

Summer 2013

factoring MATTERS



factoringMATTERS - our newsletter for owners

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Nicola Rankine,
Factoring Officer

Welcome to our first newsletter!

Welcome to our first newsletter addressed solely to the 834 owners within the 3,400 properties managed by Thenue.

In this newsletter we are concentrating on the results of our recent owners survey and our responses to some of the key issues identified from the survey. We hope you find this of interest. As this is the first edition of 'factoring MATTERS', please let us know what you think.

Other information provided in this newsletter includes details of the current year's cyclical maintenance programme, property insurance issues and information on who's who in Thenue in relation to factoring services.

We have a shared interest with you to protect your investment in your property, either as an owner occupier or as a landlord.

This shared interest will range from protecting the actual common fabric of the building where your ownership is in a tenement through to ensuring that areas of common landscaping are maintained where ownership is of an individual house.

Our recent survey has given us important information regarding the service we provide and we would like to thank the owners who took the time to reply. A summary of the main survey results are included in this newsletter.

In the coming year we will be looking to address the issues raised within the survey, and this newsletter details some changes to the service which have already been implemented. Moving forward, we will continue to issue owners newsletters on a regular basis to ensure owners are kept informed of any changes to the service and issues affecting their properties.

The overall aim of the recent survey was to understand how owners feel Thenue is performing as their factor, and how we could improve the services we currently provide. In particular, the questionnaire asked respondents for their opinions on:

- The factoring service
- Factoring Bills
- Getting involved in the work that Thenue do
- Property repair services



survey results survey results survey results survey results

The responses provided a representative sample of all our house types. Over 75% of the respondents confirmed that they have not found it difficult to maintain their home or pay the factoring charges.

The above statistic is at odds with the current arrears levels, which show a high percentage of owners have an outstanding balance due on their factoring account. In view of the ongoing arrears, we are in the process of reviewing our debt recovery process and will be using all methods possible to recover debt, which will potentially lead to increased costs (late payment fees, debt recovery fees, etc) being incurred for any accounts in arrears.

Have you found it difficult to:

yes no

maintain your home 22% 78%

pay for your factoring 24% 76%

Factoring Services

How satisfied are you with the factoring service you currently receive from Thenue?

A bar chart with four bars representing satisfaction levels. The x-axis labels are 'Very Satisfied', 'Satisfied', 'Dissatisfied', and 'Very Dissatisfied'. The y-axis represents percentages. The bars are colored purple, light blue, lime green, and dark grey respectively. The values are 8%, 57%, 25%, and 10%.

Satisfaction Level	Percentage
Very Satisfied	8%
Satisfied	57%
Dissatisfied	25%
Very Dissatisfied	10%

In relation to value for money we have for example recently appointed Mears as our main reactive repair contractor after an extensive and detailed procurement exercise where value for money and service delivery were the key drivers.

Factoring Bills

We are continually working to improve our billing procedure and the survey showed that 68% of owners were happy with the information contained within the invoices. We hope to improve this figure and are working to include additional detail within the invoices wherever possible.

We also introduced a new and improved invoice format in November 2012 which incorporates a statement showing all transactions for the period. It is hoped that this format is more user-friendly and will allow owners to monitor their balance on an ongoing basis.

Although the majority of owners stated that they were happy with the six-monthly billing frequency, we consider that issuing invoices on a quarterly basis will improve efficiency for the following reasons:

- **The balances due will be lower and therefore more manageable to prevent arrears building up.**
- **Owners making regular monthly or weekly payments will be able to review their balances at more regular intervals to allow adjustments to be made and prevent a large balance from building up.**
- **Owners will be aware of recent work carried out and be in a better position to raise any queries or disputes.**

We consider that this will be a positive step and lead to an overall improvement in the factoring service. This change took effect from 1 April 2013, with the bill for the first quarter 1st April 2013 to 30th June 2013 to be issued to owners by the end of July.

