
The latest news and announcements from the Housing Trust

INSIDE HIGHLIGHTS

Exterior Work

Changes
coming to
Portland Street
2024

New staff

The HTNS is
growing



Happy Holidays from the Housing Trust of Nova Scotia

A message from our Executive Director

Dear Residents,

It's been over a year since the Housing Trust of Nova Scotia (HTNS) purchased your building and we want to thank you for your patience and hope that you find value in the work that's been done in your building so far. In the process of evaluating the state of each building, we have learned that major work in your building will take several years to complete, but in the end, we know that this work will provide significant improvements to your units and common areas, and we hope will make an overall positive impact on your living experience.

In this newsletter, you will find information that is relevant to you as we complete the different stages of the work, and we hope you find it informative. We encourage you to reach out with any questions you might have via email to **info@housingtrust.ca**.

All the best! ~ *Angela*

Renovations & Retrofits

When the HTNS purchased your building and four others last year, we knew that we took on a big job in committing to maintaining affordability and revitalizing the buildings to provide all of you with an affordable and quality home.

The buildings are all at least 50 years old and it is not an easy feat to understand how to replace the cladding, windows, doors, etc. to improve residents' experience and ensure that everyone remains housed during the exterior work.

Our earliest efforts have focused on the property at 240 Portland Street, Dartmouth. We plan to learn from Portland and apply those learning so that we can move faster and more efficiently at other locations (27 & 35 Evans Ave, 18 Crown Drive, & 21 Albert Street).

The request for proposal (RFP) for exterior work at 240 Portland represents months of work by our team, an architect, energy engineers, and other building experts; we will start to receive responses to the RFP soon and can then advise Portland residents on when the work will start.

With the current balconies being taken down, we are exploring common amenity space for the courtyard.



Housing Trust

PROPOSED BY: C. ALBINO ARCHITECTS
300 FORT ST. DARTMOUTH, NS B2Y 4K1
2024.04.01

CO.WORK

The order of work at the other buildings will be announced as that information is available.

New Property Management



In January 2024, we will be welcoming Real Estate 360 as our new property management company. We would like to thank Twin City Property Management for all their work for our residents.



Crown Balconies

Residents of Crown Drive are reminded that they are not permitted to use their balconies. While some may appear safe, their safety is impacted by the balconies above them. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation. Your safety is our biggest concern.

Focus on Sustainability

If you are concerned about the environment, you'll be interested in knowing that older buildings like the one you live in are a major contributor to climate change, and yet, new construction has an even greater net impact.

Compared to new construction, retrofitting reduces climate change and environmental impacts by 4 to 46%, depending on type, location and assumed level of energy efficiency.

Our retrofit plans at Portland have achieved more than a 40% improvement in energy efficiency and reduction in greenhouse gases.



Affordability and Accessibility

The Housing Trust operates with a mixed-income model, with the long-term goal of providing 50 - 60% of residents with a contribution towards their monthly rent based on total household income. Our average rents are below average rents in the areas where our buildings are located, and the implementation of the mixed-income model will help ensure that we can continue to offer greater affordability to households that need it.

Some households also face accessibility challenges, so the Housing Trust has been working to renovate some of the units in each of the five buildings into more accessible friendly units.

Accessibility is a challenge in older buildings so we did a review of the Canada Building Code to determine the extent units could meet today's accessibility standards. We were able to identify opportunities to improve accessibility and meet the needs of a greater number of people living with mobility issues. To date, we have created 14 units with improved accessibility.

Outreach and education on the availability of the units will help ensure that the units rent to people who need them. To date, the renovated units are rented to persons with mobility issues.

We do not maintain a waiting list for regular units, however, to ensure that accessible units are rented to people who need them, we will keep names on a waiting list.

If you know someone who is interested in an accessible unit, email us at **info@housingtrust.ca**.



