

woven

Community News

Welcome to the 20th edition of Community News.
We hope you enjoy all the latest news, activities, upcoming events
and items of interest from around our Woven communities

The Policy Panel, made up of Woven tenants working alongside Woven staff members have been applying the Tenant Approval Stamp to a number of publications over the summer.
You can read all about the work they have been doing in this issue.



Would you like to join the Newsletter Group?

Community News is produced by tenants, for tenants; co-ordinated and compiled by the Newsletter Group and members of Woven's Communities Team.

We are on the lookout for willing tenant volunteers - Gain experience of newsletter production and share news with tenants across NI. Email: newsletter@woven.org.uk

The Newsletter Group is one of the many ways you can get involved and help to shape services for tenants. You can view the full range on the Menu of Tenant Involvement on the Woven website - woven.org.uk/community/community-involvement

HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS...

Rose-Tinted Glasses? *Where things really better in the past?*

Words from Woven tenant, Dave Maher

Like a lot of people I have often thought that life was so much more carefree back in the 50's, 60's & 70's. The old cliché of front doors being left open, people helping each other through tough times etc., all sounds so idyllic now.

The reality of historical crime trends is actually more complex than either "it's just as bad now" or "it was a complete paradise back then."

Decades ago, homes contained far fewer items of high monetary value. No flat-screen TVs, smartphones, high-end laptops, or designer goods. Communities were often more tightly knit, and the high visibility of neighbors on streets, provided a natural deterrent. However, leaving doors unlocked was often more a reflection of a trusting local culture and lower baseline consumer wealth than a complete absence of malicious actors.

Statistically, someone living in the 1960's to 90's was often at a higher statistical risk of experiencing a burglary or car theft than someone living in modern times.

Since the mid-1990's, property crime and many forms of violence have actually experienced a significant, long-term downward trend, largely aided by better home security, car immobilisers and targeted policing. How crime is counted and reported can create a distorted illusion. Over the decades, police have drastically tightened how they log offenses. Things that might have been informally dismissed are now formally recorded.

In the past, minor property thefts or burglaries often went unreported because people didn't bother or didn't have home insurance policies that required a police crime reference number for payouts. Today, insurance demands meticulous reporting, inflating official statistics.

We now have 24/7 news reporting, both local and international, so we now have The Media Effect. The biggest discrepancy between "the good old days" and today isn't necessarily the volume of crime, but our awareness of it.

Today, smartphones deliver a 24-hour stream of sensationalized, hyper-local, and global crime news directly to our pockets. This creates the psychological phenomenon known as the *Mean World Syndrome* — the more crime news you consume, the more dangerous, hostile, and threatening you believe your immediate neighborhood is, regardless of statistics.

To overcome this Mean World Syndrome, you can limit your daily exposure to sensationalised news and violent media. Instead, practice media literacy by questioning the motives behind dramatic headlines and seeking out constructive "solutions journalism" that highlights human progress and cooperation.

Engaging directly with your local community through real-life interactions also grounds your perspective, revealing that most everyday people are helpful and kind rather than dangerous.

Remember, the world is kept upright by people who have no idea they are holding it up.

Homes Through Time

NEW

There is a saying that a house becomes a home through the lives lived within it. Every street, terrace, estate and village has its own memories, not only of buildings, but of the people who gave places their character.

In this new feature, 'Homes Through Time', we hope to look back at the changing face of home life across the years. From coal fires and outdoor toilets to modern heating and busy new developments, housing has changed enormously within a generation or two. Yet many of the strongest memories people hold are not always about the houses themselves, but the communities around them.

Perhaps it was the corner shop where everyone met, the local pub where stories were shared, the neighbour who knew everybody's business, or the characters who became legends in their own streets. Many of us remember the sounds of children playing outside until dark, doors rarely locked, and communities where people looked out for one another.