In relation to payment options, 90% of respondents to the survey stated that they were happy with the options available. We have taken this opportunity to list the various payment options available in order that owners can select the one most suitable to their requirements:

- **Monthly Direct Debit Payments**
- **Telephone Payments (Debit Cards Only)**
- **Chip and Pin Payments at our Main Reception (Debit Cards Only)**
- **Online Payments (following Registration with our Payment Provider, Allpay)**
- **Allpay Card Payments (at Post Offices and Stores showing 'PayPoint' Signs)**
- **Cheque**

Please note that we cannot accept cash payments. If you require a Direct Debit mandate or an Allpay card, please contact our Factoring Officer to request this.

The Direct Debit scheme allows owners to make monthly contributions towards their account to aid with budgeting and prevent the account falling into arrears. Please note that contributions will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure payments are sufficient to cover costs, however we would stress that it is the responsibility of each owner to monitor their account and ensure it is not falling into arrears. Continual monitoring of your account is made easy with the new statement format and quarterly billing cycle, and if you wish to alter your contributions or make an additional payment at any point throughout the year, please contact our Factoring Officer to advise.

You will also be aware that we introduced a 10% discount on our management/admin fee to all owners who chose to pay by Direct Debit with a view to increasing uptake of this scheme. Although this has proved successful, it is not feasible to continue to apply this discount on an ongoing basis. The discount ceased with effect from 1 April 2013.

It is good to be able to report that we have agreed an inflation only increase of 3.2% which was applied to the factoring management fee for the year commencing 1st April 2013, increasing the annual fee to £141.00 (£35.25 per quarter) .

For those owners who pay an administration fee rather than a full factoring fee, we are considering replacing the current 20% charge with a set annual charge to avoid continual fluctuation of the amounts due by owners. The current 20% charge will continue meantime pending the outcome of our review of this area.



Repairs Service

Gutter Cleaning

We will be tendering for a new contractor to carry out the gutter cleaning contract for the next three years.

This work is very important to protect the fabric of the building from damage due to water penetration, but recent changes to Health & Safety Regulations affecting working at height may well lead to increased costs for all owners.

Once the contract has been tendered and concluded, details will be placed on the website and in subsequent newsletters.

Landscape Maintenance

105 responses were received to questions in this area with highest satisfaction levels reported on Landscape Maintenance (55%) and Door Entry System Maintenance (52%). Dissatisfaction levels on the other hand were high in relation to backcourt cleaning (53%), close cleaning (54%) and sweeping & de-littering at 75% dissatisfaction.

All of these services have recently been re-tendered and we are working hard with our new contractors to improve service in these areas. We are also seeking to work more closely with the Council Cleansing Service to ensure that the sweeping & de-littering is co-ordinated with their uplift.

Property Repairs

There were only 40-43 responses to the questions relating to Common Repairs and of those, over 70% agreed the work was necessary and over 60% found Thenue staff helpful. In relation to the cost of the work, 29% found it to be reasonable and 29% disagreed, with over 40% Don't Knows.

Where Major Repairs had been carried out there were fewer responses, nine, but again 78% agreed that the work was necessary with no disagreement and 22% Don't Knows.



Enhanced Service

55% of respondents indicated that they did not wish to pay for an enhanced service although 42% would require more information.

In summary, the majority of owners are satisfied with the service but we would want to increase that percentage.

Who's Who in Thenue

Factoring

Nicola Rankine
Factoring Officer
Susan Johnston
Finance Officer

Nicola (pictured right) has taken over from Iain Clark who retired recently. Nicola has worked in Property Management for a commercial factor and is a graduate from Strathclyde University.

Contact Nicola on 0141 550 9534 or email nicola.rankine@thenuehousing.co.uk for all enquiries relating to bills/services.



Repairs

Gail Gribben
Repairs Manager
Claire McClymont
Customer Services Officer
Anne Hogg
Charlene Crichton
Repairs Assistants

All routine common repairs are handled by the Repairs Team. Please note that internal repairs to owner occupied properties are the responsibility of owners.

