

Lead Water Pipes

1. **How many homes owned by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive are connected to lead water pipes? (Please specify whether these are lead pipes located within the homes or outside the boundary of the property – i.e. including inside the home and up to where the boundary of the property meets the public road - if known.)**

The Housing Executive does not retain information on lead pipes within its properties.

2. **How many homes owned by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive have you been made aware of that may be connected to lead water pipes? (This could be via correspondence from a tenant, political representative, another interested person or by another means.)**

Over the past 12 months, the Housing Executive has been made aware of 9 properties with lead water pipes within the boundary of the property all which were replaced.

3. **How many of the homes mentioned in your response to questions 1. and 2. are occupied by families with children?**

The Housing Executive do not hold this information.

4. **Please provide all correspondence held by you on the issue of 'lead pipes' over the past 12 months. (This may include, but is not limited to, internal and external emails, letters, business cases and reports. Examples of external correspondence recipients include any Stormont or other Government department, elected representative, public bodies, member of the public and any other outside body.)**

Please see the information provided below. Please note some of the information has been redacted as it comprises personal data relating to identified or identifiable individuals and the Housing Executive considers this to be an exception from disclosure under Regulation 13 of the Environmental Information Regulations. Disclosure of this personal information would be a breach of UK GDPR principle (a) under Article 5(1).

[Redacted]

From:
Sent:
To:
Cc:
Subject:

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

H [Redacted]

Further to your email.

This is concerning as the NIHE have been replacing lead as part of its improvement programme in the 1980's and 1990's and it would appear that under previous works the contractor did not replace the lead pipework back to the NI Water Connection in this instance.

Current NIHE policy is that whenever lead pipework is found in NIHE properties during the course of any works it should be removed as part of the works. If you could ask the contractor to provide costs for this removal and include the cost within scheme by way of a Post Contract Variation.

This would be supported by the Building Safety Department and we would liaise with NI Water to determine if the mains network contains lead pipe work and their plans to upgrade their system.

I hope this is helpful.

Regards

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Building Safety. Asset Management
Northern Ireland Housing Executive

☎ : [Redacted]
✉ : [Redacted]

Housing
Executive | **ASSET**
MANAGEMENT

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 November 2022 17:48
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Causeway Aluminium Bungalows 03:84:1002 - Lead water mains

[REDACTED]

Works are presently ongoing on the above scheme.

When excavating the concrete path at the rear of one of the dwellings in one of the Phases the Contractor has uncovered a lead incoming mains water supply pipe which changes to copper before entering the dwelling.

The Consultant had planned to carry out BKR works to the Kitchens in 7No. of the 23No.dwellings in the scheme and has included monies for the replacement of the watermains at these dwellings should lead be uncovered when the existing units are removed but wholesale kitchen replacement/lead main renewal was never intended and monies have not been included for same.

We intend to investigate the other dwellings to establish whether or not all dwellings in the estate have lead mains but in the meantime we would appreciate your advice regarding present NIHE Policy where we become aware of the presence of lead mains serving an NIHE property.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From:
Sent:
To:
Cc:
Subject:
Attachments:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Importance:

Hi [REDACTED]

Good afternoon. Further to my query with Central FOI Team regarding previous FOI response to Claire Hanna, MP in respect of lead pipes herewith attached as of 05 Sept 2022. Please note that the query was dealt with my Belfast Region, Housing Services. Hope this is the document you are looking for.

If there is anything further that you will require, please let me know and will be glad to assist you. Many thanks.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

Asset Management
Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE)
1st Floor-D, North Side, Nine Lanyon Place
Belfast BT1 3LP

[REDACTED]

Web: www.nihe.gov.uk

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From: NIHE FOI <foi@nihe.gov.uk>

Sent: 21 September 2022 12:58

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Query-Claire Hanna MP re FOI request/s

Hi [REDACTED],

Please find attached response sent to Claire Hanna's office.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 21 September 2022 12:56

To: [REDACTED] NIHE FOI <foi@nihe.gov.uk>

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: Query-Claire Hanna MP re FOI request/s

Importance: High

Hi Central FOI Team,

Good day to you. This is to request for your kind assistance regarding previous FOI request/s from the office of Claire Hanna, MP regarding lead pipes in NIHE South Belfast properties. [REDACTED] has asked us if we can help him locate a copy of a response relative herewith due to a further query from a local office.