We would love this feature to become something shared by Woven tenants themselves, so if you have old photographs of your street, home, local shops, workplaces, pubs or community events, we would be delighted to hear from you. We would also welcome memories and stories about the people and places that helped shape your community over the years.

Any photographs and memories sent in may be featured in future editions of the magazine as we build a picture of how homes, and the meaning of home, have evolved through time.

**Send all submissions to:
newsletter@woven.org.uk**



Bangor Seafront in the 1970s.
Do you have memories of holidaying here?

OUT AND ABOUT



As ever, the Communities Team has been busy all across our schemes. We were lucky enough to enjoy a very sunny Summer (for once!) and enjoyed lots of time running events outside. From wildlife talks to planting workshops to farm visits to family fun days, tenants and staff alike were able to make the most of the good weather with something for everyone! Want to get involved? Check our our website and socials!



LOTTERY SUMMER FUN

Woven were successful in securing funding from the National Lottery Community Fund last year to run events for our tenants promoting healthy living.

After a successful Summer programme last year, we ran the same again this Summer in Newry, Lisburn, Dungannon and the Northwest.

Each scheme ran a slightly different programme with activities ranging from physical activity workshops to street games to traditional and digital arts - with the art sessions brilliantly facilitated by *Wheelworks*.

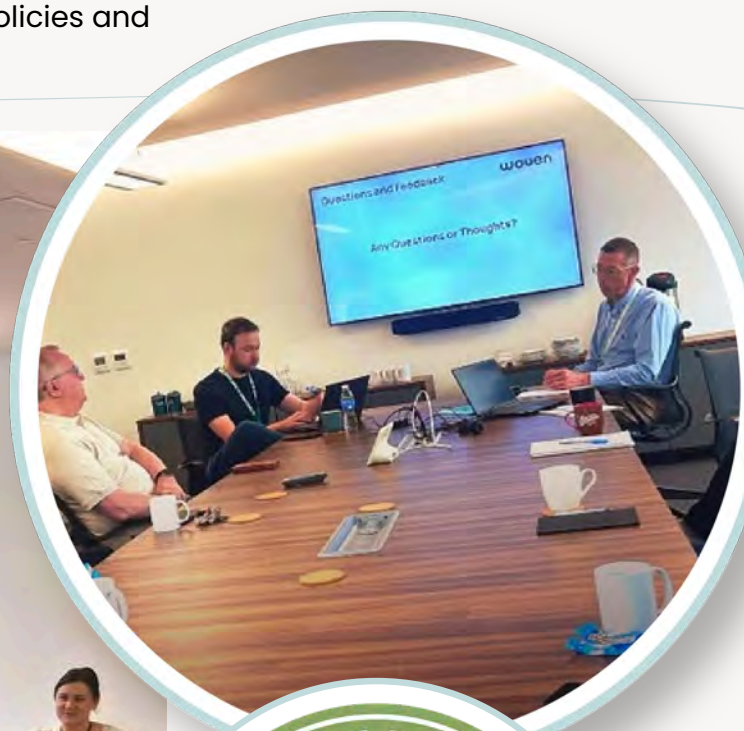
At the end of the programmes, kids were treated to a trip to W5 in Belfast, whilst for our Dungannon tenants welcomed 'Wee Bugs and Beasties' on to their scheme!

This funding has also been used by Woven to facilitate training for adults across our schemes in physical and mental health first aid.



POLICY PANEL

woven tenants on our Policy Panel have been busy over the last few months, working alongside staff to review various policies and information leaflets. Tenant feedback in this area is vital as tenants' lived experiences help us to design and implement policies and documents that work for tenants, on the ground!



The Policy Panel have been very busy over the past few months, reviewing various policies, procedures and tenant information leaflets.

The Policy Panel is made up of Woven tenants, who, along with staff members review Woven's policies to make sure that they are clear, easy to understand and fit for purpose. Tenants make recommendations and discuss any issues with staff who then make the relevant changes before publishing on our website.

