



# MHA News



News you can use!

**Msunduzi Housing Association NPC**

**June 2014**

“Housing is a human right. There can be no fairness or justice in a society in which some live in homelessness, or in the shadow of that risk, while others cannot even imagine it.”

Jordan Flaherty

### Dear Tenants,

It feels like Christmas has just passed, but we are already almost halfway through the year, and in for what appears to be a bitterly cold winter!

I want to thank all of you for the support we have received with reference to these newsletters. It is a great opportunity for us to let you know what’s “on the cards”, and how these issues might potentially affect you. As always, we invite tenants to write in and have your say in our newsletters as well.

We also thank you for your continued tenancy within our complexes, and a big thank you to those who really try to keep the area surrounding your unit clean and tidy. It is very refreshing to see some of your beautiful gardens.

In the spotlight lately is our computer centre at Acacia Park, which is proving to be such a success that we have set up a similar centre at Signal Hill, which we hope will be utilised to the fullest. We envision that everyone within our developments will have access to internet media. We have a part-time teacher who will run both centres, to ensure that they are fully utilised.

We had loads of fun over Easter, with two successful fun days for all the kids at each complex. It’s always refreshing to see the kids have so much fun. Thanks to our staff, who ran the fun days and made them such a success.

Until next issue, keep well, warm, and safe!

Ivor Caldecott, Chief Executive Officer

### Housekeeping

#### Littering

We would like to remind all tenants that each tenant is responsible for taking their own refuse to the skip. The Lease Agreement states that **“Tenants shall maintain their premises and common areas and corridors in a neat and tidy condition and shall avoid littering of any kind”**.

In addition, the bins at Signal Hill were vandalised earlier this year. Two bins were set alight and badly burned. If you have any information regarding this, please contact your housing supervisor. We would like to remind tenants that vandalism is a breach of the lease agreement, and that if the person(s) responsible are found, they will be at risk of having their lease agreement terminated, and may face criminal charges.



#### Noise

Some tenants are still playing loud music, and making noise, which greatly affects their neighbours. The Lease Agreement states that **“Tenants and their visitors shall be considerate to neighbours and not make loud noise or play loud music”**.

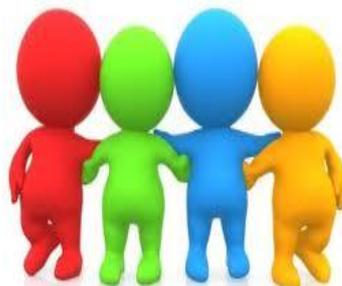
#### Security

There has been an increase in the incidence of petty crime at the complexes. In particular, we would like to remind you to always be watchful of your belongings. Ensure that your unit

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# FINANCE NEWS

We have noticed that many of our tenants have submitted deposit slips to us that have a wrong reference, an incomplete reference, or (on occasion) no reference at all. It is vitally important that **your reference is nothing other than your flat number and complex** (eg 301 ACACIA PARK RENT). If the reference is anything other than this, the payment you make is not properly captured on our finance system, and your payment may not reflect as having been made. This means that you will possibly have legal proceedings started against you.

In addition, many of our tenants who bank at Nedbank have brought us deposit slips where bank tellers have incorrectly captured the reference. This leads to a situation where the deposit slip has one reference, while the bank's computer system (and therefore our finance system) has another. The end result is that your payment is captured to someone else's account, while yours will be in arrears!

Branch Tak: Boom Street (PMBurg)  
 Credit Krediteur: Msunduzi Housing Association  
 Depositor's signature: [Redacted]  
 Depositor's contact no./Deponeerder se kontaktno: [Redacted]  
 Nedbank Limited Reg No. 1951/000009/06 DURBAN CENTRAL  
 2013-01-02  
 T2 (442)  
 16-99-45  
 Depositor's name and/or reference - Deponeerder se naam en/of referensie: **NAR.NW 25 SIGNAL HILL RENT**  
 Account number to credit - Rekeningnommer om te krediteer: 1165033550  
 # 1904 D F802 442 2 02/01/2013 15:31 DURBAN CENTRAL  
 CURRENT ACCOUNT  
 MSUNDUZI HOUSING ASSOCIATION  
 0000001165 033550/0 28338096  
 Cash/Kontant  
 Cheques/Tjeks  
**NAR.NW 25 SIGNAL HILL RENT**  
 Enjoy your day - Geniet die dag

