls.

Help

For help with requesting minor disability adaptations in your home, contact Gary Hughes (LOCA Housing and Regeneration Worker) using any of the following:

-Phone: 028 96 92 8293 or 028 90 35 1334 or 077 13990976.

Email: loweroldparkhousing@gmail.com

Facebook Message:

@loweroldparkhousing

Alley Gate Installation In December

Belfast City Council (BCC) has advised Lower Oldpark Community Association that work on the installation of alley gates at locations in Lower Oldpark is expected to begin before the end of December 2024.

BCC advises that the locations are:

-To the rear of 13-19 Shannon Street and to the rear of 1-5 Shannon Court.

-To the rear of 1-6 Foyle Court and to the side of 6 Foyle Court.

-To the rear of 2-16 Summer Street and to Nos 7-12 Foyle Court.

Public Realm Scheme Future Still Unclear

The future of a planned public realm improvement scheme for the section of the Oldpark Road from Cliftonville Circus to close to the Crumlin Road remains uncertain.

The planned improvements, which date back to 2017, received planning approval in 2019 but were put on hold. They were revived last year and it was hoped work would start before April 2024.

LOCA contacted the Department for Communities, which is responsible for the scheme, for an update. A representative said, 'DfC is still consulting with the Department for Infrastructure regarding their active travel arrangements for this area. Establishing a way forward is also affected by the ongoing budget restrictions. ... the funding of public realm projects in Belfast will be considered within the overall Department for Communities capital allocation for each financial year, alongside existing commitments and priorities.'