Anywhere you see the 'Tenant Approval' thumbs up, you can rest assured that the policy/leaflet has been reviewed and approved by Woven tenants. Recently tenants have reviewed the 'Hoarding Policy', as well as the following information leaflets:

- Redecoration Grant
- Adapting Your Home
- Letting Standards
- Home Security
- Damp, Mould and Condensation
- Pest Control
- Winter Freeze Advice



JOIN THE TEAM

We are always looking for new tenants to join us – the more voices the better! Do you want to be part of the Policy Panel and help shape how Woven delivers its services to tenants? Contact communities@woven.org.uk.

Policy Panels may be held in our Belfast or Northwest offices, or one of our on-scheme community hubs. Tenants will be provided with lunch and reimbursed for their travel expenses. If preferred, tenants are able to participate via Microsoft Teams.

The Policy Panel is just one part of our Tenant Engagement options. For a full range of activities you can take part in, please visit woven.org.uk/community

MEET THE TENANT

woven tenant **Oonagh Ward** who lives at our Lorne Street development recently sat down with Community Involvement Officer, Tom Cummings to chat about life as a Woven tenant and the benefits of getting involved!

Where were you before you moved to Lorne Street?

My sister and I were privately renting but the landlord was looking to sell the property so we had to move out. After a short spell living with family, we got our apartment here and now feel settled in our new home after a stressful few months.

What was it that made you first get involved with the community events?

I attended the launch event for the scheme to learn more and meet new people. Philip Whyte (Woven Community Involvement Officer) encouraged me to come along and I am glad he did. I had been quite isolated in the past and wanted to get out and mix with people. I was nervous but keen to get involved!

What have you been involved with so far?

I have taken part in the 6 week air fryer course which was great. I have health conditions that make traditional cooking difficult so this course was very useful. I have also taken part in a photography course, taking photos around the local area, exploring the theme of 'Belonging'. I have really enjoyed trying new things.

What difference has getting involved made to your life?

It has had a huge, positive impact. I have got more confidence and feel happier in myself. Completing the courses has given me a sense of achievement and I have got to know my neighbours.

Do you feel more connected to your community now?

Absolutely! Taking part in activities with Woven has encouraged me to start attending other groups. I attend a circus skills class every week, as well as attending my local women's centre. I have also used Woven's active travel scheme to get out and about more.

What advice would you give to other tenants about getting involved?

Whilst it can be nerve wracking to make that first step and attend that first event, I would definitely encourage tenants to get involved. I've learned new skills and made new friendships. I have found a new sense of confidence and am looking forward to attending future events.



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Want to get involved in activities in your local area? Make sure you follow Woven on Facebook and check our website for regular updates.

BEEF STEW Serves 6



As the weather gets cooler and the nights get darker, nothing beats a comforting bowl of homemade stew! It is a great way to feed a crowd using up cheaper cuts of meat.

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1kg braising steak cut into 1" chunks
- 2 onions, chopped
- 3 celery sticks, sliced
- 4 large carrots, chopped
- 1 litre beef stock
- 900g potatoes
- 25g butter

Method

- Preheat oven to 180C.
- Heat 1 tbsp oil and brown beef (in batches). remove and set aside.
- Heat remaining oil and fry the onion, carrot and celery until softened. Season.
- Mix beef with the vegetables and transfer to large ovenproof dish and pour stock over the top.
- Peel and slice potatoes in ½cm thick slices and arrange on top. Dot butter over top and cover tightly with foil.
- Bake for 1 hour, remove foil; and bake for a further 15 minutes until potatoes are crisp.

APPLE AND BLACKBERRY CRUMBLE Serves 8

A crumble is the perfect Autumn dessert – serve with ice cream or custard. September/October is still a great time to forage for blackberries too!