Smoke-free 2024

Kindly note that as of 1st January 2024, all Housing Trust buildings will be smoke-free zones. As this time nears, there will be memos posted around the buildings as a reminder. We all know that second-hand smoke is bad for our health, but here are some other reasons to go smoke-free:

- Smoke-free smells better! Did you know apartment and condominium residents share about 65% of the same air from unit to unit?
- Smoke-free reduces fire danger. Safety First! Preventing a fire at home protects your loved ones and belongings.
- Smoke-free residential buildings have fewer fires caused by cigarettes. Fires caused by smoking is a leading cause of residential fires and deaths. A ban on smoking is an expectation of the Housing Trust's insurance provider.
- Smoke-free eliminates thirdhand smoke. Thirdhand smoke is basically aged second-hand smoke that sticks to walls, ceilings, furniture, and fabrics. As thirdhand smoke ages, it releases back into the air and takes on new, more toxic forms. Thirdhand smoke increases the cost of renovation and upgrades and therefore, affects the level of affordability we can offer.
- Smoke-free is cleaner. Fewer cigarette burns, less litter from cigarette butts to clean up, and less thirdhand smoke damage - furniture, wallpaper, and other furnishings last longer in smoke-free environments.

If you have any inquiries about our smoke-free policy or anything else about the buildings, contact your resident property manager, or HTNS at info@housingtrust.ca.

HTNS Staff Update

The HTNS has added some new staff members. In addition to our Executive Director, Angela Bishop, we welcome:

- Scott Wellard, Construction Manager
- Andreas Schlieff, Site Superintendent
- Lucas Hoyles, Project Coordinator
- Megan Mariano, Project Manager for Modular Housing

You may see us in the buildings overseeing the work being done, focusing on safety and working hard to ensure all construction related concerns are addressed.

Incident Report

Several units throughout the Housing Trust's buildings experience leaks during rainy and windy weather. The permanent fix for these is the recladding and window and roof replacement. Some attempts to address the issues in the short-term have been unsuccessful because we can't determine where the leak originated. The final solution involves new cladding, windows, and roofs. It would be helpful to have a better understanding of the weather conditions when the leak occurred.

Please continue to alert your resident manager or Twin City/Real Estate 360 if you experience a leak. It would also be helpful for you to complete the form that follows, filling in as much information as you can. If you don't know the answer, that's ok, your information will still be helpful.

Modular Housing

In March 2023, the Housing Trust of Nova Scotia entered a \$20M partnership with the Government of Nova Scotia to build and operate housing designated for healthcare workers. The initiative will create at least 50 units of housing in at least three communities.

Each site will be developed with retention in mind to support healthcare workers integration and permanent settlement in communities. The initiative addresses two pressing social issues, the lack of housing for healthcare workers and the shortage of affordable housing. The Housing Trust will implement its mixed-income model at each location and work with local healthcare organizations to reach eligible residents.

The first project will be in Lunenburg. The HTNS purchased the Wheelhouse Motel at 31 Knickle Road. The existing motel will be converted to one and two bedroom and studio apartments, and townhouses will be added to the lot. The final mix of unit types and number will be confirmed in the design phase which started immediately after the purchase was confirmed.



Other locations will be announced as they are confirmed.

Rent Increases

Every household and every business is experiencing cost increases. While we are a non-profit, we experience the same costs a private sector provider of rental housing and the same cost increases.

On January 1, 2023, most residents received notice of a 5% increase. This increase was permitted under Nova Scotia Tenancy Board legislation. The cost of operating a unit is a minimum of \$450 per month and when you consider mortgage payments, rents for a substantial number of units do not breakeven for us. That's why we needed to increase rents and to offer units at higher rents in your building. Those higher rents will help us offer additional affordability to households that need it.



Want to share anything with the Housing Trust of Nova Scotia?

You can email us at info@housingtrust.ca

Incident Report

Date and time of Incident (e.g., August 12, 8:00PM)		
Please describe the weather when the incident happened (e.g., severe weather warning)		
Please describe the location(s) of leak (or other damage) (e.g., leak living room near window)		
Do you know what direction the wind was blowing? If yes, please add that information.		
Is this a recurring leak? Please circle your response.	Yes	No
If this is a recurring leak, has anyone tried to fix it?	Yes	No
If someone tried to fix it, do you know what they did? If yes, please briefly describe.		
If you tried to fix it, what did you do?		
What else would you like us to know?		

Feel free to use this form for other incidents. Please drop the form off with your resident manager or email it to **info@housingtrust.ca**.