Cyclical & Landscaping

Marie Clare Rafferty
Property Services Manager
(Development)
Ronnie Shearer
Project Officer
Michelle McMillan
Project Officer

This team is responsible for landscape and cyclical programmes with Ronnie now providing landscape Clerk of Works services and Michelle having responsibility for painterwork.

Major Repairs

Iona Taylor
Property Services Manager
(Technical)
Scott Davidson
Bobby Kelly
Project Officers
Mick Lee
Clerk of Works
Charlene Dupree
Tenant Liaison Officer

This team is responsible for any major repairs work affecting the common parts of your building, eg stone repairs.



Cyclical Programme 2013-2014

The cyclical maintenance programmes for Landscape Maintenance and Close Cleaning/ Backcourt Sweeping and De-littering continue as usual.

During the year we will be carrying out Painterwork contracts that affect the communal areas at the addresses below.

All owners will receive an individual letter prior to the contract starting in their area and we will update the website with details as they are known.

London Road - nos 78-86

Calton

Green Street - nos 1-57
Millroad Street - nos 31-220
Moncur Street - nos 225-236
Stevenson Street -
nos 201-231
Tobago Place - nos 10-41
Tobago Street - nos 135-195
Abercromby Street - no 227
Crownpoint Road - no 10

Abercromby Street

Abercromby Street -
nos 142,152,160,178

Gallowgate

Bain Street - no 8
Gallowgate - nos 272,282
Millroad Street - nos 5A,5B

Mackeith Street

Mackeith Street -
nos 11,15,19
Main Street - nos 56-86

Bridgeton

Acorn Street - no 8
Dale Street - nos 43,48
Finnart Street -
nos 36,46,110,120
Franklin Street - nos 51,61
Landressy Place - nos 3-40
Muslin Street - nos 42-67
Reid Street -
nos 2-90, 113, 121, 129

193 - 221 Main Street

Finnart Street

Finnart Street -
nos 52-64

Madras Street

Madras Place - nos 11-51
Madras Street - nos 15-55
Mill Street - nos 49-61

Muslin Street

Muslin Street - nos 56-64
Old Dalmarnock Road -
nos 36,40
Reid Place - no 7
Reid Street - no 3

Tullis Street

Main Street - nos 90,92
Tullis Street - no 10

Acorn Court

Acorn Court - nos 2-35
Megan Street - nos 78-82

Main Street

Savoy Street - nos 2-23
Colbert Street - nos 2-25
Dale Path - nos 3-15
Franklin Street - nos 3-17
Main Street - nos 93-153
Muslin Street - nos 18-30

Greenhead Street - no 113



**Bridgeton Cross/
James Street**

Bridgeton Cross - nos 10-28
Dalmarnock Road - nos 32,42
James Street - nos 175B

3 Bridgeton Cross

12 James Street - no 12
Greenhead Street -
nos 97-109

3 Landressy Street - no 3
Bridgeton Cross - no 34

Main Street - nos 29,33,41

Tullis Street - no 91
Greenhead Street -
nos 117-127

Greenhead Street -
nos 139-151

Abercromby Street -
nos 376-388
London Road - nos 499-505

Greenlodge Terrace - nos 3,5
Greenhead Street - no 155

James Street - no 20

Main Street - no 51

Netherholm

Blaeloch Drive - nos 49-53
Holmbyre Road - nos 56-58

Blackhill

Bargeddie Street - nos 34,40
Frankfield Street - nos 69-114
Moodiesburn Street -
nos 40-64
Queenslie Street - nos 1-35

Frankfield Street - nos 64-78
Moddiesburn Street -
nos 26-30
Hogganfield Street -
nos 39-63