Your assistance is therefore urgently requested - please check your deposit slip before you leave the bank! Ensure that your reference has been clearly printed on your deposit slip, and that it has been accurately captured by bank staff. This can be done by checking the small piece of paper (the receipt) that the bank teller will give to you with your copy of the deposit slip. Ensure that the reference shown on this slip is the same as the reference that is shown on the actual deposit slip.

This will greatly reduce the amount of time wasted in trying to track down payments, and will ensure that your account is always correct, accurate, and up-to-date.

## Free Water Reduction

It is important to note that the free basic water stipend, which all tenants currently receive, was not meant to be a permanent fixture. The MHA has provided free basic water to tenants at its own cost. However, as of the first of July 2014, the Msunduzi Municipality will amend its water tariffs, and the free water stipend will reduce to 4.5 kilolitres per month. However, if a person qualifies as indigent, the original stipend will apply, not the reduced stipend of 4.5 kilolitres. In order to qualify as indigent, the following criteria apply:

- The gross household income for qualification as a registered indigent may not exceed R3 200.00.
- Any resident who wants to apply as indigent must do so through the MHA Finance Department.
- Application must be made on the prescribed application forms, and applicants will be issued with reference numbers.
- An indigent application registration will be valid for up to one (1) year, where after subsidies/rebates will terminate.
- Should the tenants situation not have changed, a re-application for free water must be made in the ninth (9th) month of indigence, whereupon a revaluation/reassessment will be performed.
- Both successful and unsuccessful applicants will be informed in writing.
- Indigent tenants are compelled to inform the MHA about any change in their indigent status.
- Registered indigent tenants will be held responsible for any consumption over and above the free stipend, unless a restrictive measure has been put in place.
- Provision of the stipend will be suspended or restricted if indigent tenants fail to pay for water consumed over and above the subsidized amount.
- If a tenant supplies fraudulent information, such a tenant will not be considered as indigent at any stage afterwards.

Please also note that any tenant in rental arrears will not qualify for the free water stipend! We are confident that in working together, we can use these funds to improve the lives of tenants in other ways. Should you have any queries or comments, please write to us or come in to the office for a chat. We would love to discuss the matter further with you.

## MAINTENANCE

Please remember, when reporting faults, that certain items, in accordance with the lease agreement, are your responsibility, while other items are the responsibility of

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# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community Development is about creating sustainable and effective communities. Communities must be able to exist in an effective way, and must have a sense of identity that is fixed over time.

With this in mind, it is our goal to create communities that have an identity, and which persist over time. We want all tenants to feel like they are part of a community, to feel that their thoughts and ideas matter, and that their lives enrich the lives of those around them.

To achieve this, we have focused on a number of initiatives. Firstly, we have continued to improve upon the MHA's official newsletter. This newsletter forms an important part of our efforts to communicate with you, and to let you know of anything that may impact on your tenancy.

Secondly, we have started a soccer club for Under 15 boys at Acacia Park. We, in consultation with tenants, felt that the soccer club was a very worthwhile initiative, as it would provide a means for the children at Acacia Park to grow healthy bodies and healthy minds, as well as provide a means to pull our young people away from the attraction of drugs and other crime. We are currently in the process of moving the concept to Signal Hill. In keeping with our focus on sustainability, we are proud that the teams has been an initiative of the Acacia Park community, and that many community members have stepped up to help to create the team, and ensure that it runs according to plan.

Thirdly, we also launched the Acacia Park PC Centre. After consultations with parents, we felt that there should be some way for young people to be catered for in the afternoons, after school. The PC Centre is an attempt to provide a place where the kids can do homework, and research for school projects, in a structured and supervised manner. There are 12 computers in the centre, each with an internet connection.