Ingredients

- 200g plain flour
- 750g bramley apples, chopped
- 100g cold butter
- 250g fresh blackberries
- 100g soft brown sugar

Method

- Preheat your oven to 180C.
- Place the flour and cubed butter in a large bowl and rub together.
- Add the 100 g soft light brown sugar and stir.
- Chop apples into bite-sized pieces.
- Place the apple pieces and blackberries into the dish you are planning to cook the crumble in. Stir 1-2 tablespoons of light brown sugar into the fruit. Mix together so the apples, blackberries and sugar are well combined, then spread out into a flat layer in the dish and sprinkle over the crumble mix.
- Bake for 30-40 minutes or until it is golden on top, and the fruit is bubbling.



ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS



Woven is currently on a journey to net zero and are looking to become greener and more sustainable. This feeds through into all aspects of our works from new developments to existing schemes. Below are a just couple of examples of Woven's green work.

Linen Mill Court, Drumbness



Linen Mill Court has a fantastic green space adjacent to the scheme that provides an excellent habitat for plants and wildlife.

Rather than let this valuable green space just sit there, Woven have recently cleared the entrance to the site to create a 'viewing platform' and have undertaken a number of consultation events with tenants.

In early September, Buglife helped facilitate a 'Bug Hunt' event where tenants and staff undertook a bug survey. Capturing, recording and releasing a wide array of insects.

This site presents a unique space as a dedicated nature site and we are very excited about the potential of this site as a valuable resource for Linen Mill tenants and beyond!

Springbank, Belfast

In the past couple of years, Woven have been working hard, in partnership with Colin Neighbourhood Partnership (CNP) to clear and repurpose an area of unused land at Springbank,

More than 20 years ago, this waste ground site was fenced off due to antisocial behaviour. It became neglected and overgrown. For our tenants, it was a daily reminder of a wasted space that could have been so much more.

Woven staff recently undertook a clean up on the scheme to prepare it for Winter. We hope in 2027 it can become a valuable green resource for Woven and the wider community.



Did You Know?



100% of our workforce has now successfully completed Carbon Literacy training (as well as some tenants!)



Our 'Journey to Net Zero Strategy' ensures we are working to reduce emissions and become greener and more sustainable



Woven is a certified member of All-Ireland Pollinator Plan (AIPP) National Biodiversity Data Centre

THE FUTURE THAT NEVER WAS:

Words by Woven tenant,
Dave Maher

WHAT PEOPLE IN 1900 THOUGHT HOUSING WOULD BE LIKE IN 2000

Imagine standing in 1900 and trying to picture life a hundred years ahead. The motor car was a novelty, most homes had no electricity, and many people still relied on horses for transport. Yet people were already imagining what the year 2000 might bring...

Some of their predictions were remarkably accurate. Others were wonderfully wide of the mark.

Many futurists believed that household chores would almost disappear. Drawings from the early 1900's showed automatic cleaning systems, mechanical servants and kitchens where machines did most of the work.

In a way, they were right. While few of us have robot butlers, many homes now contain washing machines, tumble dryers, dishwashers, vacuum cleaners and smart devices that would have seemed magical to Edwardian families.



Some writers predicted houses would be built from steel, glass and artificial materials rather than brick and timber. They imagined lightweight homes that could be assembled quickly and cheaply.

Modern housing certainly uses a far wider range of materials than was common in 1900, although the traditional brick house remains stubbornly popular across the United Kingdom and Ireland.

At the turn of the twentieth century, coal fires heated most homes. Many future-gazers predicted cleaner, safer forms of heating and lighting. They were correct. Central heating, electricity and gas transformed domestic life, improving comfort while removing much of the smoke and grime that once filled towns and cities.



Not every prediction was so successful. Many believed that people would travel to work in flying machines and that moving pavements would replace ordinary streets.

While airports became commonplace, most of us still commute with our feet firmly on the ground.

One of the strongest hopes of the era was that future housing would be healthier. Reformers imagined spacious homes surrounded by gardens, parks and fresh air. Crowded slums a thing of the past.