In this light, this is to request if you can assist us by providing the reference number so we would know which files we are looking for that you can locate on your FOI register.

Thank you very much for your support and kind assistance regarding this matter.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

Asset Management
Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE)

1st Floor-D, North Side, Nine Lanyon Place
Belfast BT1 3LP



Web: www.nihe.gov.uk

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[REDACTED]

From:
Sent:
To:
Subject:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 20 September 2022 08:15

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Letter from Claire Hanna MP re. Lead Pipes in NIHE South Belfast Properties 14.09.22

Hi [REDACTED]

We have had several queries from Councillors in a number of Councils regarding lead levels in properties.

I will speak to [REDACTED] to see what the FOI was and see how we responded previously.

Regards

[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 16 September 2022 17:31

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Letter from Claire Hanna MP re. Lead Pipes in NIHE South Belfast Properties 14.09.22

[REDACTED]

I think something about lead pipes came in before?

Regards

[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 16 September 2022 17:29

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: FW: Letter from Claire Hanna MP re. Lead Pipes in NIHE South Belfast Properties 14.09.22

Gents

I am not quite sure who I should refer this to, so picked you two.

Can you to take a look at the attached letter from Claire Hanna MP regarding lead pipes and have a think about who would be best placed to respond, it certainly isn't me in this case.

Although this was stamped in to our office, it is not specifically addressed to us and you can also see she mention across N.I. so to me this is not specific to South Belfast.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From:
Sent:
To:
Subject:
Attachments:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I have received the attached query from one of our local offices regarding Lead levels in our properties.

Apparently Claire Hanna MP submitted an FOI previously.

Would you have a copy of the response.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 16 September 2022 17:31

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Letter from Claire Hanna MP re. Lead Pipes in NIHE South Belfast Properties 14.09.22

[REDACTED]

I think something about lead pipes came in before?

Regards

[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 16 September 2022 17:29

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: FW: Letter from Claire Hanna MP re. Lead Pipes in NIHE South Belfast Properties 14.09.22

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Thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From:
Sent:
To:
Subject:
Attachments:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 16 September 2022 17:29

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: FW: Letter from Claire Hanna MP re. Lead Pipes in NIHE South Belfast Properties 14.09.22

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Thanks

[REDACTED]



Claire Hanna MP

Member of Parliament for South Belfast
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
Email: Claire.hanna.mp@parliament.uk

**The Housing Centre
2 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8PB**



Ref: lead pipes.

Dear Team,

I am writing to you from the office of Claire Hanna MP regarding the issue of lead supply pipes throughout homes in Northern Ireland.

I have previously submitted a Freedom of Information request to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive to ask how many Housing Executive properties in South Belfast have lead supply pipes. I received a response to confirm that the Housing Executive do not hold this information.

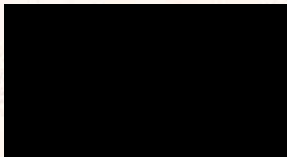
Queen's University, Belfast, researchers carried out a small study on 35 households in the city and found that 15% of water samples exceeded the UK limit for lead. The UK reference limit for lead in water is 10 µgPb/L and the Queen's University team found that out of the 35 homes, 5 test results were higher than 50 µgPb/L with one reaching 95.2 µgPb/L.

The project lead manager Dr. Tristan Sturm agreed the sample size was small which was why further testing was necessary. He said, "Without proper testing of drinking water, our cities are complicity producing the next generation of children who might under-perform, be prone to violence, or suffer debilitating bodily harm relative to their unexposed peers."