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Housekeeping continued from page 1

is securely locked when you are not in it, and remember to lock your vehicle and set the alarm when you are at home. Ensure that all your windows are secured before you go to bed. And, if at all possible, ensure that you do your washing when you will be around to monitor it, and do not let it hang overnight.

## Illegal Occupants

If someone who is not on the family form is living with you, you are in breach of the Lease Agreement for illegal occupancy. The Lease Agreement states that **“The Lessee must personally reside in the premises during the lease period, and may not allow any other person to occupy the premises or part thereof instead of the lessee. The lessee may not sublet the premises or any part thereof”**.

*How to rectify the breach?* If you are in breach for this reason, you need to report to the MHA offices to rectify the breach.

## Parking System

Here are a few Parking Rules to remember:

1. Stick your MHA vehicle disc on your windscreen to gain access to your complex
2. No vehicles will be allowed inside the complex without a displayed vehicle disc
3. Tenants parking in a wrong parking bay may be towed away

If you live at Acacia Park, you must park your vehicle in the bay that corresponds with your flat number. If you have a second vehicle, use the visitors parking inside the complex for your second vehicle.

If you live at Signal Hill, you must park in the bay that was allocated to you. All tenants at Signal Hill are given their own parking bay numbers to use, if they have a vehicle. If you are not sure of your parking bay number, please contact the MHA offices. We will be glad to assist you in clarifying any misunderstandings regarding your parking.

Please also remember to ensure that your visitors don't park in tenant parking bays. Should a visitor be parked in a tenants parking, the visitor's vehicle may be towed away, with the cost for your account!

If you have problems with other tenants' visitors parking in your parking bay, please note the registration number of the vehicle and contact your Housing Supervisor to follow up the issue. In addition, please don't park your car on the grassed areas of the housing complexes, or let your visitor's park there. Not only is it bad for the grass, you may also damage underground pipes with the weight of your vehicle.

In addition, we have spread the concept of the PC Centre to Signal Hill. The Signal Hill PC Centre will consist of six computers, each with an internet connection. It will be opening shortly, so watch this space.

Also of great importance are the annual Fun Days. We had an Easter Fun Day at both complexes earlier in the year, which was a complete hit with the kids. They had a lot of fun, and loved competing for prizes. The Easter Egg Scavenger Hunt was particularly well-appreciated. Every child left with a sense of belonging, and a feeling of pride.

MHA Staff had just as much fun as did the kids, and we look forward to having many more of these events for the young people of our complexes



If you, as a tenant, feel that there is anything that you would like to discuss with the MHA regarding community development, please feel free to pop in at the office for a chat. We would love to hear your ideas on how to improve the sense of community at Acacia Park and Signal Hill, and would gladly partner with tenants to ensure that we have strong and sustainable communities.



Quality Affordable Rental Housing

MHA (fair wear and tear is taken into account when assessing faults). A full list of items is available in the MHA tenant training manual, which each new tenant is given a copy of. Should you require a new copy, please do not hesitate to come in to the office to request one.

#### **Mould**

With the colder weather upon us, it is tempting to keep windows closed while bathing. However, this causes a marked rise in mould on bathroom walls and ceilings. It is important to bear in mind that you are responsible to ensure that your unit is kept in the condition in which you took tenancy. Should there be mould on your walls, it will be your responsibility to remove it (or hire someone else to remove it for you), unless you can demonstrate that it is the MHA's responsibility.

#### **Health and Safety**

The health and safety of our tenants is of utmost concern to us. We would therefore like to remind you, our valued tenant, of the following:

#### **Fire Hoses**

The fire hoses exist to protect you and your belongings in the event of a fire. Using the hoses for any other purpose makes them less effective, and is a danger in case of a fire. Please do not use the fire hoses for any purpose other than putting out a fire! And also remember that the unauthorised use of a fire hose is a criminal offence!

#### **Powder Extinguishers**

The same guidelines as above apply to the red powder extinguishers. Please do not tamper with them in any way. If they are tampered with, they may not work effectively in the case of a fire, and you, your family, or your neighbours may well lose your lives! If you see someone tampering with a fire hose or a powder extinguisher, please do not confront the person directly! Rather, make a note of it, and inform your Housing Supervisor immediately.

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