This vision influenced housing developments throughout the 20th century, including many social housing schemes that sought to provide decent homes, green spaces and strong communities.

Perhaps the most surprising thing is what nobody saw coming. Few people anticipated the internet, mobile phones, home computers or the ability to speak instantly to someone on the other side of the world. The greatest changes often turn out to be the ones nobody imagines.

As we think about the homes of the future today, with smart technology, renewable energy and new ways of working, it's worth remembering that every generation has tried to predict what comes next.



The people of 1900 got some things spectacularly wrong yet they also understood something important: good housing is about more than bricks and mortar. It is about creating places where people can live healthier, safer and more fulfilling lives. Perhaps that is one prediction that never goes out of date.

Prediction Scorecard



- Household chores done by machines ✓
- Clean heating and lighting ✓
- Better housing conditions ✓
- Flying cars ✗
- Moving pavements ✗
- Robot servants ✗ (so far!)

WINTER FREEZE ADVICE



Every year, during spells of cold weather, households face the risk of damage to their home and belongings as a result of freezing and burst water pipes. With Winter on the horizon, we look at a few simple precautions tenants can take so the risk of damage can be considerably reduced.

1 Locate your Stop Cock

Your stop cock controls the water supply entering your home. Stop cocks are usually found in your kitchen, below the sink unit. However in some houses they are in a front or back hall or in a larder unit. Take time to find out where yours is located, should you need to close it in the event of a burst pipe.



- > Check the stop cock every few months to ensure that it can be opened and closed easily.
- > Turn off the water supply at the stop cock if you are going to be away from your property for a lengthy period.

Heating & Fuel

2

Ensure throughout any period of adverse weather conditions, that there is enough oil to run the oil fired central heating or credit to run the gas fired central heating at your property. It is vital to maintain a supply of fuel and/or credit. Also ensure that your heating system is left running – even if at a low temperature and for short periods, throughout the day – when you are away from the property as a regular supply of heat will greatly reduce the risk of frozen pipes.



- > If possible, leave the trap door to your roof space slightly open to allow warm air to circulate in the loft.

3 Thawing Out Frozen Pipes

Sometimes, in extreme weather, frozen pipes may be unavoidable. Your first step should be to turn off the water supply at the stop cock and don't leave any taps running or dripping, as the exit of water down the plughole may be restricted if the down pipes or drains are frozen. You should take steps to protect everything around the pipe that appears to be frozen to avoid damage if it bursts and never attempt to thaw out frozen pipes by switching on your heating.



- > Gently heat any frozen pipe sections with a hairdryer (at its lowest setting) or a heated cloth wrapped around the pipe. Do not warm them too quickly or they may burst. NEVER apply a direct flame and always thaw along the pipe from the end nearest the tap.

4 Burst Pipes

Should the worst happen and a pipe does burst, remain calm and take immediate action by turning off the water supply at the stop cock. You should also switch off your heating system and, if there is any chance that water could come into contact with electrical wirings or fittings, your electricity supply.

Open all COLD water taps to drain the system. DO NOT TURN ON THE HOT TAPS AS YOUR HOT WATER CYLINDER MAY COLLAPSE IF THE PIPES LEADING TO IT ARE FROZEN.



- > It is important to remember to make sure that your hot water system is refilled before you re-light your boiler or switch on the immersion heater.

Useful Numbers

Northern Ireland Water
Emergencies **0845 744 0088**

NI Water Leakline
For reporting a leak in the mains water supply
0800 028 2011

Flooding Incident Line
For emergencies relating to serious flooding
0300 2000 100

Northern Ireland Electricity
Emergencies **03457 643 643**

Gas (Phoenix & Firmus)
Emergencies **0800 002 001**

Department for Regional Development (Roads Service)
For reporting faults with street lighting.