Using this information from QUB's research, can I ask the NIHE undertake a check of their stock in South Belfast to ensure tenants know if they are living with lead pipes, please?

I look forward to your response.

Kind regards,


caseworker to Claire Hanna MP

Constituency Office:

1 Rushfield Avenue, Belfast, BT7 3FP (371 Ormeau Road), 028 9099 6066

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 September 2022 15:14
To: 'claire.hanna.mp@parliament.uk'
Subject: Acknowledgement re.: lead pipes in NIHE properties in South Belfast (14/9/22)

Date: 14th September 2022

Dear Ms. Hanna,

RE.: Lead pipes in NIHE properties in South Belfast

Thank you for your letter of 14th September 2022 regarding lead pipes in NIHE properties in South Belfast.

We intend to provide a response to your query within ten working days. Your letter has been sent to [REDACTED] the Assistant Area Manager for South & East Belfast, for action.

In the meantime, if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact the office [REDACTED] and ask for [REDACTED] in the South & East Belfast District Office). Alternatively, you may email him at [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Tenancy Management
NIHE
Belfast South & East District Office
2nd Floor
The Housing Centre
2 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8PB

Ext.: [REDACTED]

Direct Dial: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

7th September 2022

Our ref: FOI_22-23_123

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Thank you for your request received on 5th September 2022. I am dealing with the request under the terms of the above legislation.

Your request was as follows-

"I am writing to you from the Office of Claire Hanna MP. Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, can I ask how many properties in South Belfast owned by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive have lead supply pipes?"

Response

I am writing to confirm that the Housing Executive has now completed its search for the information and can advise that we do not hold this information.

If you are unhappy with the level of service you have received in relation to your request, you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter.

You may write to:

Freedom of Information
Information Governance Team
Planning, Performance Risk & Governance
Northern Ireland Housing Executive
The Housing Centre
2 Adelaide Street
Belfast, BT2 8PB

or send an email to foi@nihe.gov.uk if you wish to make a complaint.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a review of our original decision.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Personal Information

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[REDACTED]

From:
Sent:
To:
Subject:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED]

The NIHE does not retain information on lead pipes within our properties.

We always replaced the lead pipes when we carried out improvements to our properties and our current policy is to remove at COT or during BKR schemes. The only thing you could do is visit the properties and check the connection at the stop cock.

It is possible that the NI water Infrastructure may still contain lead pipework. We have been liaising with NI Water who are working with the Department of Infrastructure in developing a lead pipe strategy.

NI Water are identifying areas of their infrastructure which still have lead pipework and this information will hopefully be passed to us for our information.

Regards

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 August 2022 16:24
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Excess Lead Levels

Hi [REDACTED]

Would we hold any records of what properties we have that have lead pipes in them?

Regards

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Antrim & Carrickfergus District Offices



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 August 2022 14:00
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Excess Lead Levels

[REDACTED] – please see [REDACTED] email below re lead pipes.

Can you please contact [REDACTED] to discuss?

Thanks.

[REDACTED]
Housing Executive
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 August 2022 10:13
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Excess Lead Levels

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Morning [REDACTED]

I have recently received notification from properties at Coronation Road regarding excess lead levels in water. I am aware these houses used to be owned by Housing Executive. They also expressed their concern that houses within Sunnylands area in Carrickfergus could have lead pipes within their properties and could have the potential for excess lead levels. I wanted to pass this information onto yourselves and if you know / have any details regarding pipework in the Sunnylands and Victoria Estate area for properties under NIHE, please let me know.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]
Environmental Health Officer

Smiley Buildings
Victoria Road
Larne
BT40 1RU



☎ [REDACTED]
✉ [REDACTED]
🌐 www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk



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[REDACTED]

From:
Sent:
To:
Subject:

Hi [REDACTED]

It has been NIHE policy since 2016 that as part of planned schemes (kitchen replacements) checks are to undertaken outside and inside the property to identify lead pipe and where lead pipe has been found it should be replaced with either copper or plastic pipework. The question will be why the contractor did not identify this as part of his survey and why he connected to an existing lead pipe.