Hogganfield Street - nos
68,72
Hogganfield Court - nos 1-15

Moodiesburn Street -
nos 2-10

Hogganfield Street -
nos 36-64

Molendinar Gardens -
nos 1-10

Molendinar Close - nos 1-10

Ballieston

Caledonia Drive - nos 1-20
Drumpellier Avenue -
nos 1-68

Muirside Road - nos 103,111
Provanhall Crescent - nos 2,4





Insurance Renewal 2013/2014

The charge for the 2013/14 insurance premium has been applied to the latest invoice of all owners who cover their buildings insurance through this policy. We still consider that these premiums are reasonable within the current market, however an increase was unavoidable this year due to the following:

- **Low interest rates - Insurers can no longer make large profits on investments**
- **Increase in crime**
- **Increase in climate and subsidence related claims**
- **Increase in compensation culture related claims due to the financial downturn**
- **2011's serious unrest and major city riots**
- **Severe weather for three successive winters resulting in tenfold increase in snow and ice losses**
- **Increased flooding claims**

Unfortunately these points have led to a hardening of rates across the entire insurance market, however our brokers, Farr Insurance, continue to work with the insurers to obtain the best rates possible. Your insurance documentation for the year was included with your latest invoice, detailing the sum insured, which is the rebuild value rather than the market value of the property. Your premium is calculated based on the individual sum insured, however if you wish to make any adjustments to your rebuild value, please advise our Factoring Officer who will liaise with Farr regarding any increases or reductions applicable.



If you wish to make a claim on this policy, please contact Farr Insurance Claims on 0845 129 8012 citing your address and the Thenue Policy Reference 13/RSL/10196A. If you wish to add your property to the Thenue Policy, please contact your Factoring Officer to confirm the sum insured required.



Help us keep in touch with you

We are aware that we do not hold contact details for many property owners, meaning only postal contact may be available to us in the event of an emergency. For example, if we receive a report of a leak from your property into another flat, it is essential that we are able to contact you as soon as possible to make you aware of the situation and avoid the potential for access to be forced by the police to stop a leak. We would therefore ask that you complete the contact information below and return it to our Factoring Officer to allow your details to be updated. Please include any daytime contact telephone numbers and email addresses where possible.

Alternatively you can email your information to nicola.rankine@thenuehousing.co.uk- please state your six digit customer reference number in the subject heading.

Name	
Customer Reference Number	
Property Address	
Alternative Correspondence Address (if applicable)	
Home Telephone	
Mobile Telephone	
Daytime Telephone	
Email Address 1	
Email Address 2	
Any Additional Information	



Information and Getting Involved

87% of respondents indicated that they would like a regular newsletter specifically for owners but less than 30% were interested in an Owner's Forum.

A dedicated Owners' Newsletter had strong support and this newsletter is the first of a twice yearly newsletter which we would propose to issue to owners.

Despite a minority of respondents expressing an interest in an Owners Forum, we nevertheless feel there is value in establishing a "forum" to further enhance communication with owners on the factoring service. With over half the owners who responded having access to the internet, we have set up an owners "internet forum" on our website. Owners can join the forum and can post discussion items and receive responses from us. Similarly, we can use the forum to receive feedback from owners on a variety of matters relating to the factoring service. Log on to www.thenuehousing.co.uk to take part!



Code of Conduct for Factors

The Scottish Government passed the Property Factors (Scotland) Act 2011 and as part of this act they created a Code of Conduct to which all factors are obliged to comply.

We will be issuing a 'Written Statement of Service' to all owners later this year, as required by the Code, which will detail the services we provide and the financial and charging arrangements.

The Code requires us to provide sufficiently detailed information in relation to charges to owners. This is an area we are continually working towards improving.

Communicating with you

We note that over half of the owners who responded had access to the internet and we would want to explore further how we might improve communication with owners using the internet, by both our web page and perhaps Facebook or Twitter. Why not let us know what you think by emailing us at owners@thenuehousing.co.uk



Thenue Housing



@thenuehousing