For emergencies relating to fire, crime or serious injury – 999 Non-emergencies – 101

STAFF NEWS

Woven achieved a first for Social Housing in Northern Ireland by achieving 100% Carbon Literacy training across all staff, reaching our target ahead of schedule.

What began as a small initiative grew into an organisation-wide programme, embedding climate and biodiversity awareness across every team. The impact is already being seen through hundreds of tonnes of carbon savings pledged by staff and a stronger culture of sustainability throughout the organisation.



The training team, led by Environmental and Biodiversity Officer, Ciaran McLarnon, worked tirelessly in delivering the training internally.

This milestone is just the start. Our focus now is on turning knowledge into action and supporting our homes, tenants and communities in the transition to net zero.



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100% Carbon Literacy

“ Achieving 100% Carbon Literacy training is an outstanding milestone for Woven Housing and a powerful demonstration of leadership within the social housing sector. ”

Sojan Johny Built Environment & Housing Coordinator
The Carbon Literacy Project

Carbon Literacy Project



[READ MORE](#) about Woven's environmental efforts on the 'Environment News' page in this newsletter

WOVEN PROUD TO SUPPORT PRIDE!

Woven staff were delighted to join our colleagues from Choice Housing, Radius Housing and Clanmil Housing for Belfast Pride in July to celebrate inclusion, equality and community.

It was a great opportunity to strengthen partnerships, celebrate diversity and reaffirm our shared commitment to creating inclusive spaces.

This year's Belfast Pride parade, held under the theme 'Love in Every Colour', brought together around 8,000 participants, with thousands of supporters lining the streets of Belfast.

One of the city's largest annual celebrations, Pride promotes equality, visibility and acceptance while celebrating the LGBTQIA+ community and the diversity that makes our society stronger.



TENANT ZONE



! IMPORTANT

Dates For Your Diary

Interested in Community Events in your area, or want to get involved in our Tenant Engagement activities?



Follow us on Facebook for the latest updates



Visit woven.org.uk (Community > Get Involved) to view our latest calendars



Call the Community Involvement Officer for your area (028 9042 7211)



Email communities@woven.org.uk

Next Time...

In the next Edition of the Newsletter, expect to see:

- Photos from our seasonal events
- Gardening Competition 2026 Winners
- Homes Through Time
- A look towards 2027...

and much more....



Welcome to Tenant Zone! This section is all about our tenants. Got a photo, a story, a poem or anything else to share? Get in touch and we could feature it here.

This is also your opportunity to get involved and have your voice heard.

ATTENTION PLEASE!



Bin Responsibilities...

As a Woven tenant, you play an important role in keeping your community clean, safe, and environmentally responsible. Residents are asked to use the correct bins for general waste, recycling, and food waste, ensuring items are sorted appropriately to reduce contamination.

Bins should be placed out for collection on the correct day and returned promptly after emptying to avoid obstruction or hazards.

Please take care not to overfill bins and ensure lids are fully closed to prevent litter and pests.

If you have bulky items or additional waste, please arrange a collection through the appropriate service rather than leaving items beside bins.

By working together, we can maintain a tidy and pleasant environment for everyone.

Your local Council website will have information on the bins in your area. If you need further advice about waste disposal or have concerns about the condition of the bins/bin store on your scheme, contact your Housing Officer



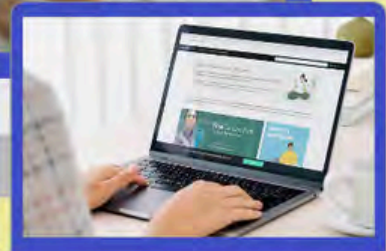
WE WANT YOU!

Want to join our Editorial Panel and get involved in writing articles as well as designing and editing the Woven Community Newsletter?

Or do you just have a story you want to tell? Maybe you have an article you think other tenants would love to read or a recipe to share?

Whatever it is, get in touch at newsletter@woven.org.uk today!

Ulster Bank



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