The problem now is that we are now at handover stage and we have just identified lead pipe. If the stop cock is located in the kitchen behind the units it may mean that the existing kitchen will have to be removed to facilitate the replacement of the lead pipe back to the toby box which will not only be nugatory expenditure but double disruption to the tenant.

Can you check with the contractor if there are any other instances like this on site as they will have to be included for replacement as part of the scheme.

Regards

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 28 March 2022 09:33
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Lead Pipe - [REDACTED]

Morning [REDACTED]

Our M&E Inspector noted lead pipe in-situ at this property during the handover stage following the BKR install. Can you confirm who is best placed to deal with this? Our BKR contractor only connects to existing pipework and therefore would not be in a position to remove it as per NIHE policy.

Thanks

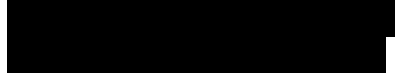


HousingExecutive

Programme Delivery

Belfast Area Office

9 Lanyon Place



From: [Redacted]

Sent: 25 March 2022 15:36

To: [Redacted]

Subject: FW: Lead Pipe Policy - [Redacted]



fyi

[Redacted] wants to have site visit to inspect.

You know they will most likely want to finish and leave this with NIHE to sort.

I can meet at the property next week possibly and invite [Redacted]

Would it be up to M&M to run new water main into the property from the street?

This would be nightmare job as [Redacted] plan says the kitchen is at the back of the property.

Thanks



From: [Redacted]

Sent: 25 March 2022 15:18

To: [Redacted]

Cc: [Redacted]

[Redacted]

Subject: RE: Lead Pipe Policy - [Redacted]

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Hi [REDACTED]

The lead pipe will not have been picked up at survey stage as this is not invasive.

Attached photo of kitchen is from survey stage. To have seen lead pipe would most likely have meant removing kickboards or back panels of units.

We can do a report on below. However, this will be invasive to confirm run of water pipe out to toby.

Attached is the floor plan for the property. This is a mid terrace property and kitchen is to rear of property. It is therefore highly likely that the water mains runs through the property to the toby at the front of the property.

Would it be beneficial to arrange a meeting at the property to investigate?

Kind Regards,



[REDACTED]
Building Surveyor

t: [REDACTED]

m: [REDACTED]

e: [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 25 March 2022 15:03

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: FW: Lead Pipe Policy

[REDACTED]

See email below from [REDACTED] and attached from M&E inspector.

Can you give us a report with regards to the lead pipe.

Thanks



HousingExecutive

Project Delivery | Asset Management | 9 Lanyon Place, Belfast



From: [Redacted]

Sent: 25 March 2022 14:51

To: [Redacted]

Subject: Lead Pipe Policy



See below extract from the policy. We would need to remove this, however in the first instance I would get a report from M&M as to the location, level of disruption expected when removing etc and liaise with Ian to see what the best course of action is as it may run below the house going by our discussions at the meeting.

5.0 MAINTENANCE

5.1 In order for the NIHE to reduce risk and maintain the water quality for their customers and employees within its premises it will;

- continue to work with Northern Ireland Water to identify the potential location of any residual lead pipe so it can be replaced
- replace lead supply pipework where it has been located and notified by Northern Ireland Water as part of the water main infrastructure upgrades
- ensure that as part of planned schemes (kitchen replacements) satisfactory checks are undertaken outside and inside the property to identify lead pipe. This will be in line with the details provided in the guidance section of the procedure manual. Where lead pipe has been found it should be identified for replacement with either copper or plastic pipework.

- make sure that the removal of lead pipework does not reduce electrical safety. If the electrical supply is earthed to the incoming water supply it will need to be earthed by another method.
- ensure necessary certification is completed correctly and accurately.

Contractors will be engaged by the NIHE to undertake all of the above.



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